Happy New Year!

It is the hope of all of us at Mills River Town Hall that you and those you love had a blessed Christmas season and are looking forward to a great 2017!

Town Council and staff are working closely with NCDOT on some projects that will begin to develop in this new year. One project in particular, the widening of Highway 191 from Mountain Road to the Highway 280 intersection, is in the planning and design stage now. The NCDOT anticipates public comment on the project in the fall of 2017.

The planning for a safer intersection of Highway 191 and Banner Farm Road is also underway, which hopefully will make an easier turn for big trucks and school buses, improving the overall flow of traffic.

Look for paving and other improvements this year on Hooper Lane and Broadpointe Drive.

We’re welcoming some great new additions to our business and industrial community as well this year. Work is nearing completion on the new Bojangles on NC Highway 280. Work is beginning on the new nursing home off NC Highway 191. GF Linamar will complete the construction of their facility in the summer of 2017. Norafin will start construction this year on their facility off of Schoolhouse Road. Silver Ridge will open its facility in January 2017 and promises to be the good neighbor and exceptional re-hab center we are hoping it will become. Welcome to ALL who have chosen to call this “fertile crescent” known as Mills River home!

You are seeing more in the way of a protective and responsive presence in Mills River from the Sheriff’s Department, as our contract with the county moves into full implementation.

A few reminders in this cold weather season: Check on the elderly and those who live alone. Be sure your pets and outdoor animals are fed, watered, and protected from the bitter cold. And, most of all...let’s be thankful to Almighty God every day that our beautiful community was spared from the horrible wildfires that did so much devastation all around us this fall. Let’s keep those who suffered in our hearts and prayers.

Again, Happy New Year!

Sincerely and respectfully,
Mayor Larry Freeman
In a poem titled “Mending Walls”, Robert Frost featured a conversation with a neighbor about a stone fence on their property boundary. In response to several comments about the need for such a wall, the neighbor’s repeated response was that “good fences make good neighbors”.

I have encountered quite a few old fences during walks in the Mills River watershed and elsewhere. Many older fences are now discernable only by the survival of old posts or short lengths of rusty barbed wire sticking out of a tree. Such fence remains do sometimes serve to help a property owner locate a boundary in the absence of a new survey. A few years ago, I found such evidence in the form of fence remains along the West boundary of our family farm on North Mills River. Rather surprisingly, the fence was located on a boundary originally established by a survey carried out in 1789.

Early settlers in the mountains used wooden rail fences. These were quite labor intensive and extravagant in the use of wood. This was understandable at a time when land was being cleared for crop land and trees were plentiful on newly established farms. These days, they are mainly seen at historic sites or perhaps for nostalgic decoration rather than to contain livestock.

Barbed wire fences were first introduced in the less wooded territories west of the mountains where it was not feasible to use rail fences. They only require fence posts and strands of wire similar to telegraph or telephone wire. Pointed barbs, short pieces of wire with sharp points, were wrapped on the main wires at intervals. These fences could be constructed fairly quickly using post hole diggers, wire stretchers, and staples.

My forebears at Mills River expended considerable effort to building and maintaining barbed wire fences to deter livestock from straying into a cornfield or onto a neighbor’s land. As a teenager, I helped my father construct some new fences or repair existing ones. The most time-consuming task was locating suitable trees, felling them, and splitting sections into posts. Once chestnut trees were no longer an option, locusts became the optimum choice for posts. Barbed wire fences seem now to be a vanishing vestige of an era of small farms where livestock commonly were pastured close to cultivated fields. Still, even yet, a good fence may prevent grazing animals from escaping to a public road or gaining access to a river or a creek. Modern fences often are electrified or constructed with treated posts and high tension strands of wire.

Those with pet dogs will sometimes install a so called “invisible fence” with embedded wires and collars that produce a shock if the dog tries to escape from their lot. It also has become common for housing developments to be built as “gated communities” with fences around the periphery. The general lack of fences around individual lots to define property lines may sometimes lead to misunderstandings over border plants or shrubs or trees where the exact boundary is uncertain. Also, a neighbor may not have a good idea as to where his mowing should end. Perhaps, a more appropriate dictum these days would be that “good surveys make good neighbors”.

