



# NEWSLETTER

Summer 2005  
Volume 2, Issue 2

## News from the Mayor

Roger Snyder

As we start with a new Fiscal Year, we have one big project behind us—this being our Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The study took almost 6 months to complete and included no less than 3 public meetings. A copy of the draft report is available at the Town Hall for your inspection. Another project that we are looking into is the future of this water situation. As of now, there is still no agreement between Asheville and Buncombe County. The Town has hired a consultant to study all options that may or may not be available to us. Water has long been an issue with the people of Mills River and the Council feels if we don't at least look at this now, then we may not get the opportunity to do so in the future.

We would like to thank the Fire Department for the opening of the Pryor Substation on Fanning Fields Road and for the good job that they continually do for the citizens of the Mills River Community.

We would also like to thank the Henderson County Board of Commissioners for helping us establish a Mills River Branch of the County's Library System and approving the Sheriff's request for a Mills River Deputy. The Sheriff's Department has gone out of their way in helping Mills River start this program.

As of June 1, we have met our State mandated requirements of providing four services to its residents: Law Enforcement (supplemental), Street Lighting, Zoning and Fire Protection.



**NEW & UPDATED WEB SITE!!!**

To read this newsletter online, access the Mills River Website at <http://www.millsriver.org>



## THE TOWN OF MILLS RIVER

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[info@millsriver.org](mailto:info@millsriver.org)

### Council Members:

Mayor: Roger Snyder  
Mayor Pro Tem: Lois Pryor  
Councilman: Wayne Carland  
Councilman: Ed Glenn  
Councilwoman: Jennie Hernandez

### Staff:

Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Susan L. Powell  
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**Mills River Volunteer  
Fire & Rescue**  
by Rick Livingston, Fire Chief

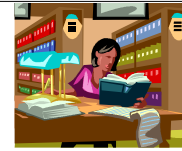
School House Road, Horse Shoe, NC 28742  
**Phone emergencies for either  
 FIRE or MEDICAL: Call 911**

On Saturday, May 14th, Mills River Fire and Rescue hosted an open house for the opening and dedication of the new Pryor Substation on Fanning Fields Road. The land for this new substation was donated by Mills River Mayor Pro Tem Lois Pryor and her late husband, Benny, who was a charter member of the department. Lois, her son Bob, and his wife Melinda were present for the event and were presented plaques in appreciation for their generous donation of the land.

The \$230,000 facility will better serve the rapidly growing northern portion of the Mills River fire district. This area includes the Broadpointe Industrial Park, Marlow Elementary School, and numerous residential areas. Currently, this station houses one pumper/tanker, one small medical/brush truck, one hazardous materials response trailer, and one public fire education trailer. Staffing is currently provided entirely by volunteers who live near this station; however, the building was designed and constructed to provide a living area for full-time paid firefighters when increased growth and call volume make this necessary in future years.

The fire department built this station without raising its tax rate of \$0.065 per \$100 property value, which is the lowest in Henderson County. The building is paid for and we are debt free. One of our goals has always been to provide outstanding service at the lowest possible cost to the taxpayer.

Future plans for Mills River Fire and Rescue include the possible construction of two more substations, as recommended by the NC Department of Insurance, as our districts grow. One substation would be in the upper North and South Mills River area, hopefully somewhere on Whitaker Lane. The other would be in the upper Highway 280 area, hopefully somewhere near the "Longview Straight" area. Anyone who owns land in these areas that might be willing to sell or donate 1 to 2 acres for construction of a substation is asked to contact the fire department.



**Check Out the New Mills River Library!**  
by Jere Brittain

Picture this—a circle of kids sitting on a colorful rug, listening to animated readings from Peter Rabbit or Cat In The Hat. Young parents getting library cards for the first time because the main library was not convenient for them. A lady from a nearby community donating several hundred dollars worth of brand new books she had purchased at Barnes and Noble for our library. Fifteen dedicated Mills River volunteers, donating totals of 75 hours per week in community service. More than 4,000 books, tapes, CD's, and DVD's for loan, many donated by Friends of the Henderson County Library. This is your new Mills River Branch of the Henderson County Public Library!

