There is no better time to enjoy your Mills River Park than in the summer! The picnic shed, the tennis court, and the kid’s playground invite you to enjoy them this warm weather season. Bring your dog and enjoy the dog park; experience healthy fresh air and the natural beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountain skyline as you walk our enhanced walking trail.

NEW this summer is the fishing pier at the back of the park which opens directly onto Mills River. Fishermen are reeling in rainbow trout every week. Just getting under construction as you read this and opening soon, is the nearby kayak and canoe launch. With an easy entrance at the back of the park off Hooper Lane, the launch and pier will offer ample parking close to the river and is handicapped accessible. This launch into Mills River will give canoe and kayak enthusiasts’ access into the French Broad River just a few miles downstream.

Town Council is pleased to announce that with the Town’s budget for the new fiscal year starting July 1, the budget is balanced with no increase in tax rates for the Town. Your fire district tax however, to support Mills River Fire and Rescue, will be increasing to 9 cents per $100 valuation. That, plus the steady 2.24 cents to operate the Town, means the total Mills River property tax rate for both the Town and for the fire department is still the best bargain in the county at 11.24 cents per $100 valuation.

One major capital improvement planned by Town Council & staff is the addition of badly needed parking. A busy and successful library plus all the activity in the park has our existing spaces full on many occasions. You’ll soon see construction getting underway that will be conveniently close to the library, playground, walking trails, and Town Hall.

By the way, you’ll notice some attractive and colorful

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**Newsletter Editors**

**Articles:** Patty Brown

**Layout:** Kathie Doole
improvements to the Town’s web site. Check them out at millsriver.org. And the best locally grown food and craft products are available every Saturday morning at the Mills River Farm Market in the G & B Energy parking lot!

We encourage you to attend our committee and Council meetings, share any thoughts or comments with us anytime, visit with us often and remember… Town Hall, your Council, and Town staff are here to serve YOU! Have an enjoyable, healthy, and safe summer!

Gratefully and respectfully,
Mayor Larry Freeman

FIFTH GRADE CITIZENSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY

Mayor Larry Freeman and 5th grader Essence Copeland, recipient of the Citizenship Award at Glenn C. Marlow Elementary School

Town Manager Jeff Wells presenting 5th grader Ella Neve her Citizenship Award at Mills River Elementary School

Second Annual Mills River Sweet Corn Festival
Saturday, Aug. 15, 2015
5pm – 9 pm
North River Farm
3333 N. Mills River Rd.
Mills River, NC
Children $5  Adults $10

MUSIC! GAMES! FUN! FOOD! FELLOWSHIP!
The boundary of the Pisgah National Forest was only a couple of miles from our home on North Mills River where I grew up. I took advantage of the proximity by taking frequent hikes and bicycle excursions in the national forest.

On one hike in the early 1940s, my father walked with me to the location of a farm once owned by his mother's family, the Rickmans. My great-grandfather, John B. Rickman (1821-1892), had acquired land for his home place in the 1860s and 1870s. It was located near the confluence of Rocky Fork and North Mills River. The Rickman farm was acquired by George W. Vanderbilt before it became part of the national forest in 1916. It served as the site for a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp during 1933-1935. The CCC recruits worked on a road extending from Mills River to the Pink Beds via Yellow Gap. They also constructed a number of fire towers, trails, and shelters. After the CCC Camp closed, the site was converted into the North Mills River Recreation Area.

My father and I also walked over a ridge between Rocky Fork and North Mills River to the former home of John Ingram. The house where he had lived no longer existed, but we found a chimney at the site. Ingram had sold a portion of his farm to George Vanderbilt for two dollars an acre in May 1900 and the remainder for five dollars an acre in December 1900.

On another occasion around 1947, my father and I were joined by an older neighbor, George Mullinax (1880-1968), on a hike to Fletcher Creek and Big Creek. A short distance up Fletcher Creek from the Hendersonville water intake dam, we stopped to examine the physical remains of an old "splash dam" that had been used during an attempt to float large poplar logs to a sawmill near Asheville in 1895. Some of the iron spikes and timber used to build the temporary dam were still visible. A large pool below the site of the dam was well populated with trout. George recounted some of his experiences when he carried farm produce to the logging camp on Big Creek.