MILLS RIVER RECREATION FOUNDATION, INC.
Cultural • Charitable • Civic • Recreational

VOLUNTEER IN 2017
Mills River Recreation Foundation, Inc. (MRRFI) is currently welcoming volunteers to assist in writing grants for the Mills River Park. Everyone is welcome to join our efforts in securing funding for future development of the Park. We also invite you to join our Board and share ideas for future fundraising. If you are interested, please contact Jallene Austin at 828-699-7575 or Lois Pryor at 828-684-8425.
GLENN C. MARLOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

Mills River Town Council declared Friday November 4th “Glenn C. Marlow Elementary School Celebration of Success Day”.

The school was recently recognized as one of the top 4% of all schools in North Carolina to achieve “A Plus” status for the 2016-17 school year.

Principal John Hart credited the entire school “family” with that success and a school-wide assembly was held Friday November 4th to celebrate the event. Mayor Larry Freeman and Town Manager Jeff Wells attended the assembly.

Mills River Mayor Larry Freeman pointed out that the man for whom the school was named back in 1999, the late county school Superintendent Glenn Marlow, would have been proud of the teachers, staff, and students for achieving “A Plus” recognition.

MILLS RIVER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mills River Fire & Rescue would like to take this opportunity to thank our generous community for all the donations, contributions, and support that were received during the wildfires. We were stunned and proud of the response to the county wildfire emergency. Thank you to Mills River and surrounding communities for always showing us support. You are greatly appreciated.

WILDFIRES: A Spreading Concern

As a Community, let’s work together to do our part to prevent wildfires in our area. By decreasing the risk and following some simple tips we can prevent wildfires in our area. Don’t let your property become fuel for the next fire!

Wildland Safety Tips from the NFPA:

- Clear off pine needles, dead leaves and anything that can burn from your rooflines, gutters, decks, porches, patios and along fence lines. Falling embers will have nothing to burn.
- Store away furniture cushions, rattan mats, potted plants, and other decorations from decks, porches and patios. These items catch embers and help ignite you home if you leave them outside.
- Wind-borne embers can get into homes easily through vents and other openings and burn the home from the inside out. Walk around your house to see what openings you can screen or temporarily seal up.
- Embers landing in mulch that touches your house, deck, or fence is a big fire-hazard. Rake out any landscaping mulch to at least 5 feet away.
- Trim back any shrubs or tree branches that come close to the house and attachments and any overhanging branches.
- Walk around your house and remove anything within 30 feet that could burn such as woodpiles, spare lumber, vehicles, and boats—anything that can act as a large fuel source.
- If ordered to evacuate, make sure all windows and doors are closed tightly, and seal up any pet doors. “Many homes are destroyed by embers entering these openings and burning the house from the inside out.”

For more tips and safety information check out www.firewise.org.

If you have further questions or would like to schedule a safety program or informational session please feel free to contact Jeannie Moore, Public Fire and Life Safety Educator III at Mills River Fire and Rescue (828) 891-7959.
PARK UPDATE - WINTER 2016

At the beginning of any new year it’s good to reflect back on the previous year while looking forward to the possibilities a new year brings. Here is an end of the year recap and some new projects that we are considering.

Last fall, volunteers for the United Way Day of Caring repainted the four concrete activity pads associated with the Born Learning Trail. For those unfamiliar, the Born Learning Trail is a series of 10 signs and activities that are posted around the front walking trail with the purpose of promoting learning in a fun and interactive way. Thanks guys!

The Park also hosted the Lion’s Club Annual Trunk or Treat on Halloween and the Sgt. Matthew Baynard Foundation Veterans’ Memorial 5K run held Veterans Day weekend. We estimated over 100 people participated in the 5K run.