Located directly across Boylston Highway (NC 280) from Food Lion, the library is open Monday through Friday, 2:00—6:00 PM, plus Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00—12:00 Noon. Your current library card is valid at the Mills River branch; Henderson County residents may obtain a card at our branch by presenting a driver's license or other ID. Books from any branch of the Henderson County system may be returned at Mills River. Books or videos not on the shelves at Mills River may be ordered from the County system for pickup at Mills River. Public Internet access is available.

*(Continued on Page 4)*

**MEETING DATES**

Jul	4	Independence Day	Town Hall Closed
	5	Planning Board	7:30 PM
	13	Finance Committee	7:00 PM
	14	Town Council	7:00 PM
	18	Agricultural Advisory Committee	7:30 PM
	19	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Aug	28	Town Council	7:00 PM
	2	Planning Board	7:30 PM
	9	Board of Adjustments	7:00 PM
	10	Finance Committee	7:00 PM
	11	Town Council	7:00 PM
	15	Agricultural Advisory Committee	7:30 PM
	16	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Sep	25	Town Council	7:00 PM
	5	Labor Day	Town Hall Closed
	6	Planning Board	7:30 PM
	8	Town Council	7:00 PM
	14	Finance Committee	7:00 PM
	19	Agricultural Advisory Committee	7:00 PM
	20	Planning Board	7:30 PM
	22	Town Council	7:00 PM



## History Corner

by Jim Brittain

By 1916, the existing water supply of the town of Hendersonville was found to be inadequate to supply the demand, especially in times of drought or a fire. Charles E. Brooks, who served as Mayor of Hendersonville during 1915 to 1919, became a strong proponent of expanding the water system and quickly took advantage of an opportunity to bring Mills River water to town. George W. Vanderbilt died in March 1914 and much of his property, which included the headwaters of Mills River, was sold to the federal government as the nucleus for the Pisgah National Forest in 1916. A consultant hired by Hendersonville considered various alternative sources before recommending that water from Big Creek, a tributary of North Mills River, be piped to a reservoir in Hendersonville. The consultant, Gilbert C. White, stated that this source should meet the town's needs for the foreseeable future. Among the advantages were that the watershed would be protected by the federal government and that the water was of such high quality that a filter plant would not be needed. Thus, the town newspaper ran a headline in its edition of January 12, 1916, stating that "Pisgah Mountain Water is Proposed for this City." Implementation of the consultant's plan was delayed by the War, but the state legislature authorized the issuance of municipal bonds to fund the Mills River project in December 1921.

Construction of the intake dam at the confluence of Big Creek and Fletcher B=Creek began in September 1922 and it was completed in December 1922 at a reported cost of slightly over \$22,000. The dam was 25 feet in height and 160 feet long with a concrete core and it had a facing on the downstream side of large blocks of locally-quarried stone. It was an aesthetic structure and remains so today after more than eight decades.

The construction of the 16.3 mile long pipeline from the intake dam to Hendersonville was a challenging task. It consisted of 12-foot long cast iron sections with each weighing between 1,450 and 2,200 pounds, depending on the pressure specifications. The diameter of the pipe was 16 inches. The route crossed Mills River several times, the French Broad once, and 29 smaller streams. The pipe was fabricated at a foundry in Birmingham, Alabama, and hauled to Henderson County by rail. In a progress report in December 1922, the project engineer stated that trucks, tractors, two and four horse teams, and two and single yoke oxen had been used during construction of the line. He noted that oxen had been able to drag pipe sections over terrain where nothing else could go.

The pipeline had blow-off valves at stream crossings so that the line could be flushed in sections. Automatic air-release valves were installed at hill tops to purge air from the line. According to the engineer, about 215,000 pounds of lead had been used to seal the pipe joints. The lead was melted on site over open wood fires. The line was buried under at least 2.5 feet of dirt except in the National Forest where crop cultivation was not anticipated. In March 1923, the local newspaper reported that pipe was being installed at a rate of about 5,000 feet per week.

Even before completion of the water project, residents of the Mills River community anticipated that they would receive a share of water from the pipeline down the valley. A newspaper article in April 1923 noted that Mills River now had one of the finest rural schools in the state, but that it still lacked electricity and running water. It pointed out that the Hendersonville water pipe passed quite near the school and that local residents hoped to have running water in their homes quite soon. A report of a community meeting in June 1924 was headlined "Mills River People Seek Connection for Water and Lights." It stated that those attending the meeting were eager to receive water "available by tapping the city's line from Pisgah which runs near many residences." Needless to say, their expectations were not fulfilled and most Mills River residents still get their water from other sources.

