



NEWSLETTER

Fall 2008
Volume 5, Issue 3

News from the Mayor

Roger Snyder

Birthday Party

This past June the Town celebrated its 5th birthday. Lots of people came out and enjoyed the occasion. Also, we enjoyed visiting with people that we haven't seen for a long time. Many thanks to the sponsors that participated and supported this event. No tax money was used for this celebration.

Boylston Creek

North Carolina will be holding a Public Hearing concerning the re-classification of a portion of Boylston Creek and its tributaries. I have no idea what additional restrictions, if any, will be added to the ones already in place for development and agriculture. The public hearing will be October 9, 2008, starting at 1:00 PM, at the Mills River Community Building on Schoolhouse Road. It is very important that we all turn out for this meeting.

Tax Rate

In June, the Council approved a 1 cent tax rate for the FY 2008-2009. We have maintained the same rate since our incorporation in 2003. The Staff and Council are very proud to be able to "hold" the line on taxes.

Hooper Property

The Town purchased this 50+ acre tract of land around January of 2008. It is our desire to build a Town Hall and Library on this property. Both of these facilities will be under one roof. The Council has authorized the staff to put out grading bids and we are working with a local architect to design a building that fits our present and future needs. We also have a "Parks and Recreation Development Advisory Committee" researching what would best be suited to go on the property. Public comment is very important.

Mills River Fire Department

The Fire Department also kept their tax rate (6.5 cents) the same as last year. Congratulations to them for opening Station 3 (Boylston Station) and Station 4 (located on North Mills River Road).

And as always, if we can be of assistance, please feel free to contact the Staff or the Council.



THE TOWN OF MILLS RIVER

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info@millsriver.org
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Mayor Pro Tem: Lois Pryor
Councilman: Wayne Carland
Councilman: Shanon Gonce

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HISTORY CORNER

by Jim Brittain



When I was a teenager, older residents of the Mills River Valley still talked about the great log drive of 1895 when temporary dams on the headwaters released impounded water in an ill-conceived attempt to float logs

from Big Creek down Mills River to the French Broad. The project which caused an ecological disaster was part of an effort to make a quick profit from George W. Vanderbilt's investment in forest lands.

Actually, much of Vanderbilt's recently acquired land in Pisgah Forest contained little marketable timber, having been used previously as crop land or free range for livestock. However, the Big Creek watershed on the headwaters of North Mills River had remained uninhabited. It still contained a superb stand of old-growth hardwoods including tulip poplars, which were more suitable for floating than more dense oaks. These trees attracted the attention of Gifford Pinchot, a professionally trained forester, hired by Vanderbilt. Pinchot had been educated to consider mature trees much like a crop of corn to be harvested and replanted to produce another harvest after a suitable interval. He assured his employer that the forest should yield an annual dividend of at least four per cent on the investment. Logging Big Creek seemed a good way to confirm his promise.

A problem which Pinchot faced once he decided to harvest logs on Big Creek was how best to get them to market. He decided to employ a technique similar to a method used in the Adirondacks in New York and float logs down the river to a sawmill near Asheville. From there, lumber could be shipped over existing railroads. However, Mills River was not ideal for floating big logs especially in the lower valley with its low banks and river bottom land which tended to flood during high water. Pinchot's solution was to build so-called "splash dams" to impound water which would be released to enhance the natural flow and carry the logs.

A splash dam was built at a site on Big Creek upstream from its confluence with Fletcher Creek using hemlock logs dragged to the site by oxen. A 22 foot high crib dam was built using log cribs filled with stone and secured with wrought-iron spikes so that the dam would be able to withstand force from impounded water. An old photograph of the dam shows that it had a water gate in the center to release the flood. Although, there were no big tulip poplars on Fletcher Creek, a second splash dam was built there to store water to augment the water to be released at the Big Creek dam. Pinchot left to take a job with the federal government before the splash dams were used. His successor as Vanderbilt's forester, Carl A. Schenck, was not enthusiastic about Pinchot's plan. However, Vanderbilt gave orders for the project to be continued since a bandsaw had already been installed to saw the logs anticipated from Big Creek.

Logging operations were labor-intensive. Work crews equipped with axes, long crosscut saws, and other equipment felled the tulip poplars, removed limbs, and cut them into logs up to 17 feet in length. Teamsters used oxen to drag

the logs from where they were cut to a holding area near the dam. The crews stayed in work camps where there were cooks and men hired to sharpen saws and repair tools and equipment. Photographs, included in a book authored by Carl Schenck, depict sawyers at work, logs awaiting the splash, and two teamsters with 6 oxen dragging a poplar log. Each log was marked with Vanderbilt's initials so that they could be identified if stranded during the log drive. An effort was made to clear obstacles from the creek bed and construct barricades to confine the flood where the banks were low. Several men with experience on river log drives elsewhere were brought to Big Creek to manage the drive.

