FROM THE MAYOR

Happy Spring Mills River! Our Town Park is buzzing with activity as always! Our Park staff is making needed repairs, and performing spring maintenance. In addition to the usual athletics and play, you will soon see construction begin on a maintenance building next to Town Hall. We are excited for this needed addition as we look at future park projects! We are taking shelter reservations for 2019. Call the Town Hall to get your reservation in!

We will soon be embarking on the process of a new Comprehensive Plan, “Making Mills River”. This process involves community participation with surveys and feedback, so stay tuned to our website for details.

This is a Spring newsletter of change…. First, join with me in wishing our Town Manager, Jeff Wells (and his family) the best of luck on their move for his new position in Waxhaw, NC. We are very grateful for Jeff’s time and dedication to Mills River and are sad to see him and his family move on! Thank you Jeff, we will miss you! The Town Council is working with a company to assist with locating a qualified replacement. We are optimistic that we will have a new permanent Town Manager in place in the next few months. In the meantime, we welcome Interim Town Manager Mark Burrows, who will be serving during this transition process.

This will be the last Town of Mills River Newsletter. Thank you to the dedicated staff and volunteers who have contributed to, compiled, and helped publish the newsletter for our Town since 2005! For those on Facebook, we invite you to “Like” our Town of Mills River, NC Facebook page. This is the quickest way to get updates and to be engaged with us daily! I encourage you to sign up for our mailing list at www.millsriver.org. You can receive a monthly update of the happenings in our Town. You can also see the Community Calendar on the home page. Thanks to all of you who make Mills River such a wonderful community of people!

Chae Tranham Davis, Mayor
HISTORY CORNER
by Jim Brittain

Philip Sitton (1770-1843), a pioneer ironmaster and the patriarch of the Mills River Sittons, his wife, Winifred Bradley Sitton (1766-1841), and several children moved to South Mills River from Georges Creek, SC, in the late 1790s. The state of North Carolina gave him a land grant of 3000 acres as an incentive to construct and operate an iron forge. He selected a site for his first forge near the confluence of Bradley Creek and South Mills River. Although no contemporary description or drawing of his forge has been found, it is likely that it was an open-hearth type known as a "bloomy" or Catalan forge. Surviving physical evidence in the form of large pieces of iron-rich black slag has been found near the mouth of Bradley Creek.

Iron ore mined on the South face of Forge Mountain (known as "Iron Works Mountain" in the early 19th century) was transported by ox cart or wagon through Vineyard Gap to the forge. Limestone was mixed with the ore to act as "flux" to remove impurities, and charcoal produced locally from hardwood timber, served as fuel. A water-powered leather bellows forced air into the burning charcoal. The temperatures achieved in a bloomy forge ordinarily were not high enough to produce molten pig iron. Instead, a large mass of heated iron known as a "bloom" resulted which could be converted to malleable wrought-iron bars by repeated hammering and reheating. A heavy water-powered trip hammer was employed to shape the forged iron into the desired bar stock which, subsequently, would serve the needs of gun makers and blacksmiths. When in operation, the forge was a very hot and noisy work place with sustained ringing of the reciprocating hammer against the anvil and the heat from the furnace and hot iron.

After a few years, Philip and his family decided to abandon the Bradley Creek forge and install a new forge a few miles further down South Mills River. The new site offered a number of advantages including a new source of ore not far from the forge, a better site to develop water power, and better farm land for growing grain and raising livestock. Also, the new forge offered better access to a labor force and good home sites for the extended family. The new forge and "other improvements" are mentioned in an 1819 land deed. A water-powered grist mill was installed near the forge and provided stone ground meal for the forge workers and other residents of the community. A sizeable work force was needed to mine and transport ore, produce the charcoal fuel, and other activities at the rural industrial complex. It was common practice for workers to be paid, at least in part, by meat, grain, and vegetables to feed themselves and their often large families.