Completion of the new water system stimulated a public celebration in Hendersonville in July 1923. The *Hendersonville News* announced that the city now had a supply of water "unsurpassed for purity anywhere in America" and that "only wild beasts inhabit the watershed." An editorial called it "the greatest project" which Hendersonville "has ever undertaken in the course of its long history." Those who attended the water celebration were reported to have "sung in gleeful manner." The public was encouraged to visit the new distribution reservoir at Ewart Hill which was filled with water from Mills River. In April 1924, it was reported that about 800,000 gallons per day was being used from the system which had a capacity of about 2.3 million gallons per day.

Only three years later, in 1927, Hendersonville water customers received the surprising news that the purity of their water was threatened and that a new source would be required, at least temporarily. The threat came from announced plans by the Carr Lumber Company to build a logging railroad into the North Fork watershed and harvest timber there for as long as seven years. The Carr Company had negotiated a contract in 1912 when the property still was owned by Vanderbilt. The federal

government agreed to honor the contract even though the area to be logged was now part of the National Forest. At the same time, the city of Asheville launched an effort to secure rights to "Pink Beds" water from the headwaters of South Mills River, effectively blocking that alternative for Hendersonville. However, in April 1927, the Chief Forester offered to let Hendersonville have access to Bradley Creek, a tributary of South Mills River. Asheville was authorized to secure water from the Pink Beds prong of the river. (Subsequently, Asheville decided on a different source for its water supply.)

Hendersonville agreed to relinquish its use of water from North Mills River until the lumber company completed its logging operations above the intake dam. Early in 1928, a plan was announced to install a 60-foot high dam on Bradley Creek to create a storage reservoir with a maximum capacity of 435 million gallons. The plan called for Hendersonville to issue \$400,000 in municipal bonds to pay for the new dam and new pipeline. Public opposition to the high cost soon led to a revised plan to reduce the cost to \$225,000 by building a low dam of ten to fifteen feet in height. This of course reduced the storage capacity significantly. A new pipeline using 20 inch diameter iron pipe was installed to carry the Bradley Creek water about seven miles to a junction with the older line from North Mills River. Water from the new source became available during the summer of 1928 but without much fanfare. By then, Hendersonville had about 2,400 consumer taps and was supplying Mills River water to Flat Rock and Balfour as well as to residents of Hendersonville. In January 1929, it was reported that Hendersonville now had access to enough water to serve a population of 200,000.

Increased demand for water eventually led to the construction of a new treatment plant on lower Mills River just below the Davenport Bridge. A new 24 inch pipeline with a capacity of about six million gallons per day carried the treated water to an enlarged storage reservoir at Ewart Hill, beginning in 1965. A study in 1975 indicated that the Hendersonville water system could be expanded to supply every community in Henderson County by 1990 at an estimated cost of about \$14 million.

After about a 70-year delay, Asheville obtained a share of Mills River water in 1999 when a new treatment plant costing about \$29.8 million was dedicated near the confluence of Mills River and the French Broad. It was built with a capacity of 5 million gallons per day with a potential expansion to 10 million gallons if needed. Ironically, most residents of the new town of Mills River and upper Mills River still rely on well water

It is interesting to speculate on the response if the town were to announce a plan to install its own treatment plant well upstream from the two existing plants which furnish water to irrigate lawns and golf courses elsewhere in the county and beyond.

**(Continued from Page 2)**

The Mills River Library is a result of collaborative efforts of the Mills River Town Council, the Henderson County Board of Commissioners, and the Henderson County Public Library. The Town pays the rent, the community provides the volunteers, and the County library system provides the logistical support and trains the volunteers.

Current special activities include Story Time for children ages 3-6, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:00 AM, and Summer Reading for school children with small prizes for reading accomplishments. Plans for future activities include lectures by local authors, workshops on local history, and sponsorship of book clubs or other interest groups. Donated books received at Mills River are forwarded to the Main Library for evaluation. Books needed in the system are catalogued, and other books are given to the Friends of the Henderson County Library for sale to benefit the system.

During its first month (May 2005), the Mills River Library circulated about 850 items, with 25-35 visitations per day. Circulation and visitation have grown by 50% during June.

For additional information, to make suggestions, or to volunteer, contact the Mills River Library at 890-1850.