Accounts of the episode seem to agree that the log drive from Big Creek down Mills River constituted a man-made disaster. Valley residents recalled that sounds of the drive "could be heard for miles." Fields along the river were underwater for days "while bridges, foot logs, and fords were washed away." Much of the vegetation on banks was destroyed and "all fish disappeared from the stream for many years." Schenck himself wrote that "farmers along the river were furious, and my crews were forbidden to enter upon their premises, where many logs were stranded and scattered." He expressed regret that "the primeval beauty of Big Creek had been destroyed." He admitted that both he and Pinchot deserved "censure" for having planned the log drive. In addition to the damage done on Big Creek and to the Mills River community, many of the logs which did make it to the French Broad River were lost when a boom designed to capture them at the sawmill gave way.

The location of the splash dams on Big Creek and Fletcher Creek was first pointed out to me by a neighbor, George W. Mullinax (1880-1968), during a hike about a half century after the great log drive. He remembered having carried produce to the work camps on Big Creek when he was a teenager. At the time of our hike, there still was a large pool filled with trout just downstream from the Fletcher Creek splash dam. One could still observe some of the hemlock logs and iron spikes used to make the dam. I have revisited the splash dam sites several times since. The remains have suffered further deterioration from periodic natural floods. Most of those who now pass near the sites on horses or bicycles are unaware of the splash dams and their history. Although no longer the primeval forest that it was before the coming of Vanderbilt loggers more than a century ago, the Big Creek valley is still the largest road-free watershed in Henderson County. Many of us would prefer that the area be kept "roadless" and that the descendants of the giant poplar trees floated away in 1895 continue to grow undisturbed.

Thinking of Buying or Refinancing
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www.northcarolinamortgage.com

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Locally Owned & Operated, with 25+ Yrs. Exp.

(All programs are subject to credit approval)

RECIPE CORNER



Baked Okra

by Viola Sitton

1 pound fresh okra
 1/4 cup egg substitute
 1/4 cup nonfat buttermilk
 2/3 cup cornmeal
 1/3 cup all purpose flour
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
 vegetable cooking spray

Remove tips and ends; cut okra crosswise in 1/2 inch slices.

Combine egg, buttermilk, stir in okra and let stand 10 minutes)

Combine cornmeal mix in ziplock or just shake over okra with buttermilk, season with salt. (I add Cajun spice because I like more seasoning.)

Bake in 15 x 10 pan with either oil or cooking spray in the bottom. Place okra in pan in a single layer. Bake 450° for 8 minutes; stir well and spray with cooking spray and brown under broiler.

(I usually just add canola to bottom of pan to keep from sticking and bake at 380° - 400° until I think it is brown enough then flip it over. But try your preference.)

(114 calories per 1/2 cup serving - worth every bite!)



Post Office Survey

The Survey included with your 2008 Mills River Property Tax Notices contains information important to the community's effort to obtain a Mills River Post Office.

Please return to the Town Hall
 by October 31, 2008.

MEETING/OTHER DATES

Oct 7	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Oct 8	Finance Committee	7:00 PM
Oct 9	Town Council	7:00 PM
Oct 9	Division of Water Quality Public Hearing – Boylston Creek Mills River Community Ctr.	1:00 PM
Oct 14	Board of Adjustment	7:00 PM
Oct 20	Agricultural Advisory	7:00 PM
Oct 21	Planning Board	7:00 PM
Oct 23	Town Council	7:00 PM
Oct 28	Parks and Recreation	7:00 PM

Nov 2 Daylight Savings Time

Nov 4 Election Day - VOTE

Nov 11	Veterans Day	Town Hall Closed
Nov 12	Finance Committee	7:00 PM
Nov 13	Town Council	7:00 PM
Nov 17	Agricultural Advisory	7:00 PM
Nov 18	Planning Board	7:00 PM
Nov 23	Parks and Recreation	7:00 PM
Nov 27	Town Council	7:00 PM
Nov 27-28	Thanksgiving	Town Hall Closed

Dec 2	Planning Board	7:00 PM
Dec 9	Board of Adjustment	7:00 PM
Dec 10	Finance Committee	7:00 PM
Dec 11	Town Council	7:00 PM
Dec 15	Agricultural Advisory	7:00 PM
Dec 16	Planning Board	7:00 PM
Dec 23	Parks and Recreation	7:00 PM
Dec 25	Town Council	7:00 PM
Dec 24, 25, 26	Christmas	Town Hall Closed

Jan 1	News Year Day	Town Hall Closed
Jan 6	Planning Board	7:00 PM
Jan 8	Town Council	7:00 PM
Jan 14	Finance Committee	7:00 PM
Jan 19	Agricultural Advisory	7:00 PM
Jan 19	Martin Luther King	Town Hall Closed
Jan 20	Planning Board	7:00 PM
Jan 22	Town Council	7:00 PM
Jan 27	Parks and Recreation	7:00 PM