The wrought-iron bars produced at the Sitton forge could be made into a remarkable variety of useful products by local craftsmen. Examples include door hinges, pot hooks, carpentry tools, horse shoes, plows, fittings for yokes, traps, and hunting rifles. In the early 19th century, Mathew Gillespie (1788-1871), an experienced gunmaker, moved from the east fork of the French Broad River to South Mills River where he married Elizabeth Sitton (1788-1858), a daughter of Philip and Winifred. Gillespie established a gun shop near the iron forge and used wrought iron to fabricate his rifle barrels and gun locks. He and his five sons continued to produce the highly-prized weapons for several decades.

Three generations of the Sitton family worked at the Mills River forge. Philip's son, Lawrence Sitton (1794-1873), worked at the forge until it ceased operation during the Civil War. In 1812, he married Isabel Gillespie (1795-1888), a sister of Mathew Gillespie. A son of Lawrence and Isabel, Philip Lawrence Sitton (1814-1857), also worked at the forge until his death shortly before the War. In 1842, he married Nancy Allen (1825-1909) and they became the parents of several children including Silas C. Sitton (1848-1912). Although the forge did not resume operation after the War, Silas C. Sitton established a water-powered sawmill near the site of the forge and operated it until he was killed in an accident at the mill in December 1912. I have an old photograph identified as the "old S.C. Sitton mill dam." The dam appears to be about 8 to 10 feet high and was a composite dam of wood and stone.

Bert J. Sitton, a grandson of Silas C. Sitton, recently has installed new grave stones marking the burial sites of Philip and Lawrence Sitton and their wives in the Sitton-Gillespie Cemetery. This family cemetery offers a commanding view of Forge Mountain and overlooks the site of the Sitton forge, sawmill, and grist mill. Forge Mountain remains as a highly visible physical reminder of a vital 19th century industrial center in the heart of the Mills River community.

MILLS RIVER FIRE & RESCUE
Jeannie Moore Wood, Fire and Life Safety Educator

SPRING BLOOMS AND INJURIES ZOOM

When warm weather comes, chances of injury increases. Life gets a little more hectic when the daylight hours increase. The demands on us become larger during the warmer months. We have spring cleaning, sports, children’s activities, not to mention outdoor maintenance of our home. A great time, but we need to be cautious and try to prevent incidents and injuries before they happen.

- Use the proper techniques for your activity.
- Rest when appropriate and don’t get over heated.
- Make sure you drink plenty of water or hydrating liquid. Don’t use sugary sodas, they are not hydrating.
- Don’t try to play or continue if you are injured or feel pain.
- Wear the appropriate gear for the event. Its always fun to be active and to get outside, but if you are cycling, rollerblading, skateboarding, or playing ball, please make sure you wear the correct safety gear. Protective gear can keep you for getting injured and help you to have an enjoyable and fun day.
- Make sure that you check the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, change them if necessary.
- Check your batteries in your security systems and make sure all cameras and devices are in proper working order.
- Change your door codes at least once a year for safety reasons.
- If you are going to be out of town, have a friend or neighbor pick up your mail or packages to decrease the risk of theft and break-ins.

With these tips Mills River Fire and Rescue wishes you a happy and safe Spring season.
To request safety programs or for more information please contact Jeannie Moore Wood at Mills River Fire and Rescue @ 828-891-7959.
PARKS AND RECREATION

The warmer weather has brought many park users back outside after a cold, wet winter. As you reacquaint yourself with Mills River Park, you may notice a few small changes that we hope will have a great impact on user experiences.

Our first addition, which was made possible by a donation from Grace Community Church, is youth soccer goals. Mills River children participating in the Henderson County Recreational Soccer League will make great use of the goals while practicing weekly at Mills River Park. When not in use for practices, goals will be available for public use. We’d like to sincerely thank Grace Community Church for helping make this addition to the park possible and for being such a great community partner.