We are in the process of gathering and writing this year’s profile for the annual America In Bloom tour. Henderson County did very well last year obtaining 4 out of 5 possible “blooms”. The America in Bloom committee held its first fundraising project over the Christmas holiday by sponsoring the iceless (polymer) ice rink at the Hendersonville Visitor Center.

As a result of last year’s Recreational Needs Survey and a recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, the Town Council recently decided to move forward with building a basketball court and a new picnic shelter. These proposed facilities are to be located near the parking lot north of the Town Hall. Council directed the staff to apply for a PARTF (Parks and Recreation Trust Fund) grant to assist with the funding of the construction.

An important part of the PARTF grant application process is showing public input and support for the grant proposal. This Spring we will host several opportunities for direct public input to support this current request. We will keep you informed about the dates for these drop-in sessions. We want to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting your park when we need your input for these grant opportunities. This year’s application is due May 1st, 2017. The board that makes the decision regarding who will receive funding meets in the fall, so we will keep you posted.

In addition to applying for a grant, we are also proposing to turn the field adjacent to the northern parking lot into a multi-use open field. This will require grading and seeding in the spring.

Please note: The water fountains at the restroom building have been shut down for the winter. Fountains are available in the Town Hall building during business hours.

Don‘t forget that the Picnic Shelter may be reserved up to six months in advance. A calendar may be viewed at the Town's website to confirm availability. Please go to www.millsriver.org and click on the Park button or call the Town Hall at 828-890-2901 for information.

We look forward to the continued growth of the park and thank you for your ongoing support.

Happy New Year!

MILLS RIVER’S DEDICATED DEPUTIES

Deputies from left to right: Scott Aly, Billy Brittain, Ricky Woodard
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE TAX COLLECTOR
by Aurelie Taylor

The period of time for which taxes are levied, or the period taxes for a particular year are said to "cover" is a matter that has occasionally caused confusion. Units of local government operate on a fiscal year beginning July 1 and ending June 30; property is listed for taxation each year in January. This lien attaches automatically, by operation of law, without an effort on the Collector's part. Because the lien attaches to real property as of January 1, obviously it does so not only before the tax becomes due but also before the exact amount of the tax can be known. Bills are mailed to the owner of record on January 1 in August or September, depending on how quickly I can process the assessment information sent to the Town by Henderson County.

The North Carolina Supreme Court has defined a lien as "the right to have a demand satisfied out of the property of another." This right runs against the property rather than against the owner. Thus, if a property is sold to another person, delinquent taxes are the new owner’s responsibility. Once the lien has attached to real property, its priority is not affected by transfer of title, by death, by receivership, or by bankruptcy of the property owner. When buying property, always check to see that the property taxes are paid.

The lien of the property tax against real property is superior to all other liens and rights (except certain liens for other taxes) regardless of the claimant and regardless of whether acquired before or after the lien for taxes. Furthermore, once the lien has attached to real property, its priority is not affected by transfer of title, by death, by receivership, or by bankruptcy of the property owner.

If you think you may have problems paying your tax before the due date, please let me know as soon as possible, even before the bill comes out. Some taxpayers find that it's easier to pay monthly; I'm happy to accept payments this way – payments made between January and August simply lower the balance on the bill I send in the Fall.

There are also programs available to the disabled veterans and elderly that lower their tax bills. Please contact Henderson County to apply for tax relief; they send the information to me and not only can your County tax bill be lowered, but the Town’s will be, too. Applications are taken until June 1, 2017.

If I can answer any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone at 890-2901 or by email at aurelie.taylor@millsriver.org

SIGN UP FOR NIXLE EMERGENCY ALERTS
from the
Henderson County Sheriff's Office

To Sign Up:
Text your zip code to
888777

Get FREE up-to-date emergency, public safety, & community notifications delivered by text!

