

# Bank of Granite

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## **Snipes Retires After 25 Years at Bank of Granite, 50 Years in Banking and at Nearly 75 Years Old**

Over time, Charles M. Snipes has planted and nurtured thousands of tulips in his gardens. It is likely he has helped an even greater number of customers in his 50 years as a banker in the Unifour area of western N.C.

Now Snipes will have more time for his tulips, and for his family and friends. After announcing his retirement as chief executive officer in January, Snipes' retirement as chairman of the board officially began with the adjournment of Bank of Granite's annual stockholder meeting on April 28. During the meeting, Snipes was presented with a framed shadowbox of mementos representing his years in banking on behalf of the board of directors and employees.

"I have had an incredible experience at Bank of Granite," Snipes said. "When I joined the bank in 1982, we counted five offices in two counties and around \$67 million in resources. Since then we have been recognized as one of the premier community banks in the nation and today have 22 offices and \$1.2 billion in assets. It's time for the strong leadership I have recruited over the years to take the reins." He added, "It will be my greatest pleasure to witness their successes."

R. Scott Anderson, president of the corporation and Bank of Granite was named CEO in January. “We’ve been preparing for this succession for some time now,” stated Snipes. “Scott is a dynamic and very capable leader and he will be a great steward of Bank of Granite’s future growth and success.”

### **A Banker’s Banker**

A native of Lincolnton, N.C., Snipes served three years in the U.S. Army Security Agency. He then graduated in 1958 from Lenoir-Rhyne College in Hickory, N.C., and began his career in banking at First National Bank of Catawba County. He is also a graduate of the North Carolina School of Banking at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. By the 1981 acquisition of First National by First Union National Bank, Snipes was senior vice president and Hickory City executive and had been elected to the board of directors and executive committee.

A long-time proponent of community banking, Snipes was laying the groundwork for his own start-up bank when John A. Forlines, Jr., then CEO of Bank of Granite, approached him. “I met John at Lake Hickory Country Club to talk about joining his bank although I had every intention of starting my own,” Snipes said. “I had the investors, the business plan, even a location, and was ready to go with my own venture. But I liked what I knew about Bank of Granite and I thought I’d be able to make a difference there.”

Snipes came on board as executive vice president and chief administrative officer at Bank of Granite in 1982. He was named president of Bank of Granite in 1987,

corporation president and bank CEO in 1994, CEO of the corporation in 2005 and chairman of the board in January 2006.

### **A Dedicated and Impactful Career**

Known to start every day with a 5 a.m. walk, Snipes has hit the ground running nearly every day of a career that spanned 50 years in February. The bank's executive committee has met biweekly at 7:30 a.m. and according to Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer Karen Warlick, "It wasn't unusual for Charles to have already conducted a meeting or two beforehand."

His energy and positive nature have fostered tangible returns. In 1997 the corporation acquired GLL Associates, an established mortgage firm renamed Granite Mortgage. The bank's 2003 expansion into Boone, Wilkesboro, Conover and Matthews, along with the acquisition of First Commerce Bank in Charlotte, provided growth opportunities as the Unifour reeled under textile and furniture plant closings. Most recently, Bank of Granite opened new offices in Winston-Salem and Statesville.

During Snipes' tenure, the bank experienced a milestone with its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The yearlong celebration in 2006 culminated with a time capsule burial in conjunction with public and employee events.

### **It's All About the People**

Snipes is the first to say that Forlines, his partner of many years, and "the incredible and devoted staff at Bank of Granite" are responsible for any success he

might claim. He and Forlines aggressively fostered a corporate culture based on customer and community service.

Tirelessly active in the community, Snipes has been, and still is, a leader in numerous education, non-profit and civic organizations. He has been especially involved at Lenoir-Rhyne College where he has served on the board of trustees for more than 18 years, including six years as chairman of the finance and investment committee and nine years on the executive committee. In 2002, the college named its business school The Charles M. Snipes School of Business in his honor. He has an impressive resume of other civic and business awards to his credit. (See *sidebar information below.*)

A charter member of St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Snipes is currently a member of the church's administrative board, finance committee and is special funds treasurer. He is past chairman of the administrative board and committees including membership and evangelism, and finance. For the new sanctuary, he chaired the study committee, as well as capital campaign and finance planning committees. Additionally, he has served as financial secretary, church treasurer, president of his Sunday school class, building fund chairman and treasurer, and church trustee.

### **Role In Banking Industry**

Throughout his career Snipes has been active in state and national banking organizations. He is a member of the North Carolina Bankers Association, becoming Group VIII chairman in 1970 and statewide chairman in 1998. Currently,

he is a member of the American Bankers Association membership council and has served on that organization's communications, community banking and government relations committee councils. In 1993, Governor Jim Hunt appointed him to the North Carolina Banking Commission where he served until 2002.

### **On the Home Front**

Snipes' wife of 44 years, Glenda Marie Gayle, died in November of 2000. They have two daughters, both of whom are in banking. In 2004, Snipes married Catherine Russell Barringer, a Hickory businesswoman with two grown children. Together she and Snipes have nine grandchildren. Last year, Mrs. Snipes retired as the owner of a prosperous beauty salon in Hickory. "We are both hard workers," she said in an interview in their home. "I admire and respect Charles for his dedication. He has devoted so much energy to the bank and to the community. I know he will miss the intensity of full-time work, but I am looking forward to this new and exciting phase in our lives, and I believe he is as well."

