

# The Village Record



The Newsletter of  
Village of Flat Rock  
110 Village Center Drive  
Post Office Box 1288  
Flat Rock, North Carolina  
Telephone: (828) 697-8100  
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Editor: Jim Wert

Volume XX Number 2

September 2009

## From the Mayor's Desk

*Robert V. Staton*

At its August 3 agenda workshop meeting, the Village Council was treated to a visit by Sheriff Rick Davis, who brought with him Captain Tim Griffin, Deputy Mark Russell and Deputy Russell's partner *Gas*, a handsome two and a half year old Belgian Malinois. (See a picture of Deputy Russell and his K-9 partner 'Gas' below.) The primary purpose of the visit was to give Sheriff Davis the opportunity to introduce *Gas* to the council. *Gas* was acquired last year by the sheriff's office for its K-9 unit at a time when recent retirements because of age or illness left the unit short three dogs, fifty percent of the unit's complement. According to the sheriff, forfeited drug money was available at the time for the purchase of two replacement dogs, and Flat Rock's donation helped to bring the unit back to full strength.

The village's donation resulted from an appearance by Flat Rock resident Mary Merkle at the April 2008 council meeting, at which she urged the council to buy a dog for the sheriff's K-9 unit. She came to the meeting with facts and figures, including the cost of a trained dog, the cost of

training for a handler, and the cost to equip a vehicle to transport the dog and handler, and made an impassioned plea for the village's purchase of a dog for the sheriff. The council approved the donation for the purchase at the July 2008 council meeting.

Sheriff Davis reported that *Gas* had already been involved in a number of drug related arrests, one of which resulted in the confiscation of a substantial sum of drug money from the wholesale of marijuana in another community. After a routine traffic stop of the empty truck that had hauled the contraband through Henderson County, *Gas* was called in to investigate. The residue of marijuana in the vehicle attracted his attention, which lead to a search of the vehicle and the discovery of the large sum of cash. Yes, *Gas* is certainly earning his keep, according to the sheriff.

Ms. Merkle, who was invited to the council meeting to meet *Gas*, thanked the council for inviting her to the meeting and said, "It was wonderful to see what a special K-9 dog Flat Rock's monies purchased. 'Gas' and his partner Mark Russell will do wonderful work for all of Henderson County."

Ms. Merkle and Gas apparently became good friends at the meeting. While posing for pictures afterward, Ms. Merkle reported that, without a word spoken, Gas reached up with his paw and tugged at her hand. She wrote in a letter to the council about the experience, "I think he was telling me that he'd like to go home with me to play instead of going to do all of the hard work he was facing. He's going to be a great K-9 cop and will do his partner proud."

In a letter to thank the village for its July 2008 donation, Sheriff Davis said, "our K-9s are a very important part of our team. They willingly help to guard, protect, and defend their partners, as well as citizens of Henderson County. It is truly awesome to watch them work, and know they are willing and ready to serve – even in the face of danger."

The council appreciated the visit by the sheriff and his deputies. Our working relationship with the sheriff's office has always been a good one. The village's donation for the purchase of a trained dog for the K-9 unit has served us well in the continuation of that relationship.



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Carl Sandburg Home  
National Historic Site  
81 Carl Sandburg Lane  
Flat Rock, NC 28731-8635  
828/693-4178 phone  
828/693-4179 fax

## **Carl Sandburg Home NHS News Release**

Release date: Immediate  
Contact: Connie Hudson Backlund,  
Superintendent  
Phone Number: 828-693-4178  
Date: July 24, 2009

### **Carl Sandburg Home Celebrates America's Best Idea**

Flat Rock, NC) Writer and historian Wallace Stegner called national parks "the best idea we ever had. Absolutely American, absolutely democratic, they reflect us at our best rather than our worst."

Starting in the 1800s, the scenic natural wonders of the West, places like mineral springs in Arkansas, towering mountains and majestic trees of Yosemite, spouting geysers of Yellowstone, and the arid ruins of Casa Grande, inspired individual Americans to call for their preservation, asking their government to create something called “national parks.”

