



The Village Record

The Newsletter of
Village of Flat Rock
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From The Mayor's Desk

Mayor Ray E. Shaw, Jr.

The tax bills for 2006 have been mailed. If you have not received yours please call the Village Hall at 697-8100 for a duplicate bill. The tax rate is the same as last year's rate 8.5 cents/\$100 of valuation. These funds are used for paying the 3 fire departments that serve property within the Village. As reported to you last June, revenue from these assessments will generate \$546K while the contracts with the fire departments will cost \$576K. The difference will be made up from miscellaneous revenues.

The Village is currently evaluating the draft of the County's Soil erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance. The ordinance will be a win-win situation for Henderson County. It has been a long time coming to our community. The ordinance will be at least as stringent as the current State ordinance now in effect but it will be enforced more rigidly by County personnel.

The contractor has finally finished the paver walk from the post office to the National Park Service property....well kinda. The heavy rains of early September washed out some of the walk near the NPS. We look forward to repair of this section and restoration of the walk.

Finally, the Village will soon have a new sign in front of the office. This should be a help in finding the office for those that are unfamiliar with the current location. Have a nice fall.

2006 Property Tax Bills In the Mail

Nick Weedman

Tax bills for real and personal property were mailed to Flat Rock property owners on September 6, 2006. The due date for the tax is September 1, 2006 but property owners have until January 5, 2007 to pay the bill. After that date, a penalty and interest will be due on late payments.

The bill has a misleading statement that needs correction. **The tax is officially due on September 1, 2006 but taxpayers have until January 5, 2007 to pay the tax bill without penalty or interest being added.** We regret the inconvenience this may have caused taxpayers.

The Village continued to use a post card for billing purposes. While some owners may be concerned that property values are shown on the card, it should be noted that this informa-

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tion is a matter of public record and readily available at the Henderson County Court House as well as on the Henderson County web site. We trust there will be minimal sensitivity on this issue.

The bill mailed is separate from the County billing that most taxpayers have received.

Here are some common questions and answers relating to the tax bill. If you need more information or want to discuss your tax bill, feel free to call the Village Hall at 697-8100 and talk with Rowena Sweezy, our Village Clerk and Village Tax Collector.

Is this a new tax on my property?

No, the Village is collecting a property tax for the second year. Prior to 2005, the County collected the tax but due to certain circumstances, the Village took over that responsibility in order to pay for certain services, specifically fire protection. Formerly by the County collected taxes for each of the Fire Districts.

Did tax rates go up this year?

The tax rates are unchanged at \$0.085 per \$100 of assessed value for real and personal property.

Will the Village collect taxes on vehicles?

No, the law mandates that the County collect vehicle taxes and you will continue to receive your Vehicle Tax Notice from Henderson County. The essence is that the County collects this tax on behalf of the Village.

I sold my home early this year and no longer live there. I still received a tax bill. Why?

The law states that the property owner on record as of January 1 is responsible for taxes on the property for the fiscal year that begins in July. At the property sale closing, the attorney pro rates the taxes due between the parties. If the new owner received your pro rata share, you should convey the tax bill to the new owner. For properties sold after July, many attorneys contact the Village Office to determine taxes due and actually makes the payment. Suggest you look at your closing statement to determine who should pay. If in doubt, contact the attorney who handled the closing of the property.

The name or the address shown in my tax bill is wrong. What should I do?

Contact the Henderson County Tax Assessor's office and advise them of the corrected information. The telephone number is 697-4870.

I have a boat I keep on a lake in South Carolina. Why is it taxed in Henderson County?

Property is taxed based on the domicile of the owner.

I have an airplane but did not receive a tax bill for it. What should I do?

Contact the Henderson County Tax Assessor's office (697-4870).

My mortgage company escrows funds to pay property taxes. Last year, I received the tax bill. Should I expect to receive a bill this year?