Message may include information on:
School Lockdowns   Weather Alerts
Road Closures      Evacuation Notices
Missing Persons    Fraud/Scam Advisories
Suspect Descriptions    Community Events

Sheriff Charles S. McDonald
www.hendersonsheriff.org

“A Brotherhood in Pursuit of Excellence”
A look at what’s happening at the Mills River Library, January - March 2017

**Mondays:**  Family Storytime

**Tuesdays:**
- 9:00am -10:30am  Yoga
- 1:00pm -3:00pm  Knit and Crochet Group

**2nd Thursday:**  Book Club 10:30am

We will be discussing the following:
- January – “Painted Girls” by Cathy Marie Buchanan
- February – “Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet” by Jaime Ford
- March – “Dead Wake” by Erik Larson

Thanks to a generous donation from a member of the community we will be able to continue our Hands on Museum series for children grades K-2 this January through May. We have also added a series for children ages 7-11 during this period. These programs make learning fun and we very much appreciate being able to offer them to children in the community. Programs are always the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month and registration is required.

**Program Specials:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Program Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 3</td>
<td>4:00pm</td>
<td>LEGO Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 4</td>
<td>4:00pm*</td>
<td>Hands on presents CSI, K-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 18</td>
<td>4:00pm*</td>
<td>Hands on presents Build a Better World LEGOs, ages 7-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>10:00am-12:00pm*</td>
<td>Card Making with Gail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>4:00pm*</td>
<td>Hand on presents Magical Magnets, K-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 7</td>
<td>4:00pm</td>
<td>LEGO Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>4:00pm*</td>
<td>Hand on The Great Space Race LEGOs, ages 7-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>4:00pm*</td>
<td>Hands on Engineering with the Three Little Pigs, K-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>4:00pm*</td>
<td>Hands on Switch-a-Roo-Zoo LEGOs, ages 7-11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Registration is required *

Programs are being added so stay tuned and we hope to see you.

For more information, call 890-1850
WHISKEY-GLAZED SWEET POTATOES

Ingredients
- 3 pounds sweet potatoes (about 4 large)
- 1 cup pecans
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus more for preparing baking dish
- 3/4 cup agave syrup
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 cup whiskey
- 2 cups crisp apples, peeled, cored, and sliced into 1-inch pieces

Directions
Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Place the potatoes on a baking sheet and cook the potatoes whole, do not pierce. Bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Lightly squeeze the potatoes - if they are soft, they are done. Let cool.

In a small sauté pan over high heat, add the pecans and lightly toast. Add 4 tablespoons of butter, reduce the heat to medium, add the agave and spices, and allow to simmer for 4 to 5 minutes. Add the whiskey and continue to simmer for 5 minutes more.

Peel the potatoes and cut into 1/2-inch slices. Butter the bottom and sides of an 8 by 8-inch baking dish. Arrange the sweet potatoes, alternating with the apples. Pour the whiskey-pecan mixture over the top and place in the oven.

Bake for 30 minutes, basting the top with the whiskey sauce once at 15 minutes.

Remove and serve immediately.

ENJOY!
Identity theft and fraud crimes seem to increase this time of year. These crimes take on many different faces and can happen to anyone. Being a victim of this type of crime can be very disruptive to your life. Please report these crimes to Law Enforcement and to other pertinent agencies (banks, post offices, etc.). The following are a few tips to help you protect yourself.

- Do not give out personal information such as social security #’s, driver’s license information, date of birth, etc., over the phone or Internet.
- Do not send money to organizations that you are not familiar with, nor give them personal information.
- Do not send money or checks to persons or groups requiring this in order to receive a money prize or other type winnings.
- Shred or destroy bank and credit card statements, and other documents containing personal information. Also, be aware of pre-approved credit card mailings, these items should be shredded or destroyed before placing them in the trash receptacle at home or the office.

Also with winter approaching there is a chance for inclement weather. Be sure your homes and vehicles are prepared for any inclement weather. Snow and ice storms can cause power outages and almost impassable roads. Make sure you have all provisions needed for your home and vehicle in case there is any inclement weather this winter.

Have a Safe and Happy 2017!

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