In 1916, the work of caring for these places was moved to a new agency created by Congress for that specific purpose. The National Park Service was given the responsibility to not only conserve and protect parks, but also to leave them “unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site joined the National Park Service in 1968 commemorating history through poet, writer, biographer, folk singer and social activist Carl Sandburg. This fall, Carl Sandburg Home NHS celebrates its role as a unit of the National Park Service through a series of special programs, many of which include neighboring national parks, Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Blue Ridge Parkway.

America’s Best Idea just keeps getting better, with these special programs.

#### **July 10 – October 4**

##### ***Summertime Memories—Western North Carolina Treasures***

exhibition at Hand-in-Hand Gallery in Flat Rock featuring photography, painting and wood of Carl Sandburg Home NHS, Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

#### **Tuesday, September 15**

**7:00 p.m.**

##### ***A Parkway, Home and Mountains: Perspectives on National Parks in Western North Carolina***

A panel discussion with Great Smoky Mountains National Park Superintendent Dale Dittmanson, Blue Ridge Parkway Superintendent Phil Francis and Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site Superintendent Connie Backlund. Hendersonville *Times-News* editor, Bill Moss, will serve as moderator. Event will be held at the Henderson County Public Library, Hendersonville, North Carolina.

#### **Tuesday, September 22**

**7:00 p.m.**

##### ***National Parks: It’s a Wonderful Life***

Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site Superintendent Connie Backlund will share her perspectives as a 30-year National Park Service career employee who has served at parks across the country along with sharing a brief preview of the upcoming Ken Burns’ documentary, “The National Parks: America’s Best Idea”, at the Henderson County Public Library, Hendersonville, North Carolina.

Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site is located three miles south of Hendersonville off U.S. 225 on Little River Road. The park is open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., daily, except Christmas Day. For further information, please telephone 828-693-4178, or visit our website at [www.nps.gov/carl](http://www.nps.gov/carl).

## **New Tax Year Begins!**

*Nick Weedman, Vice Mayor*

Tax bills for real and business personal property in the Village of Flat Rock were mailed on August 28, 2009. This is the earliest mailing of tax bills since the Village began the levy and collection of property taxes in 2005.

Bills for real property were slightly over \$669,500 based on property values that were approximately \$895 million. The tax rate remained unchanged at \$0.075 per \$100 of property value.

By law, property taxes are due on September 1, 2009 and are payable without interest charges until January 5, 2010. On January 6, 2010, an interest charge of 2 percent on the unpaid balances still owed to the Village will be added. For those still delinquent on February 1, 2010 an interest charge of 0.75 percent on the remaining principal balance will be added and this will recur on the first of each subsequent month until taxes are paid in full.

If you have questions about the value of your property, these are best addressed by the Tax Assessor, Mr. Stan Duncan, or his staff. Other questions about the mechanics of tax billing and payments may be addressed to the Tax Collector, Martha Orr, or to the Village Clerk, Michelle Hill.

The last of the tax payments for the 2008/09 tax year were received in August just weeks before the new tax cycle began. The Village collected 100 percent of the taxes owed in the last tax year as it has done since the inception of property tax levied in this municipality. The dedication of our Village staff and their tenacity deserve credit for this remarkable

achievement. While some other municipalities have collected 100 percent of their tax levy in a given year, we are not aware of any other municipality or county that has achieved a 100 percent collection rate consistently.

With the downturn in the economy, collections were slightly more difficult in this past tax year. And, because of this, we had to revert to increasing use of garnishments to achieve full collections. And, again, since tax collections started, we have not found it necessary to foreclose on even one piece of property to collect taxes due.

The cooperation of all Flat Rock property owners is highly appreciated for their prompt and full payment of real and business personal property taxes levied by the Village.

If you have not received your 2009 Tax Bill. Please contact the Village office.

