

The Village Record



The Newsletter of
Village of Flat Rock
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Volume XX Number 1

April 2009

From the Mayor's Desk

Robert V. Staton

One of the *founding fathers* of the Village of Flat Rock and its first mayor, Cyrus Highlander, died on April 4, 2009, at the medical center of Tryon Estates in Columbus after a long period of declining health.

A chemical engineer who retired from UpJohn Pharmaceuticals Co. in 1987, Cy Highlander and his wife, Gretchen, moved to Flat Rock shortly thereafter and built a home in the Flat Rock Lakes development off of Little River Road. He soon became actively involved in his new community and on the committee seeking the incorporation of Flat Rock. Upon the incorporation of the village in 1995, he became the interim mayor, and the following November, he was elected to a four year term as mayor of the Village of Flat Rock. He served as mayor until 1999.

Mayor Highlander was a strong advocate for no ad valorem taxes for Flat Rock. He reasoned that other sources of revenue, primarily sales taxes distributed by

the state, would be sufficient to sustain the village government. To keep administrative costs low, he encouraged volunteerism and, except for a paid village clerk, successfully operated a municipality staffed by citizen volunteers. That system has served the village well, and ad valorem taxation was avoided for nine years following incorporation. Although the village eventually had to levy ad valorem taxes when it was faced with the loss of its primary revenue source, and the paid staff now consists of two full-time and one part-time employees, citizen volunteers remain important to the village. Our government could not operate as reasonably as it does without them.

During his term of office, Mayor Highlander oversaw the establishment of a planning board, the adoption of a comprehensive land use plan, and the enactment of the village's first land use regulations – a zoning ordinance in 1998 and a subdivision ordinance in 1999. Both of those original ordinances were subsequently substantially amended, and are currently being amended again and updated, but the groundwork for land use regulation for orderly development in Flat Rock was laid

by Mayor Highlander and other *founding fathers* who served on the village's first elected council.

Cy Highlander was a visionary for whom the preservation of Flat Rock's history, unique character, historic places, landscapes and architectural structures was always a priority. Because of declining health, he left his adopted community that he loved in 2001, and now he is gone forever. He will not be forgotten. We are grateful for all that he did for the betterment of Flat Rock, and I for one am proud to follow in his footsteps and to continue the work that he began.

What is the Census ?

- ⇒ The census is a count of everyone living in the United States every 10 years
- ⇒ The census is mandated by the U.S. Constitution
- ⇒ The next census is 2010
- ⇒ Your participation in the census is required by law
- ⇒ It takes less than 10 minutes to complete
- ⇒ Federal law protects the information you share during the census
- ⇒ Census data is used to distribute Congressional seats to states, to make decisions about what community services to provide, and to distribute \$300 billion in federal funds to local, state, and tribal governments each year

Census Workers to Verify Addresses in the U.S.

Dave Bucher

Nationwide, more than 140,000 census workers will participate in the address canvassing operation, a critically important first step in assuring that every housing unit receives a census questionnaire in March 2010. All information is kept confidential. The countdown to the 2010 Census is officially one year out on April 01, 2010.

The address canvassing operation will be conducted out of 151 local census offices across the U.S. with most offices beginning on April 6th . In most cases, census workers will knock on doors to verify addresses and inquire about additional living quarters on the premises. This is the first census to include group quarters (such as dormitories, group homes, prisons and homeless shelters) in the address canvassing operation, which should improve both the accuracy and coverage of the final count.

Census workers can be identified by the official Census Bureau badge they carry. During the address canvassing operation, census workers may ask to verify a housing structure's address and whether there are additional living quarters on the property.

2010 Census workers will never ask for bank or social security information. All census information collected, including addresses, are confidential and protected by law. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents answers with the FBI, the IRS, CIA, Welfare, Immigration, or any other government agency. No court of law or law enforcement agency can find out respondents' answers. All Census Bureau employees — including temporary employees — take an

oath for life to keep census information confidential. Any violation of that oath is punishable by a fine of up to \$250,000 and five years in prison.