The Village has been in contact with a number of companies that provide a service of payment of property taxes that have been escrowed by mortgage lenders. We hope that virtually everybody who has taxes escrowed will not receive a bill this year and the mortgage service company will be billed instead. There will probably be those who still receive a bill and, in that instance, it will be because the mortgage lender failed to inform the Village they would be pay-

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ing on your behalf. Suggest you contact your mortgage company if you escrow for property tax and you still receive a bill from the Village.

I am confused about when the taxes are actually due. One place on the bill shows September 1 while another place shows January 5, 2007. Which is correct?

Taxes are due on September 1 for the fiscal year that started on July 1st. Payments may be made at any time up through January 5, 2007 without any penalty or interest being charged. Beginning on January 6, 2007 a 2% penalty will be applied to the bill with interest assessed at ¾ of 1% of the balance on the first of each month thereafter.

Is it possible to make partial payments on my bill?

Yes. No penalty or interest will be charged as long as the total amount is paid on or before January 5, 2007.

Merchant Moments News of the Village of Flat Rock Merchants Association

Mary Garrison

It's been a busy summer for the Flat Rock Merchants, especially for the non-profit organizations within our membership. With nights growing cooler and fall around the corner, let's take a quick preview of our members' fall events on the horizon.

* **A Visit with Lincoln** will be held at the **Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site** on Saturday, September 30 from 9:30 – 12:30 pm. Four performers will be featured: Louise Bailey – historian, Dennis Boggs – a professional actor portraying Lincoln, Civil

War musician Wayne Erbsen and Pascal Reber on the bagpipes. The event celebrates Carl Sandburg's biography of Lincoln. (Free event.)

*Music lovers will want to attend **Flat Rock Music Festival** the weekend of September 29 through October 1 at Camp Ton-A-Wondah. This is a family-oriented occasion featuring American roots-based music with both local and national performers. Prices include camping and all music venues. Food and craft vendors will be on site. The festival benefits Environmental Conservation Organization (ECO) and a variety of charities that assist cancer patients. Visit www.flatrockmusicfestival.com for more information.

*The **Summer Music Series**, sponsored by our merchants association and Carolina First, has been well-received. If you have not attended yet, catch the last concert on Saturday, October 7 beginning at 5 pm. The featured singer/songwriter is **Tom Fisch** who has an original country/folk style. The concert will be on the back deck of Little Rainbow Row on the corner of Greenville Highway and West Blue Ridge Road. It's a family-friendly free event. Food from Flat Rock Village Bakery and the Woodfield Inn will be available for purchase. (Info at 697-7719)

***Flat Rock Playhouse** continues its fall and holiday season with the following plays: *Leading Ladies* (September 13 through October 1); *I Love You, You're Perfect...Now Change* (October 2 through 22); *The Rainmaker* (October 27-November 12); *Sanders Family Christmas* (November 15 – December 3); and *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* (December 8-17). For more information, call 693-0731.

***Flat Rock Village Holiday Stroll** will be held again this year. The date is Saturday, December 2 from 10 am to 8:30 pm. Many of our shops, galleries, inns, and eateries participate to kick-off the holidays. Watch the local media for more details on this fun event in our village.

***Expressions! Photography** is offering a free studio session for anyone who brings a new toy worth \$25 or more. The toys will be donated to Toys for Tots, the US Marine Corps National Charity. This is available now through December 22.

***Home for the Holidays: Christmas at Connemara** will be held at the Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site again this holiday season. The event is Saturday, December 16 from 10 am to 2 pm, and features music in the folk music vein the Sandburg family would have liked. Decorations will be in the simple style of the Sandburgs. Call 693-4178 for more information. Musicians at the event include: Lisa Whitfield – guitar/vocals, a choral group from Mars Hill College, flute music and Buddy Davis - guitar/vocals. (Free event.)

***Works in Progress** is a no-charge performance held each second Sunday afternoon of the month at Flat Rock Guitar Studio. It's always free and the public is invited to enjoy the classical guitar renditions of students, teachers, professionals and guests. (Info at 242-5417.) Events that were held this summer by our non-profit members were widely attended and highly successful. The people of Flat Rock should be proud of this community spirit. Here's a quick rundown on those events.