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## **FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE VISIT**

*Ron Davis*

**Note: Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) are the areas that would be inundated by a flood having a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any**

**given year. In other words, this would be a 100 year flood. SFHAs are high risk areas. SFHAs are determined by engineering firms and depend to some extent on computer modeling. Some SFHAs are mapped with greater precision than others. There are no guarantees that property outside of the SFHAs is safe from flooding. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) statistics indicate that twenty-five percent of flood claims come from moderate-to-low risk areas outside the SFHAs. Standard home owner's insurance does not cover flood damage. Residents who have property, particularly structures, near a SFHA may wish to contact their insurance agent to discuss flood insurance options.**

On October 2, 2008, new Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) became effective for Henderson County. The state and federal governments are responsible for creating and issuing FIRMs. The new FIRMs were an update of the FIRMs that had been in effect since 1982. Although the new FIRMs did not add significantly to the total floodplain areas (SFHAs) in Flat Rock, in some cases the floodplain expanded and in some cases it receded. The new FIRMs were part of an increased emphasis by FEMA on flood damage prevention, perhaps brought about by Hurricane Katrina. On December 11, 2008, the Village Council adopted Ordinance No. 56, Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance (FDPO). Although village zoning ordinances have prohibited residential development, and most other development, in a floodplain since December 13, 2001, there are a number of structures in the village floodplains that were constructed prior to that date and some where the floodplains in the new FIRMs expanded to include them. Adoption of the FDPO was necessary to qualify Village residents to purchase flood

insurance. On December 12, 2008, the Village Council was informed that FEMA had enrolled the village in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and that the citizens of Flat Rock were eligible to enjoy the full benefits of the NFIP, including the purchase of flood insurance.

Subsequently, a number of village property owners had elevations on their properties surveyed and applied to FEMA for a Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) determination that structures on their properties were not in the floodplain. To date, five have been successful. One effect of such a map amendment determination is that it removes the federal requirement for the lender to require flood insurance for the property. Residents needing more information on the SFHAs or the LOMA process should contact Floodplain Administrator Judy Boleman at (828) 697-8100.

The NFIP is administered in North Carolina by the Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management. On August 26, 2009, Randy Mundt, North Carolina Outreach Coordinator and Acting NFIP Coordinator for the Division of Emergency Management, Office of Geospatial and Technology Management, came to Flat Rock for a "Community Assistance" visit. He was accompanied by Terry Foxx, from the Western NC Division of Emergency Management.

Community Assistance visits are conducted to maintain periodic contact with communities participating in the NFIP and to assess their needs for technical assistance and coordination. In addition, the visits provide an opportunity for assessing the effectiveness of local floodplain ordinances and enforcement practices.

The first part of the visit was a field survey (drive around) of the village floodplain areas with Ms. Boleman and Council Members Jim Wert and Ron Davis. These floodplain areas are in the vicinity of Mud Creek, King Creek and King Creek Tributary Three. The field survey gave Mr. Mundt and Mr. Foxx an opportunity to become familiar with the Village of Flat Rock and to determine the types of development, if any, which might be occurring in the floodplains. It also gave Ms. Boleman, Mr. Wert and Mr. Davis the opportunity to ask questions specific to certain sites while observing the sites.

After the field survey Mr. Mundt and Mr. Foxx returned to the Village Hall for a follow up meeting with the survey participants and Mayor Bob Staton. Mr. Mundt was provided with a number of documents he had requested so that he could properly respond to several questions that were put to him during the field survey and follow up meeting. This was a helpful and productive visit for all concerned.

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## United States Census 2010

### **The Census: A Snapshot**

- ◆ **What:** The census is a count of everyone residing in the United States.
- ◆ **Who:** All U.S. residents must be counted—people of all races and ethnic groups, both citizens and non-citizens.
- ◆ **When:** Census day is April 01, 2010. Questionnaire responses should represent the household as it exists on this day. More detailed socioeconomic information will be collected annually from a small percentage of the population through

### **the American Community Survey.**

- ◆ **Why:** The U.S. Constitution requires a national census once every 10 years. The census will show state population counts and determine representation in the U. S. House of Representatives.
- ◆ **How:** Census questionnaires will be delivered or mailed to households via U.S. mail in March 2010; many households will receive a replacement questionnaire in early April. Census workers also will visit households that do not return questionnaires.

### **A Complete Count: The importance of Census Data**

- ◆ Every year, the federal government can allocate more than \$300 billion to states and communities based, in part, on census data.
- ◆ Census data guide local decision-makers on where to build new roads, hospitals, child-care and senior citizen centers, schools, and more.
- ◆ Businesses use census data to locate supermarkets, new housing, and other facilities.
- ◆ Census data determines how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House Representatives.