Status Report
2008/09 Property Tax Collection
Update

Nick Weedman, Vice Mayor

The season for collection of property tax in the Village of Flat Rock is winding down.

As of April 15th, collections were at 99.6% of the amount billed in September, 2008. Property owners had until January 5, 2009 to pay and after that date interest charges started to accrue.

Collections this year are virtually the same as of the same date in 2008. Given the economy, we feel fortunate to have achieved such a high rate of collections. We are confident that we can achieve the same level of collections that has been attained in every prior year – a 100% collection rate.

There are 18 properties on which property taxes are delinquent and these are owned by 12 different owners. Most of the owners that are delinquent this year were also delinquent last year.

Letters have been sent to each of the delinquent accounts on a number of occasions. And, in response, we are working with several of the property owners to arrange for payments.

As required by law, the Village will advertise delinquent accounts shortly. Prior to placing the ad, attempts will be made to make telephone contact to attempt to arrange for tax payments. If the property

owner fails to respond, steps will be taken to garnish or to seize bank accounts as a step to resolve the account.

If all else fails, the Tax Collector will recommend that steps be taken to initiate foreclosure on real or personal property to satisfy the tax lien. In the years the Village has been collecting taxes, it has never been necessary to foreclose on a single property. And, we hope, this year has a similar outcome.

If you are among the few delinquent tax payers, we urge you to make payment quickly or to discuss the matter with the Tax Collector to see if a payment plan could be devised that is mutually acceptable. That is far better than foreclosure.

The cooperation of property owners in Flat Rock in the timely payment of their property taxes is highly appreciated.

Flat Rock Tailgate Market
Times News Article
By: James Shea
March 22, 2009

Flat Rock resident Molly Sharp and her husband David went to the South of France for their 10th wedding anniversary. Everyday they would get up and one of their goals was to find a market. Every town had a market, and they were all different. They would find a different market everyday and buy the food and go home and cook it. They said to each other, “why can’t we have one of these in Flat Rock?” So, David said that is a great idea. But he knew, he was way too busy to do it. They were very involved in the community in Flat Rock. He said, “I am on a several committees, if you want to do this,

then you will have to do it.” She said “OK” and sought the help of two of her good friends (Cheryl Stippitch and Saundra Poces) that lived nearby. They did their research by going to Tryon, Landrum, and Brevard, looking at the different markets and vendors. After doing the research, they realized that there were many challenges they would face, but felt that the end result would be worth it. When they open this year, it will be their 2nd full year of operation. The Tailgate Market will operate every Thursday, 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm, starting May 7th and running thru November 5th.

**Black Bird Farms
“Growing Up”
Times News Article
By: James Shea
March 16, 2009**

Billy Haynes got bit by the farming bug over a decade ago, and it hasn't let go. “I probably got that from my dad, he was interested in farming” he said.

Haynes owns Black Bird Farms. The farm grows mostly heirloom tomatoes, but have expanded into Community Supported Agriculture. Haynes wants to sell fresh vegetables to the residents of Henderson County. For a CSA program, residents purchase a share of the harvest at the beginning of the season and get a box containing lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, greens, tomatoes, squash and other vegetables each week.

For more information about the CSA program at Black Bird Farms, visit www.blackbirdcsa.com or call 808-8080.

“CELEBRATE FLAT ROCK 2009”

VILLAGE OF FLAT ROCK
ICE CREAM SOCIAL JUNE 6TH
(RAIN DATE JUNE 7TH)
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
CALL: CAROL ANDREWS 828-697-0208

The Village of Flat Rock will host its annual Ice Cream Social on Saturday June 6th (rain date Sunday, June 7th) on the grounds of the Flat Rock Village Hall and throughout the village. As in the past, there will be free ice cream, Strawberry, Chocolate Chip and Chocolate. The sugar-free flavors will be Vanilla and Butter Pecan.