The wet weather this past year has done some serious turf damage to the Mills River dog park. We know the grass area in the large dog park being closed was less than ideal for users, but allowing the grass to rest this winter will allow for a much better experience this spring and summer. Large amounts of grading, cement and drainage work in the high traffic areas was recently completed in the hope to minimize mud in the future.

The grass area in the large dog park will be closed until the second week of April to allow time for our over-seeding to take root. The newly sodded areas will remain closed for 1 month to ensure the sod has properly taken to the soil. We appreciate everyone’s patience as we work through this process. We will have a better place for the dogs of Mills River to play when the work is completed and the grass has grown!

Individuals and groups are starting to reserve the Picnic Shelter for the spring and summer months. Forms, rules, and requirements for making a reservation are on the Town’s website, as well as a calendar with currently reserved dates. If you think you may want to reserve a date, check out the calendar and call early as reservations are taken on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservation fee is $25 per hour with a 2-hour minimum. Only cash or check is accepted. Please go to www.millsriver.org and click on the Park button or call the Town Hall at 828-890-2901 for more information.

SUMMER SOCCER CAMP
June 24 - 28
at Mills River Park
Half-day and Full-day options available!


For questions, Please contact Beth Leadbetter at (678) 540-1590 or bleadbetter@challengersports.com

After four plus years as Town Manager for the Town of Mills River, I am resigning from the position effective April 12, 2019. I have accepted an opportunity in the Charlotte area.

I want to express how much I appreciate the opportunity to have served as Town Manager. Mills River is a special community with outstanding people. I look up to each Council member, current and past, whom I have had the privilege to work with. Our advisory boards are second to none in their service to the community. I have also enjoyed working with all my peers throughout the community and beyond as relationships have always been very important to me. I also want to extend a special appreciation to the Mills River staff, who work hard every day in civic service and have made my job easy over the years. A manager is only as good as his/her staff and Mills River has the best I have ever had the privilege to work with.

It has been an honor to serve as your Town Manager. I look forward to continuing the relationships that I have made here. They are truly special to me.

Sincerely,
Jeffrey D. Wells
ADVERTISEMENT OF TAX LIENS ON REAL PROPERTY FOR THE YEAR 2018

Under and by virtue of the authority vested in the Tax Collector by § 105-369 of the North Carolina General Statutes, and pursuant to an Order by the Mills River Town Council, the Tax Collector is hereby advertising liens for the year 2018 on the real estate described below. The amount advertised will be increased by interest and advertisement costs, and the omission of interest and advertisement costs from the amount advertised will not constitute a waiver of the taxing unit's claim for those items.

North Carolina General Statute § 105-369 requires that tax liens be advertised in the name of the owner as of the date of delinquency. The date of delinquency for the 2018 tax year was January 8, 2019.

IF THESE TAXES REMAIN UNPAID, THE TOWN OF MILLS RIVER MAY FORECLOSE AND SELL THE PROPERTY TO SATISFY ALL CLAIMS OF UNPAID TAXES.

Do not mail the principal amount of taxes due. Please contact the Mills River Tax Collector for the correct amount owed including interest and penalties.

This the 20th day of March, 2019.

