# *Mebane City Beat: A time for festive connections*

**BY KELLY HUNTER**
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS OF ORANGE




COURTESY OF CITY OF MEBANE

There is nothing quite like the magic of the holiday season. From the vibrant colors of autumn to the twinkling lights of the holidays, there is a special feeling of excitement and wonder in the air. October marks the beginning of this wonderful time of year, bringing with it numerous events that bring loved ones and community members together to celebrate the season and embrace the spirit of togetherness.

Mebane takes pride in its strong sense of community and the unity shared among its residents. How is this sense of connection fostered? It begins by bringing people together around a shared purpose: creating meaningful experiences, enriching the lives of children and adults, and providing opportunities for social interaction and community celebration. From seasonal festivities to cherished annual traditions, these gatherings help strengthen the bonds that make Mebane such a special place to call home.

As the holiday season approaches, the City of Mebane is excited to welcome residents and visitors to a series of family-friendly events filled with entertainment, seasonal traditions, and opportunities to make lasting memories.

**A Spooktacular Start to the Season**

The festivities kick off with a Community Bike Ride hosted by the Mebane Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) on Saturday, October 24, at 9:30 a.m. This kid-friendly, 3.5-mile ride will depart from Mebane City Hall, travel through downtown, and return to its starting point.

The ride is a great opportunity to connect with fellow bicyclists and jump-start your day with some exercise! Participants are encouraged to wear costumes, provided they are safe for cycling.

Later that morning, head to Clay Street and Fourth Street for the Downtown Mebane Halloween Spooktacular, running from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Children and adults alike are invited to dress up as their favorite witches, ghouls, superheroes, Disney characters, crime-fighting action figures, and more for a chance to win the costume contests! Four-legged friends are welcome, too, so feel free to include your pup in your Halloween look!

Attendees can look forward to an exciting lineup of entertainment and activities, including aerial artists, a fire performer, the Alamance Arts Witches, spooky storytelling with the Alamance County Public Libraries, face painting, crafts, and interactive inflatable games. You can also expect to find street performers, stage entertainment, food trucks, and more! The event will also feature street performers, stage entertainment, food trucks, and more! At 1:15 p.m., trick-or-treating will begin, with participating downtown businesses handing out free candy to young attendees.

This year, the event has been extended by an additional hour in the morning to give families with younger children more flexibility to enjoy the festivities before nap time. A City of Mebane information tent will also be available in the Go Girl Shoppe parking lot to assist community members with questions and other needs.

Parking will primarily be available in the gravel lots behind businesses along Ruffin Street. Attendees are encouraged to arrive early to find parking and make the most of the day's activities.

**A Christmas Season to Remember**

As November arrives, the community will gather for one of the season's most anticipated celebrations: Santa's Arrival and the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on Saturday, November 21, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

This year brings an exciting change to a familiar tradition. Rather than holding Santa's Arrival at the Mebane Arts and Community Center in the morning, the celebration will take place downtown at the Veterans Memorial Garden, combining Santa's Arrival with the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony.

The festivities will begin at 4 p.m. when Santa makes his grand entrance aboard the Mebane firetruck. Families will have the opportunity to meet Santa and take photos with him, weather and lighting conditions permitting, before he joins the mayor for the ceremonial lighting of the Christmas tree at approximately 7 p.m.

The free celebration will feature food trucks, a showing of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, and performances by the Alamance Children's Theatre Choir, the Senior Connect Handbell Choir, and the Senior Connect Line Dancing Group. Children can also visit the Letters to Santa writing station to share their holiday wishes as part of the City's annual Letters-to-Santa program.

From festive entertainment to a special visit from Santa, the evening promises to be a wonderful way for families and friends to gather downtown and officially welcome the Christmas season.

**A Mebane Tradition After Dark**

The holiday celebrations continue with one of Mebane's most beloved traditions: the 47th annual Mebane Christmas Parade on Friday, December 4! As the only nighttime Christmas parade in Alamance County, the event comes to life with holiday lights, music, and plenty of Christmas cheer.

Beginning at 7 p.m., the parade is expected to feature approximately 100 entries representing numerous local businesses, schools, dance teams, marching bands, and community organizations that help make Mebane special. North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University's Marching Band will kick off the parade, setting the tone for an evening filled with spirited performances and festive displays. At the rear will be the big man himself, Santa Claus, riding on his sleigh, waving to the crowd and bringing the parade to a memorable close.

Residents and visitors are encouraged to arrive early, explore local shops, enjoy dinner downtown, and find a comfortable spot along the parade route. The City's It's Snowing exhibit will be available for holiday photos beginning at 5 p.m., providing another festive opportunity to capture memories with family and friends before the parade begins.

Those planning to attend should bring their own chairs and arrive early to secure a viewing location. Downtown streets will close at 5 p.m., and nearby parking lots are expected to fill quickly, so allowing extra time to park and find a spot is strongly encouraged.

With nearly five decades of tradition, the Mebane Christmas Parade remains a special way to celebrate the season, recognize the people and organizations that contribute to the community, and bring residents together for an evening of holiday excitement. For those unable to attend in person, the City will livestream the parade on its YouTube channel, with Public Information Officer Kelly Hunter serving as host alongside special guests.

**Making Memories, Together**

While each event offers its own unique experience, they all share something important: the opportunity to bring people together. Whether enjoying Halloween festivities downtown, gathering to welcome Santa and watch the Christmas tree light up the sky, or cheering on parade participants beneath the holiday lights, these celebrations create opportunities for connection and lasting memories.