Jollene J. Austin
 Financial Advisor

Edward Jones
 MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



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LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS ADS

The Mills River Town Newsletter is printed quarterly: at the end of March, June, September, and December. 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. The committee reserves the right to refuse an ad. Both ad and payment will be returned if this occurs. Thank you for your support.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

The Town of Mills River newsletter is published and distributed quarterly. Articles submitted may be edited for brevity. Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each of the following months: March, June, September, and December. Submit articles in writing to:

Paula DeLorenzo
9 White Birch Drive
Mills River, NC 28759

or by email to p828@mchsi.com. Articles can also be dropped off at the Mills River Town Hall. If you need assistance, have questions, or need more information, feel free to call Paula at (828) 890-8131 or email.

FRIENDS OF THE MILLS RIVER LIBRARY

by Lois Pryor

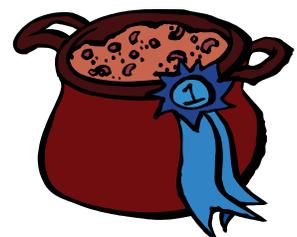
The August 23rd Ice Cream Social and Raffle to benefit the Mills River Public Library was a great success thanks to all who bought raffle tickets and came to enjoy the ice cream and fellowship.

The Friends of the Mills River Library raised \$1,383.00 after expenses.



The Friends of the Mills River Library will sponsor a Chili and Salad Supper and Raffle on November 1, 2008 at the Mills River Community Center on Schoolhouse Road. All proceeds will benefit the Mills River Branch Library. Raffle prizes include a University of North Carolina basketball autographed by Coach Roy Williams, two tickets to a University of North Carolina basketball game, and autographed University of North Carolina sportswear. Raffle tickets are on sale now.

Contact any Friends of the Mills River Library Board member, or stop by the Library or Town Hall.



YOUR FAMILY - THE HENDERSON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY - AND YOUR MILLS RIVER BRANCH LIBRARY

4683 Boylston Highway
Mills River, North Carolina 28759
828-890-1850
by Roz Ledford

With a branch of the Henderson County Library right in Mills River's town limits, there are so many reasons that your entire family should belong and utilize this marvelous resource so close to home.



A library card can give residents access to free online databases and materials to research information on everything from health to vacation destinations to car repair. In addition, it can help make life more fun, with free access to music, DVDs, the Internet and more.

Libraries offer books, magazines, audio books, DVDs, computers, software and other multimedia materials. Most can be borrowed for home use simply by showing a library card. Librarians and volunteers can help with recommendations on locating materials suitable for various ages and interests.

A library card can give children access to free homework help, materials to research their papers or information for their next book report. A library card can also help make life after school more interesting. Preschool story times expose young children to the joy of reading. Summer reading programs keep children reading during school vacation and have been shown to be the most important factor in avoiding a decrease in reading skills during the school year.

Library cards are for the entire family to enjoy. According to a recent household survey by the American Library Association, 44 percent of parents report that they bring their children to the library because it gives them something to do together. No matter how crammed the purse, wallet or the family schedule is, there's always room for the smartest card of all – a library card!

Following are a few ways the American Library Association suggests that you can use your library card:

Look up health info * Research job opportunities * Find a list of childcare centers in the area * Learn about candidates running for office * Get wireless computer access * Research a term paper * Find a new recipe * Trace your family history * Take a computer class * Learn about home improvement and get decorating tips * Pick up tax forms * Enroll your child in a summer reading program * Find the latest mystery novel * Research the purchase of a new/used car*

GET TO KNOW...Corporal Ken McCraw

by Paula DeLorenzo

Corporal Ken McCraw of the Henderson County Sheriff's office is a native of Henderson County. A graduate of Hendersonville High School and UNC at Wilmington, Corporal McCraw has a Bachelor's degree in Sociology.

Directly out of school, Corporal McCraw went right into basic law enforcement training at Cape Fear Community College in Wilmington. After working a couple years for the Henderson County Sheriff's Department, Corporal McCraw then worked for ten years in the NC Probation and Parole Department in Henderson County.

Having returned to work for the Henderson County Sheriff's Department in 2000, Corporal McCraw started to work in Mills River in 2005. Although Ken is still employed by the Henderson County Sheriff's Department, the Town of Mills River contracted with Henderson County to have a full time deputy working within its town limits. This position supplements the other deputies working in this area of the County.



What does Corporal McCraw do you may ask...better to ask what he doesn't do!

The Corporal's job includes general patrol, answering calls for service, and community oriented policing of neighborhoods, schools and businesses. Although patrol is limited to the city limits, this is a time consuming job due to Mills River's large geographic size and its mix of residential, business, agriculture, industrial and park lands.