### **2010 Census Questionnaires: Quick, Easy, and Confidential**

- ◆ With only 10 questions, the 2010 Census questionnaires is one of the shortest questionnaires in history and takes just 10 minutes to complete.
- ◆ By law, the Census Bureau cannot share individual's census questionnaire responses with anyone, including federal agencies and law enforcement entities.

## “BE COUNTED IN 2010”

(RECAP)

### THE 2010 CENSUS IS IMPORTANT

**It determines the distribution of more than \$300 billion annually of government funding for critical community services. It generates thousands of jobs across the country. And impacts your voice in Congress**

### YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**As an influential community, business or organization leader, you can raise awareness and encourage participation in this historic event. With your help, the Census Bureau will continue to produce accurate data, which will directly affect the quality of life in your community.**

## 50 Ways Census Date Are Used

- Analyzing local trends.
- Estimating the number of people displaced by natural disasters.
- Developing assistance programs for American Indians and Alaska Natives.
- Creating maps to speed emergency services to households in need of assistance.
- Delivering goods and services to local markets.
- Designing facilities for people with disabilities, the elderly, or children.
- Planning future government services.
- Planning investments and evaluating financial risks.
- Publishing economic and statistical reports about the United States and its people.
- Facilitating scientific research.
- Developing “intelligent” maps for government and business.
- Providing proof of age, relationship, or residence certificates provided by the Census Bureau.
- Distributing medical research.
- Reapportioning seats in the House of Representatives.
- Planning and researching for media as backup for news stories..
- Providing evidence in litigation involving land use, voting rights, and equal opportunity.
- Drawing school district boundaries.
- Planning budgets for government at all levels.
- Spotting trends in the economic well-being of the nation.
- Planning for public transportation services.
- Planning health and educational services for people with disabilities.
- Establishing fair market rents and enforcing fair lending practices.
- Directing services to children and adults with limited English language proficiency.
- Decision making at all levels of Government.
- Drawing federal, state, and local legislative districts.
- Attracting new businesses to state and local areas.
- Distributing over \$300 billion in federal funds and even more in state funds.
- Forecasting future transportation needs for all segments of the population.
- Planning for hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, and the location of other health services.
- Forecasting future housing needs for all segments of the population.
- Directing funds for services for people in poverty.
- Designing public safety strategies
- Development of rural areas.

- Planning Urban land use.
- Planning outreach strategies.
- Understanding labor supply.
- Assessing the potential for spread of communicable diseases.
- Analyzing military potential.
- Making business decisions.
- Understanding Consumer needs.
- Planning for congregations.
- Locating factory sites and distribution centers.
- Distributing catalogs and developing direct mail pieces.
- Setting a standard for creating both public and private sector surveys.
- Evaluating programs in different geographic areas.
- Providing genealogical research.
- Planning for school projects.
- Developing audit education programs.
- Researching historical subjects areas.
- Determining areas eligible for housing assistance and rehabilitation services.

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### **News From the Merchants of Flat Rock September 2009**

#### ***SUMMER MUSIC IN FLAT ROCK:***

This free outdoor series is presented by the Flat Rock Merchants Association and takes place on the back deck of Little Rainbow Row on the first Saturday of each month through October. Bring folding chairs as there is limited seating on deck, cash for dinner and drinks and musician CDs. Music is from 5:00 -7:00 pm for the Oct. concert. Upcoming Concerts: October 3rd - Rock Killough

#### ***FLAT ROCK TAILGATE MARKET:***

Every Thursday from 3:00 – 600 pm through November 5th. Find everything from herbs to seasonal vegetables plus plants, flowers,

native perennials, baked goods, locally raised meats and more. Most things are grown right here in Henderson County.

#### ***FLAT ROCK WINE SHOPPE & THE BACK ROOM***

October 3- Flat Rock Art and Wine Festival - The festival features arts and crafts created by local artists, as well as children's activities, food, wine tastings, a fundraising raffle, and entertainment by local musicians.