The festivities will begin at noon and continue until 4pm. This year there will be a completely new lineup of entertainment. **Me & The Boys**, a soft country and nostalgic rock group, featuring Angela Heatherly, Terry Wetton and Cas Haskell; **Still Kickin'**, a country & bluegrass group, some of the members are associated with the Helm's Barber Shop Boys. The group features Don Rice, Erskin Levi, Tom Scott, Gary Taylor and Tammy Cunningham; **Appalachian Fire**, a blue grass group featuring Rane Stepp, Jim Fox, Dave Ploss, Cliff Searcy and Dwayne “Doc” Durham; and **QP and Elaine Anderson**, a folk and country music group. Tiffany Ervin of Morning Glory Productions will be the mistress of ceremonies for the days events.

There will be walking tours at Connemara, the Carl Sandburg National Historic site, at 10 and 11a.m. and 2 and 3 p.m. The tours will last approximately one hour.

Miss Hendersonville 2009, Ciara Newman and Hendersonville's Outstanding Teen 2009, Katie Holbert will be in attendance. We will

also have Miss Asheville, Jill Ascyue. Dick Timmerman and Caasi (Brenda Pace) and the Clowns of Glory will return this year. They will be available all afternoon to do face painting and will be making animal balloons.

The Flat Rock Playhouse will have 2 performances of "Old Love" at 2:15 and 8:15 p.m. The show has some mature humor. Tickets are available at box office 693-0731.

Some of the merchants along Little Rainbow Row will be doing demonstrations. There will be food and beverages for sale at several locations throughout the village. As in the past the Village Merchants will have hot dogs, chips and soda for sale to support their Christmas Charity Program. Various rescue units will also have demonstrations.

Bring a lawn chair to enjoy the entertainment and join your friends and neighbors in celebrating Flat Rock.

There will be handicapped parking available.

For the comfort of all, we ask that you please leave your pets at home.

The June 6th performance of the Flat Rock Merchant's Summer Music Series, sponsored by the Village of Flat Rock will feature Chuck Brodsky, a singer, songwriter and story teller put to music. This performance will be held on the back porch of the Wrinkled Egg at 6p.m.

The Red Cross will be having a Blood Drive from 12:20 p.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Chris and Mary Jane McDonnell could use volunteer ice cream scoopers. The shifts run ½ hour each anytime from 12 to 4p.m. If you

are able to help, please call them at 692-2929.

News from the Merchants of Flat Rock April 2009

The Merchants Association would like to announce new members: Back Home Magazine, Charleston Gardens at Flat Rock, Edward Jones/Karen Knight, Hubba Hubba Smokehouse, The Lake House Lodge & Spa and Steve J. Allen, Attorney at Law. Please be sure to give them a warm Flat Rock welcome the next time you see them.

Summer Music In Flat Rock - The 2009 Summer Music series in Flat Rock will kick off Saturday, May 2nd featuring Jean Calvert and Company. This free outdoor series is presented by the Merchants Association and will be held on the first Saturday of the month, May through September. The concerts are staged on Little Rainbow Row's back from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Scheduled concerts for the remainder of the season are: June 6th, Chuck Brodsky (Sponsored by the Village of Flat Rock as part of Celebrate Flat Rock); July 4th, Carol Deurmit and Steve Whiteside; August 1st, Tom Fisch; and September 5th Angela Easterling. An October 3rd concert will be added if funding allows. This is a casual, family oriented, bring-your-lawn-chair outdoor event - weather permitting. Food and beverages will be available from Flat Rock Village Bakery and Hubba Hubba Wood-fired Smokehouse. Off street parking will be designated with limited handicap accessibility. Come out and enjoy all the concerts with your friends in Flat Rock.

www.flatrockonline.com - The Merchants Association is presently working on a new design of their website – keep your eye on the site for exciting updates.

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

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 August issue of "The Village Record" is August 17, 2009

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