Mills River continues to grow at a fast pace. Corporal McCraw reports that drug related crimes are the most prevalent crimes, similar to Henderson County. Corporal McCraw is a former member of the SWAT Team (Special Weapons and Tactics) and is to be commended on his dedication to duty.

**To contact the Sheriff's Department call:
697-4911 for non-emergencies
911 for emergencies.**

MILLS RIVER VOLUNTEER FIRE & RESCUE NEWS

by Rick Livingston – Fire Chief



As we approach the last quarter of what has been the busiest year in Mills River Fire & Rescue Department history, it's time to reflect back on some major accomplishments during the past nine months. We have completed construction and placed apparatus in two new substations in our fire district. The first station was completed in March and is located on Boylston Highway at Forge Valley Drive. This station is named Mills River Volunteer Fire & Rescue Station 3. The second station was completed in September and is located on North Mills

River Road between the two entrances to River Loop Road. This station is named the Mills River Volunteer Fire & Rescue George Mullinax Station. Mr. Mullinax was the grandfather of Mrs. Alice Krebs, who graciously donated the property for this station.

No paid full-time personnel will be staffing these substations, probably for several years, as volunteers will be handling these operations. However, these stations were constructed with living quarters, knowing that at some point in future years, as growth occurs, paid personnel will need to be stationed at each location. It is also important to note that these stations were completed and equipped with apparatus without any increase in your fire tax rate, which continues to be the lowest in the area.

You might be wondering why these two stations were built within a year of each other. The answer to this question is two-fold. First, and most importantly, these stations were built to better serve the fast growing areas where these stations are located. Our response time to the residents of these areas will be greatly reduced by having apparatus stationed at these locations. Secondly, the N.C. Department of Insurance determined that there was a need for these stations in order to maintain our insurance rating. This rating determines how much you must pay for fire insurance coverage. Mills River Fire & Rescue went through a rating inspection survey on September 8, 9 and 10 and these new stations were of utmost importance during this inspection process. We will not know the results of this inspection survey for three to four months; however, we feel very positive concerning this process and hope that our rating will be improved even further.

We have already hosted an official opening and dedication for Station 3 and will be doing the same for the George Mullinax Station at some point in the next several months depending on the schedule of Mrs. Krebs and her family. We invite each of you to join us for this event as the date and time will be announced later.

In closing, I would like to provide a word of warning concerning the upcoming winter months. We all know that the cost of heating fuels is at an all time high. For this reason, many alternative and sometimes unsafe, sources of heating will be used. National predictions are for structure fires to be at an all time high during the coming months, ultimately due to the high cost of heating. Let's all work to make sure that Mills River doesn't contribute to these projected statistics. If you must use alternative or portable heating appliances, make sure that they are U.L. approved, that they are safely away from combustibles, and that you do not overload extension cords if one is needed. Last, but not least, please support our upcoming annual portrait fund raising project.

Have a great fall season and please call if you need advice or assistance

Our main station number is 891-7959

Always call 911 for emergencies

PARKS COMMITTEE APPOINTED

by Pat Christie

In December of 2007, the Town purchased approximately 50 acres off of Hooper Lane with the idea of developing a park at that location. The Town Council has since also decided to construct a new building that will house the Town Hall and the Mills River Branch Library on the site. A public input session was held in April of 2008 in order to start planning for the park by giving Mills River citizens an opportunity to tell the town what types of facilities they would like to see in the Town's first park.

The next step taken by the Town Council was the formation of an advisory committee to formulate a plan for the park. The Mills River Parks and Recreation Development Advisory Committee was appointed by the Town Council in June of 2008 with the goal of recommending a master plan to Council for the park development on the Hooper property site. The committee has met and reviewed the results of the public input session, had a guest speaker come and discuss grant opportunities that are available, and visited parks in the area to ascertain what facilities other entities have and learn about the pros and cons of different layouts as far as construction and maintenance are concerned.

The committee meets on the 4th Tuesday of every month at the Town Hall at 7:00pm. There is an opportunity for public input at the meetings and of course, the public is always welcome to attend and see what the committee is doing.

MILLS RIVER FIFTH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
June 2008





**HENDERSON COUNTY SHERIFFS DEPARTMENT
MILLS RIVER DIVISION**
by Corporal Ken C. McCraw

Have a safe and happy fall!!

Enjoy the beauty of Mills River as the leaves change!

Remember if you need law enforcement services:

For Emergencies: 911

Non-Emergencies: 697-4911

NC Highway Patrol 693-4141

**NC Wildlife Resources Commission
1-800- 662-7137 (to report wildlife violations)**

**The Town of Mills River
5046 Boylston Highway
Suite 3
Mills River NC 28759**