Community events are about more than entertainment. They allow residents to support local businesses, celebrate longstanding traditions, discover new experiences, and spend meaningful time with the people who matter most. They also showcase the many individuals, organizations, and businesses that contribute to Mebane's welcoming spirit.

As the holiday season approaches, residents are encouraged to mark their calendars, invite friends and family, and take part in these special community celebrations. For the latest event updates, weather-related announcements, and additional information, follow the City of Mebane Recreation and Parks on Facebook and Instagram at @CityofMebaneRec, as well as the City's official social media pages at @CityofMebane.

"These events are a magical way to kick off the holiday season and get into the spirit with your loved ones and fellow members of the Mebane community. You don't want to miss them!" said Becca Liegey, Recreation Events and Program Supervisor.

So, come celebrate the holidays with us and be part of the traditions that make Mebane positively charming. From our community to yours, we wish everyone a joyful holiday season!

*Kelly Hunter is the public information officer at City of Mebane.*

## RIVER PARK CONCERT

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

thing that works well."

Eric Gephart, a local native and Kamado Joe representative, will be cooking at the event, providing free samples and a large dash of showmanship. Eno River Brewing has made a commemorative one-off beer for the concert, called Cosmic Harmony. Harris Distributors will supply additional beer options, and non-alcoholic beer and other beverages will be available.

The concert is run by the Triangle Music Alliance and powered largely by volunteers. It began as a small gathering of about 50 people and grew to more than 5,000 attendees at its peak. It is now one of Hillsborough's marquee events. The Alliance partners with community radio station WHUP as the nonprofit beneficiary of support. A private "sustainer" fundraiser on Friday, Oct. 23, is nearly sold out; this event and local sponsorships keep the concert free.

For Josh, all the work that goes into the event pays off in spades."When I stand on the stage and look out at the crowd, with kids dancing and people of every age and from diverse backgrounds having fun, I get emotional every time. Everyone organizing it has the same intent: community and inclusion, and making something beautiful and joyful that brings people together in music and happiness."

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

What: Ninth annual River Park Concert

When: Saturday, Oct. 24. Park opens at noon, music runs 12:30 to 8 p.m.

Where: River Park, 140 E. Margaret Lane, Hillsborough, NC 27278

Lineup: Ghost & Bones (12:30), Jack the Radio (2), Tan & Sober Gentlemen with Mason Via (3:30), The Brothers Comatose (5:30)

GOOD TO KNOW

Bags will be checked at entry.

ID is required to buy and drink beer. Non-alcoholic options are available.

Well-behaved dogs are welcome on a leash, and owners must clean up after them.

Four food trucks will offer a range of culinary options. Outside food and drinks and coolers are not allowed.

More info: trianglemusicalliance.com/rpc-event

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Orange County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing at the Whitted Meeting Facility, 300 West Tryon Street, Hillsborough, NC, on Thursday, November 5, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. to hear public comment on the following items:

**1. Zoning Atlas Amendment:** An application to rezone approximately 20.51 acres of land (PIN: 9940-35-8007) located at 9825 NC Highway 49, Cedar Grove, within the Cedar Grove Township of Orange County. The proposed rezoning is from AR (Agricultural Residential) to NR-CD (Non-Residential Conditional District).

Additional information regarding the application (MA25-0004) is available at the Planning Department's Active Developments page: https://www.orangecountync.gov/3038/Active-Development-Projects

**2. Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Text Amendment:** An application to amend regulations pertaining to the review processes for subdivisions. The following Sections of the UDO are proposed for amendment:

- Section 2.1 - Review And Decision Making Authority - Summary Table
- Section 2.13 – Exempt Subdivisions
- Section 2.14 – Minor Subdivisions
- Section 2.15 – Major Subdivisions
- Section 2.16 – Subdivisions in the Economic Development, Commercial, and/or Commercial-Industrial Nodes
- Section 2.26 – Appeals
- Section 7.6 – General Design Standards
- Section 7.12 – Flexible Developments
- Section 7.13 – Specifications for Plat Drawings

**3. Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Text Amendment:** An application to amend regulations pertaining to "Good Housekeeping" Reforms to Subdivision Standards. The following Sections of the UDO are proposed for amendment:

- Section 2.1 - Review And Decision Making Authority - Summary Table
- Section 2.5 – Site Plan Review
- Section 2.9 – Conditional Districts
- Section 2.13 – Exempt Subdivisions
- Section 2.14 – Minor Subdivisions
- Section 2.15 – Major Subdivisions
- Section 2.16 – Subdivisions in the Economic Development, Commercial, and/or Commercial-Industrial Nodes
- Section 2.26 – Appeals
- Section 3.4 – Conventional Commercial Districts
- Section 3.5 – Industrial Districts
- Section 3.7 – Economic Development Districts
- Section 7.1 – General Provisions
- Section 7.2 – Classification of Subdivisions
- Section 7.3 – Phasing of Subdivisions
- Section 7.4 – Improvements and Performance Guarantees
- Section 7.5 – Subdivision Agreements
- Section 7.6 – General Design Standards
- Section 7.12 – Flexible Developments
- Section 7.13 – Specifications for Plat Drawings
- Section 10.1 - Definitions

Substantial changes to the proposal(s) may be made following the public hearing due to verbal or written comments received or based on the Board's discussions.

Questions may be directed to the Orange County Planning Department via phone at (919) 245-2575 or via e-mail at planningdept@orangecountync.gov.

Notice to people with special needs: If you have an audio or visual impairment, unique accessibility requirements, or need language assistance, please call the County Clerk's Office at (919) 245-2130 or TDD# 919-644-3045.

PUBLISH: October 21 and October 28, 2026