#### ***FLAT ROCK PLAYHOUSE:***

August 19 - September 6 - **Real Estate**, The American Premiere of a romantic comedy about selling the house, evenings 8:15 pm, matinees 2:15 pm,  
September 9 – 27 - **Around the World in 80 Days**, a show of danger, romance and comic surprises, in one of the greatest adventures of all time, evenings 8:15 pm, matinees 2:15 pm,  
September 30 - October 18 - **Martys' El Paso**, Jason Petty returns, back by popular demand with his brand new show celebrating the music of Marty Robbins, evenings 8:15 pm, matinees 2:15 pm

#### ***FLAT ROCK MUSIC FESTIVAL:***

Sept 25 – 27 – An outdoor concert featuring 3 days of music, songwriting, camping, swimming, workshops and kids events. Go to <http://www.flatrockmusicfestival.com> for tickets and info.

The Merchants information provided by:  
Sharon Stokes  
Public Relations Coordinator  
Flat Rock Playhouse  
*The State Theatre of North Carolina*  
PO Box 310  
Flat Rock, NC 28731

Fax: (828) 693-6795

Please visit our website:

[www.flatrockplayhouse.org](http://www.flatrockplayhouse.org)

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## Village Greenways Extension

The Village has been given the opportunity to take advantage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (stimulus money), and has received a grant of \$55,000 to extend our existing greenways sidewalks in the village center.

The sidewalks will be extended by constructing two new sections – one along the west side of Greenville Highway from Little River Road south in front of the U.S. Post Office and across the Historic Flat Rock, Inc. Preserve to Memminger Drive, and a second on the east side of Greenville Highway north across the Village Hall property and the property of Blue Ridge Fire & Rescue to the fire department's northern boundary.

Requests for proposals are expected to be issued by the Village to area contractors in October, and construction is expected to begin early in 2010.

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## The Kudzu Team Says Thanks

Big thanks go to the Village Council for their support, to the property owners for participating in our program, and to our volunteers who give their time to contact property owners, identify kudzu sites, flag the pesky vine, and walk with our professional technician as he treats kudzu with Transline.

This year we negotiated a new contract with Tommy Eubanks, our licensed professional. Our previous contract had expired

Tackling kudzu to prevent its takeover is an ongoing battle. Each year new sites are reported and old sites are visited to monitor success. Thanks to this program put in place in 2001, we are able to report significant progress controlling this invasive vine. This summer we scheduled three spraying dates and the weather cooperated with us each day.

Please help us to be vigilant about this menace. These vines can grow up to a foot in one day and will strangle the life out of the vegetation they cover. If everyone is quick to report kudzu within the boundaries of the Village, the Kudzu Team will assist in dispatching it! Please contact the Village at 697-8100 to report kudzu.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in this program.

Kudzu Eradication Committee members: Linda Casselberry, Ann Christenson, Liz Curtis, Jim Kisner, Ann Nolan, Susan O'Brien, Kim Rogers, and Phoebe Timberlake.

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**Daylight Saving Time  
ends on Sunday,  
November 1, 2009**

**Don't forget to turn back your clock!!!!**



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**Village of Flat Rock**  
**P.O. Box 1288**  
**Flat Rock, NC 28731-1288**

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## Schedule of Meetings

All monthly **Council Meetings** are on the **second Thursday** of each month, and will start at 9:30 AM.

**Agenda Workshops** are scheduled to start at 9:30 AM on the **Monday** 10 days prior to the Council Meeting, unless that Monday falls on a holiday.

**The Planning Board** meets the **first Tuesday** of each month from 9:15 AM until 11:30 AM.

**The Board of Adjustment** meets the **first Tuesday** monthly at 3:00 PM (if there are agenda items).

**Village of Flat Rock** office hours are 9:00 AM—4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

**The Zoning Administration** office hours are from 2:00 PM-4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

*The deadline for articles to be included in the December issue of "The Village Record" is November 19, , 2009*

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## Village Directory

**Mayor:**

Robert V. Staton 696-4020

**Council Members:**

District 1

Nick Weedman, Vice Mayor 693-5300

Ronald L. Davis 698-8214

District 2

Dave Bucher 696-3269

Don Farr 697-6304

District 3

Jimmy Chandler 693-7455

Jim Wert 693-0132

**Village Clerk:**

Michelle Hill 697-8100

**Deputy Village Clerk:**

Martha Orr 697-8100

**E-Mail Address:** vofr@bellsouth.net

**Website:** villageofflatrock.org

**Zoning:** zoning@villageofflatrock.org