From the splash dam, we continued up Fletcher Creek to its confluence with Spencer Branch. On the ridge above Spencer Branch, we stopped at a solitary grave marker for R.W. Duckett (1817-1869). The Duckett family had lived in the vicinity in the mid 19th century. The property was acquired from Duckett's heirs by Vanderbilt in 1900. We continued our walk up Middle Creek and crested over a ridge to Horse Cove on the headwaters of Big Creek. We found the remains of the Big Creep splash dam, also used in the 1895 log drive. The water released from both dams had been timed so that it would arrive at the junction of Big Creek and Fletcher Creek simultaneously.

On later hikes on the headwaters of Mills River, I recall seeing numerous artifacts dating from the logging operations of the Carr Lumber Company in the 1930s. One example was an old "drag pan" that probably had been used to grade the railroad bed on Fletcher Creek. It led me to give the name "Drag Pan Creek" to a nearby small tributary of Fletcher Creek. Another example was an abandoned flat car one used to haul logs on the narrow gauge railroad up Big Creek. I adopted the name "Flat Car Creek" for a nearby tributary that featured an attractive waterfall.
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE TAX COLLECTOR

As you may already know, the Mills River Town Council has voted to keep the Town tax rate at $0.0224 per $100 of valuation for tax year 2015. Town taxes are collected separately from County taxes; the Town also collects tax for Mills River Volunteer Fire Department. The Fire Department was forced by the necessity of upgrading equipment to raise their rate to $0.09, resulting in a combined tax rate of $0.1124 per $100 of valuation.

September brings tax notices once again. Because the Town gets its tax data from Henderson County, the Town’s bills generally get mailed a few weeks after the County’s bills are received. Legally, tax liens attach to property on January 1, but since the tax rate isn’t set by governing bodies until the end of June, notices can’t be sent until late summer. When towns like Mills River receive their owner, address, and assessed value information from counties, this further delays tax notices. We try to get the notices out as close to September 1, the official due date, as possible. Taxes may be paid any time up to the delinquency date without penalty. This year the delinquency date is January 6, 2016. The date can vary, depending upon whether January 6 falls on a Saturday or Sunday.

Pre-payments (both total and partial) are always accepted – there are citizens who pay a set amount a month every month of the year. Partial payments are also accepted. If the tax isn’t paid in full by the delinquency date, interest will accrue on the unpaid balance. We don’t have the software to post taxes online, but we’re always happy to answer any tax questions over the phone - that’s part of what we’re here for. The assessed value of your property in Mills River is the same as the value in Henderson County. Their tax information is on their website, so if your question has to do with value it may be worth checking it online with Henderson County and calculating it based on the rate in the first paragraph.

A note about tax notices – governments are not legally obligated to furnish property owners a tax notice. It’s the responsibility of the citizen to know that they owe property tax. Just like you know you have to file a state and federal income tax return, you should know what property you owe taxes for. We do our best to get a notice to the proper place, but if we don’t, the tax obligation still exists.

If you think you might have problems paying your taxes on time, please call the office and set up a payment plan. The earlier you do this, the more options we have to help. If we don’t know you’re in financial distress, we are likely to use “enforced collection” measures after January 6 – garnishment of wages or rent, attachment of bank accounts or investment accounts or seizure and sale of your property. We’re happy to work with citizens who need some extra time to pay, but if we don’t hear from you, we don’t know you’re having monetary issues.
MILLS RIVER LIBRARY EVENTS

Regular Programs:
- Storytime - Monday at 10 am
- Knitting Group – Tuesday at 1:30 pm
- LEGO Club – 1st Tuesday of every month 4 pm
- Book Club – 2nd Thursday of every month 10 am
- Yoga Series – check with library for schedule

Special Programs:
- Summer Reading Program – June 15 to August 15th

July Events
- Park Rangers are Superheroes – 7/9 11:30 am
- Sally the Therapy Dog - 7/10, 7/24, 8/7 11 am *registration required*
- Blast off Into Physics – 7/14 10:30 am
- Super Heroes of Science – 7/15 11 am *registration is required*
- Farmer Jason – 7/17 11 am
- Touch a Truck – 7/25 10-1 pm
- Teen Cartooning – 7/29 11 am *registration required*

August Events
- Search and Rescue Dogs – 8/4 10 am
- Science Shenanigans – 8/11 10:30 am
- Blue Moon Puppets – 8/12 11 am

For more information about programs please call or stop by the library 890-1850

PARK UPDATE SUMMER 2015

School is out and summer is finally here! The park is full of activity and is especially busy in the mornings and evenings when it is a little cooler. We hope everyone will come out and enjoy all that the park has to offer.