Aurelio Taylor
Town of Mills River
Tax Collector

ACOSTA, AMPARO OVIEDO, PO BOX 409, EDNEYVILLE, NC 28727, REID 10-11227, $422.10
ANGEL DOBBS, C. & ANGELA D., 200 RED MILL RD., MILLS RIVER, NC REID 99-72204, $72.72
ARUSSO, SUZANNE ALDR, 23 NORMAN RD., FLETCHER, NC 28732, REID 99-38193, $55.18
BABOR, REGINA K & CHRISTOPHER A., 114 SAWMILL RD., MILLS RIVER, NC 28759, REID 99-02314, $298.80
BALDWIN, AMBER & JARED, 161 SCHOOL HOUSE RD, MILLS RIVER, NC 28759 REID 8-00380, $383.04
BLADES, MADALYN R. & BARBARA JANE, 3212 34TH AVE N., ST. PETERSBURG, FL, 33713, REID 8-00261, $433.65
BOYD, GEORGE W. & OLA S., 100 CREASMAN HILL RD., MILLS RIVER, NC 28759-2689, REID 10-12444, $248.22
BOYD, GEORGE W. & OLA S., 100 CREASMAN HILL RD., MILLS RIVER, NC 28759-2689, REID 10-12444, $30.10
BROWN, RODERICK & STEPHANIE, 500 S MILL RIVER RD., MILLS RIVER, NC 28759, REID 0-12598, $568.26
BROWN, VANITY A, 200 S MILL RIVER RD, MILLS RIVER, NC 28759, REID 10-12552, $568.26
CARLAND, ANTHONY & CASSANDRA, 64 PENNSYLVANIA RD., MILLS RIVER, NC 28759, REID 99-28260, $189.72
CASTRO, FELIPE & RUIZ, 851 HIGHWAY 211, MONTEVISTA, CA 91953
CROMPTON, PATRICIA CORN, 45 LEE ILA TRL, MILLS RIVER, NC 28759, REID 8-00380, $383.04
COUCH, THOMAS E., SR., 8519 BOYLSTON HWY, MILLS RIVER, NC 28759, REID 99-1302, $248.58

Continued on Next Page
**RECIPE CORNER**

Chili Cornbread Salad

**Ingredients**
- 1 package (8-1/2 ounces) cornbread/muffin mix
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chiles, undrained
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/8 teaspoon dried oregano
- Pinch rubbed sage
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 envelope ranch salad dressing mix
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cans (15-1/4 ounces each) whole kernel corn, drained
- 3 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 cup chopped green onions
- 10 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese

**Directions**
2. In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, sour cream and dressing mix; set aside. Crumble half of the cornbread into a 13x9-in. dish. Layer with half of the beans, mayonnaise mixture, corn, tomatoes, green pepper, onions, bacon and cheese. Repeat layers (dish will be very full). Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours.

ENJOY!

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**MEETINGS & OTHER DATES**

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**MILLS RIVER LIBRARY**

**Hours:**
- Monday 9-5
- Tuesday 9-6
- Wednesday 9-6
- Thursday 9-1
- Friday 9-5
- Saturday 9-1

**Special Day Events:**
- April 2, 4:00pm: “Hands on! - Lost in Space Part 1” - Grades K-5 **
- April 3, 4:00pm: “Zaniac - Battlebots” - Grades K-3
- April 10, 4:00pm: LEGO Club - all LEGOs will be provided, all ages welcome
- April 11, 10:30am: Book Club
- April 16, 11:00am: Chair Yoga with Lynn Edgar
- April 16, 4:00pm: “Hands on! - Lost in Space Part 2” - Grades K-5 **
- April 17, 4:00pm: “Zaniac - Battlebots” - Grades 4+
- April 24, 4:00pm: “Hands on! - Liquids” - Grades K-5 **
- May 1, 4:00pm: “Zaniac - Enchanted Engineering” - Grades K-3 **
- May 8, 4:00pm: LEGO Club
- May 9, 10:30am: Book Club
- May 15, 4:00pm: “Zaniac - Enchanted Engineering” - Grades 4+ **
- May 22, 4:00pm: “Hands On! - Shoots and Roots” - Grades K-5 **
- May 29, 4:00pm: “Zaniac - Minecraft” - Grades K-5 **
- June 12, 4:00pm: LEGO Club
- June 13, 10:30am: Book Club
- June 21, 4:00pm: “Hands On! - Space” - Grades K-5 **
- June 26, 11:00am: Universe of Bluegrass

**ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**For other events - Please check the Community Events calendar online at www.millsriver.org**

**Space is Limited - Registration is Required**
HENDERSON COUNTY SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT
MILLS RIVER DIVISION

Please check the Henderson County Sheriff’s Office website at www.henderson.lib.nc.us/county/sheriff for links and information regarding identity theft, Community Watch programs, and crime prevention.

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