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### **Local Small Business Ads**

The Mills River Town Newsletter is printed quarterly: March, June, September, and December. At sometime in the future we hope to increase the frequency of circulation. In order to defray the cost of publishing, the newsletter will be taking small business ads. These ads will be business card size and black and white. The business must be located within the town limits. There is a \$50 fee for each quarterly advertisement and since there is a limited amount of space, ads will be taken on a first come, first serve basis. The ad must accompany payment and checks should be labeled for the newsletter. The fee collected goes directly for newsletter costs. Site selection within the newsletter is to be determined by the newsletter committee and the committee reserves the right to refuse an ad. Both ad and payment will be returned if this occurs.

### **Projects Update**

#### **Law Enforcement**

Ken McCraw is doing an outstanding job and has some projects that he will be implementing in the future. Remember this position is in addition to the regular deputies that still cover our area. Ken is available to attend your organization's meetings.

#### **Street Lighting**

The street lights are up at Highway 280 at Schoolhouse Road and Highway 191 at Banner Farm Road. In the near future we will be looking at the possible placement of additional lights.

#### **Water Agreement**

As of now, we have no idea what will happen when the Regional Water Agreement expires on July 1. Since Mills River is not a party to this agreement, we are watching it carefully from the sidelines.

#### **Land Use Study**

Our land use study is complete and was presented to the Council. Right now the Council is reviewing the recommendations that they have made and will put it on a meeting agenda in the near future to discuss the study in depth.

#### **Mills River Sewer Line**

Word from the County Engineer, Gary Tweed, is that the main line is well underway and should be completed by August of 2005. The other projects, Mills River School line and the Food Lion line, are out for bids and are expected to be finished around the end of January, 2006.

### **Committee Spotlight**

This issue looks at the Agricultural Advisory Committee. This Committee serves a necessary function as it represents the agricultural community. It makes recommendations to other committees and to the Town Council. Some of its members are members of the County's Agri Committee. It is common knowledge that this Council wishes to protect this important part of Mills River's heritage. In fact, our very first ordinance was to protect agriculture and not to hinder their operations in any way. The Committee has nine members and meets on the 3rd Monday of every month. Darryl Fullam is the Chairman.

### **Happy Birthday Mills River!!!**

The Town celebrated its 2nd birthday on June 24th in the Town Hall parking lot with the Mills River Fire & Rescue, the Sheriffs Deputy, Council Members, and approximately 400 residents and local merchants attending. Hotdogs, soda, chips, and a birthday cake were donated by area business owners, along with monetary contributions to pay for the banners, advertising, and equipment rentals.

"We would like to thank the towns' people who really came together and offered their services to make Mills River such a wonderful community to live and work in", said Jolene Austin of Edward Jones Investments, who organized the event.

Enjoying the birthday celebration on June 24th held in the Town Hall parking lot. The celebration was sponsored by Mills River businesses.



**Edward Jones**<sup>®</sup>

**Jolene J. Austin**  
Investment Representative

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**Henderson County Sheriffs Department  
Mills River Division  
by Corporal Ken McCraw**

This is just a quick note to say hello, and thank everyone in Mills River for making my new job assignment an easy transition. The friendliness of this community is wonderful. In the near future I hope to have the opportunity to meet each and every one of you.

Some of the new programs you will see in Mills River are increased neighborhood and business patrols and the use of our speed limit radar trailer. Please contact me through the Sheriffs office if your homeowners association, business, or community group would like to schedule me to speak on one of the many programs we offer.

To contact me for non-emergency matters, please call 697-4911. To contact our department for emergencies, please call 911. Please do not call the Town Hall for law enforcement matters. You still need to call the Sheriffs Department and they will dispatch the unit on duty.

Also, remember that school is out, so watch out for the kids playing as you travel.

**Henderson County  
Sheriffs Department  
Contacts**



**For Emergencies: 911  
Non-Emergencies: 697-4911**

**Financial Corner**

The Council approved a 1 cent tax rate based on \$100.00 valuation for FY 2005-2006. This elated to about \$60,000 to the Town. In addition to the 1 cent, the Town also collects 6.5 cents for the Mills River Fire Department. As always, our FY 2005-2006 budget is available at the Town Hall for your review.

**The Town of Mills River  
PO Box 189  
Boylston Highway  
Horse Shoe NC 28742**