As the Mayor mentioned in his article, a handicapped accessible fishing pier (platform) has been constructed on the river at the north end of our park. Construction is underway for a step down canoe/kayak launch in the same general location. A gravel parking lot is also being installed in the vicinity of both of these facilities. Just in time to beat the heat! Access to this parking lot will be directly off of Hooper Lane adjacent to the bridge. Please be mindful of the cars and trucks that come through there when entering and exiting that parking area.

On May 15th, 2015, there was a ribbon cutting event held to officially open the Born Learning Trail sponsored by United Way. This trail is the first of its kind in Henderson County and we are proud to have it as an added feature of our park.

Upcoming events include the Library's annual Touch-a-Truck event on July 25th, a Challenger Sports' kid’s soccer camp to be held the week of July 27th -July 31st (we have brochures at Town Hall) and a Mills River 5K to be held on August 30th.

Additionally, Mills River is once again participating in the America In Bloom national awards program. We are joining Hendersonville, Flat Rock and Laurel Park in representing Henderson County in areas such as floral displays, landscaping, environmental efforts and heritage preservation. We want to thank Bed and Breakfast on Tiffany Hill, Van Wingerden International, the NCSU Mountain Horticultural Crops Research and Extension Center, and Sierra Nevada for allowing the judges to visit your facilities.

The Picnic Shelter may be reserved in four hour increments and the weekends are filling up. Forms, rules, and requirements for making a reservation are on the Town’s website, as well as a calendar showing availability. If you think you may want to reserve the shelter, please check the calendar and call early as reservations are taken on a first come, first served basis. Please go to www.millsriver.org and click on the Park button or call Town Hall at 828-890-2901 for information.
SUMMER AND OUTDOOR SAFETY

Jeannie Moore-Payne, Mills River Fire and Rescue

Before heading outside to garden or do other yard work, remember accidents can, and do, occur at home. More than 173,000 injuries were associated with yard and garden equipment in 2005, according to the National Safety Council. But by taking some simple precautions, you can reduce the chance of being injured while fixing up your yard.

Summer fun and outdoors can be great, but to enjoy our yard, we must get it ready. Most of us do the home projects on our own. Remember to be safe and follow the safety tips below:

- Store pesticides and herbicides on high shelves or inside locked cabinets, out of the reach of children.
- Garden tools such as rakes, spades, forks, pruning clippers, files and metal plant stakes should not be left lying around when not in use.
- Check over all the equipment you plan to use to ensure it is in good condition and that any safety devices are in place and work correctly.
- **Never allow children** to operate power lawn and garden equipment. Teenagers may operate the machinery if they possess adequate strength and maturity, and only under adult supervision.
- If you use chemicals in the yard, keep children away from the area.
- Make sure any equipment is stored properly.
- Ladders should be placed on their sides, and rakes should lie with the tines down.
- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Clothing should be as close-fitting as possible to avoid being caught in moving parts of equipment.
- Protect your eyes with goggles or glasses.
- Protect your hearing when using motor-driven/loud decibel equipment.
- Wear sturdy shoes with slip-resistant rubber soles.
- Wear gloves when changing, sharpening or cleaning blades.
- When using a riding mower or lawn tractor, clear the yard of people before mowing, and stop the mower if any person enters the area.
- When working on the power lawn mower, be sure the blade and all moving parts have stopped.
- If the chipper/shredder becomes jammed, turn it off, disconnect the spark plug and wait for all moving parts to come to a complete stop before attempting to unclog the machine.
- Never start cutting with a chain saw until you have a clear work area, secure footing, and a planned retreat path from a falling tree.
- Never operate a chain saw that is damaged, improperly adjusted, or is not completely and securely assembled. Be sure the saw’s chain stops moving when the throttle-control trigger is released.
- Keep people and pets at least 50 feet away when operating a Trim N Edge trimmer.
- When using the trimmer as a lawn edger, wear safety protection. Do not use an edger on graveled surfaces.
- Use trimmer only for weeds and grass.