In addition to the shadowbox Snipes received during the stockholder meeting, he was also honored at a recent reception at Lake Hickory Country Club by bank officers and civic and business associates. There he was presented with Catawba County's Spirit Award by county commissioner Katherine "Kitty" W. Barnes and Hickory Mayor G. Rudy Wright, Jr. read a proclamation naming the day Charles M. Snipes Day and presented him and Mrs. Snipes each with a key to the city. Snipes also received a scrapbook featuring cards, letters and mementos sent from customers and many others he has worked with or helped during his career.

Bank of Granite employees honored him during their joint staff meeting on May 6 and presented him with a travel voucher to enjoy with Mrs. Snipes. But the most special thing he received during the employee event was a farewell scrapbook representing his 25 years at Bank of Granite with contributions from all 22 banking offices and the bank's three operational and administrative offices.

Snipes has one other milestone to celebrate soon. On May 17, he will be 75 years old. He and his wife will mark the occasion with a joint birthday party (her birthday is in May as well) with a large gathering of family and friends on May 25.

Snipes says he will stay involved in the business community through his work on a number of boards. He will remain active in the Rotary Club of Hickory where he recently received an award for perfect attendance since joining the club — 40 years ago. But there are gardening catalogs on the couple's kitchen table alongside several travel brochures. It makes one wonder if Snipes will miss the business world quite as much as it will miss him.

#### CURRENT CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- Piedmont Boy Scout Council Advisory Board
- Frye Regional Medical Center Advisory Board
- Piedmont Educational Foundation Board
- Sipe's Orchard Home Director Emeritus – Board Member 34 Years
- Arts Center of Catawba Valley Treasurer and Director
- Catawba County Industrial Revenue Bond Authority Member
- Catawba Valley Community College Board of Trustees Member and Immediate Past Chairman
- Catawba Valley Community College Foundation Board
- Catawba Valley Community Foundation Board
- Lenoir-Rhyne College Board Chairman and Executive Committee Member
- Catawba County Champions of Education Board
- Rotary Club of Hickory

## PAST CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- 1966–1967 President Hickory Jaycees
- 1970 President Greater Hickory Chamber of Commerce
- 1970 Chairman Lenoir-Rhyne College Alumni Association
- 1970 Co-Chairman Greater Hickory United Fund Drive
- 1971 Chairman Hickory Salvation Army Advisory Board
- 1972 President Greater Hickory United Way Fund
- 1972–1973 President Rotary Club of Hickory
- 1975 Chairman Lenoir-Rhyne College Loyalty Fund
- 1968 Chairman Hickory All-America City Entry Committee
- 1977–1979 Chairman Catawba County Industrial Development Commission
- 1981–1983 Chairman Lenoir-Rhyne College Board of Visitors
- 1987–1989 President Piedmont Educational Foundation
- 1987 Chairman Catawba County Chamber of Commerce
- 2003–2004 Hickory Metro Higher Education Center Advisory Board
- 2004–2006 Catawba Science Center Board

## AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1965 Hickory Outstanding Jaycee of the Year
- 1966 Hickory Jaycees Young Man of the Year
- 1967 Hickory Outstanding Jaycee of the Year
- 1967 North Carolina Jaycees Outstanding Local President of the Year
- 1967 Hickory Jaycees Outstanding Young Layman of the Year
- 1968 North Carolina Jaycees Faith in God Award as Outstanding Young Layman of the Year
- 1972 Hickory Jaycees Boss of the Year
- 1976 Lenoir-Rhyne College Alumni Association Distinguished Service Award
- 1976 Lenoir-Rhyne College Board of Trustees Distinguished Service Award
- 1978 Hickory News Man of the Year
- 1981 Lenoir-Rhyne College Board of Trustees Award
- 1982 Catawba County Chamber of Commerce Glen R. Boyd Outstanding Citizen Award
- 1982 Professional Secretaries International, Hickory Chapter, Executive of the Year
- 1983 Rotary Club of Hickory Paul Harris Fellow
- 1987 Governor James Martin Awards State of North Carolina Order of Long Leaf Pine
- 1991 Lenoir-Rhyne Business Council Business Leader of the Year
- 1996 Lenoir-Rhyne College Opal L. Moretz Alumni Service Award
- 1998 National Society of Fund Raising Executives Outstanding Volunteer Fund Raiser
- 1998 Catawba County March of Dimes Distinguished Citizen of the Year
- 2002 Lenoir-Rhyne College Names School of Business The Charles M. Snipes School of Business

## CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- 1958 Joins First National Bank of Catawba County as trainee

- 1959 Consumer loan officer
- 1961 Assistant cashier
- 1962 Branch manager
- 1963 Named assistant vice president
- 1965 Commercial loan officer
- 1970 Senior vice president and city executive, elected to board of directors and executive committee
- 1981 Senior vice president of First Union National Bank after merger
- 1982 Regional vice president, Hickory region responsibility
- 1982 In September, Bank of Granite welcomes Snipes as executive vice president, chief administrative officer and board of directors member
- 1987 President of Bank of Granite and Bank of Granite Corporation
- 1994 Chief executive officer of Bank of Granite,
- 2005 Chief executive office of Bank of Granite Corporation
- 2006 Chairman of the Board, Bank of Granite Corporation

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Photo Caption 1: Board of Directors as shown in 1982 annual report. Seated: Charles Snipes and John Forlines. Standing: Robert Gibbons, Thad Russell, Jack Moore, Barton Hayes and Floyd Wilson.



Photo Caption 2: Snipes in his office shortly before announcing his retirement.



Photo Caption 3: Charles and Catherine Snipes at their northwest Hickory home.

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