Information and Statistics from
National Safety Council and
Heart of America Metro Chiefs Council
RECIPE CORNER

Chicken Kebabs with Creamy Pesto

- 2 teaspoons grated lemon rind
- 4 teaspoons fresh lemon juice, divided
- 2 teaspoons bottled minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 8 (1-inch) pieces yellow bell pepper
- 8 cherry tomatoes
- 1 pound skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 small red onion, cut into 8 wedges

Cooking spray
- 2 tablespoons plain low-fat yogurt
- 2 tablespoons reduced-fat sour cream
- 1 tablespoon commercial pesto

1. Preheat broiler.
2. Combine rind, 1 tablespoon juice, garlic, oil, salt, and pepper. Toss with bell pepper, tomatoes, chicken, and onion. Thread vegetables and chicken onto 4 (12-inch) skewers. Place skewers on a broiler pan coated with cooking spray. Broil 12 minutes or until chicken is done, turning occasionally. You can also put on grill.
3. Combine 1 teaspoon juice, yogurt, sour cream, and pesto. Serve sauce with kebabs.

ENJOY!

MEETING & OTHER DATES

| Jul 7 | Planning Board | 7:00 PM |
| Jul 9 | Town Council | 7:00 PM |
| Jul 16 | Finance | 7:00 PM |
| Jul 17 | Agricultural Advisory | 9:00 AM |
| Jul 23 | Town Council | 7:00 PM |
| Jul 28 | Parks and Recreation Advisory | 7:00 PM |
| Aug 4 | Planning Board | 7:00 PM |
| Aug 11 | Board of Adjustment | 7:00 PM |
| Aug 13 | Town Council | 7:00 PM |
| Aug 21 | Agricultural Advisory | 9:00 AM |
| Aug 25 | Parks and Recreation | 7:00 PM |
| Aug 27 | Town Council | 7:00 PM |
| Sep 1 | Planning Board | 7:00 PM |
| Sep 10 | Town Council | 7:00 PM |
| Sep 18 | Agricultural Advisory | 9:00 AM |
| Sep 22 | Parks and Recreation | 7:00 PM |
| Sep 24 | Town Council | 7:00 PM |
| Oct 6 | Planning Board | 7:00 PM |
| Oct 8 | Town Council | 7:00 PM |
| Oct 13 | Board of Adjustment | 7:00 PM |
| Oct 15 | Finance | 7:00 PM |
| Oct 16 | Agricultural Advisory | 9:00 AM |

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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 accepts small business ads. These ads should be business card size (preferably the card itself) and black and white. There is no guarantee of ad or print quality. The company must do business within the town limits, but not necessarily have its location in the town. 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 served basis. The payment must accompany the ad and 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 editors. The editors reserve the right to refuse an ad. Both ad and payment will be returned if this occurs. All ads must be emailed in JPEG format and MUST be business card size.

Thank you for your support.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

The Town of Mills River newsletter is published and distributed quarterly by US mail and e-mail link. A copy can also be found at www.millsriver.org. Articles submitted may be edited for brevity, content, and appropriateness. Inclusion of an article is at the editor’s discretion. Deadline for submission of articles is the 20th of each of the following months: March, June, September and December. Submit articles in writing to:

Patty Brown
Town of Mills River
124 Town Center Drive
Mills River, NC 28759

or by email to patty.brown@millsriver.org. 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 Patty at (828) 890-2901 or e-mail her at the above address.
Summer time is here again. It is a time to relax and have fun! There are some things to remember to ensure you have an enjoyable time:

- Never leave your personal property unattended while out in public for any period of time. Purses or handbags left unattended in vehicles, shopping carts, etc. make easy targets for criminals.
- Always lock your vehicle and keep your windows rolled up. Remove valuables when possible but never leave them in plain view. Lock them in the trunk or glove box until you get home.
- Always be aware of your surroundings. If something doesn’t look or feel right in a situation, leave the area and report the incident to law enforcement.
- Always make sure your residence is locked when you are away.
- Never put your travel plans on social media. Wait until you return home to post pictures of your vacation.
- Have a trusted neighbor or friend/family keep an eye on your home. Have your mail and newspaper held until you return, or have a neighbor or friend/family pick them up.

Have a safe and happy summer!

For Emergencies: 911  Non-emergencies: 828-697-4911
NC Highway Patrol: 828-693-4141

The Town of Mills River
124 Town Center Drive
Mills River NC 28759