On September 12, the Supporting Players, the official Volunteer Guild of **Flat Rock Playhouse**, presented a check of \$60,000 to the non-profit arts organization, The Vagabond School of the Drama (aka Flat Rock Playhouse). This generous annual contribution is a direct benefit of the Dark Night Revue, their annual performance and picnic fundraiser held in August. The proceeds are used to support the Playhouse and the new YouTheatre Education Center.

One project the group has dedicated to sup-

porting for the next five years is the YouTheatre Education Center scheduled to begin construction in fall/winter 2006. \$30,000.00 will be contributed from the Dark Night Revue proceeds from this year. The Supporting Players, many of whom live in the Village of Flat Rock, have designated a total of \$192,000 to the Center over the next five years. The Education Center will be the full time home of the YouTheatre for classes and workshops for students K - 12 and adults. For more information about the Education Center contact Dale Bartlett, Development Director, 828-693-0403 x209, dale@flatrockplayhouse.org.

Charles Kuykendall, President of **Historic Flat Rock Inc.**, says, "the members of Historic Flat Rock, Inc. have been very active this summer. The group hosted the bi-annual Tour of Homes in July with approximately 740 guests despite the rain." The following afternoon, members attended an elegant Hunt Breakfast at the beautiful home, Elliott Place. Approximately \$13,000 was raised from the two events, thanks to the countless hours of service from many volunteers. Other recent events include the ongoing restoration of the circa 1847 Old Post Office building. The renovations have been extensive and include structural improvements that maintain the historical integrity of the building as well as a beautiful paint job.

The Friends of **Carl Sandburg** at Connemara held their first Hobo Ball on Saturday, September 9. It was a memorable occasion, celebrating Sandburg's hobo days and supporting the national historic site. The event also marked the formation of the Sandburg Landmark Society, a major donor designation. These membership funds will provide upkeep of "Connemara," Sandburg's last residence where he completed many of his works.

In other news the merchants would like to

join with the rest of our village citizens in expressing our gratitude to the **Greenways Committee**. An additional portion of the sidewalk was completed from the corner of Little River Road and NC 225 to the entrance of Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site. Their efforts have created a pleasant, green walking community. The trail is appointed with attractive Charleston style benches for walkers to take a break. Chairman Ed Lastein, Dries Jansma and many others devoted much time to this endeavor.

Now that the Summer Music Series is coming to a close, we wish to extend thanks to these business sponsors. **Series Sponsor** was Carolina First. **Event Sponsors:** The Wrinkled Egg, Chicken Little, Hand in Hand Gallery, Flat Rock Outfitters, Flat Rock Village Bakery, Mill House Lodge, Flat Rock Inn B&B, Woodfield Inn, Apartments at Twin Oaks, Highland Lake Inn and Seasons Restaurant, Rose Tree B&B, Dean's Deli, Flat Rock Playhouse, Garrison Family Dentistry, Diamond Rush, Singleton Centre, Pleasant Surroundings, Expressions! Photography, Edward Jones, Flat Rock Guitar, Flat Rock Wine Shoppe, Stuart Stepp, AIA, Nelson Construction, Hunter Chevrolet-Volvo-Subaru-Hyundai, and Historic Flat Rock, Inc. **In-kind sponsors:** Bold Life, Flanagan Printing, Brenner Signs, Flat Rock Music Festival.

Finally, we wish to give our community the opportunity to spread cheer to Flat Rock families in need this holiday season. Donations of cash, groceries and gifts are welcome. This project is sponsored by our organization. We work in conjunction with school guidance counselors in the Flat Rock school districts. Donation drop-off points are Wrinkled Egg & Chicken Little, Diamond Rush, Hand in Hand Gallery, Flat Rock Outfitters, Flat Rock Inn, Garrison Family Dentistry and Flat Rock Playhouse box office.

Just a reminder that our meetings are every other month on the first Monday evening of the month. Any business in the village limits of Flat Rock is invited to join. For more information, call President Dale Bartlett at 693-0403 ext. 209.

Here's to fall and the holiday season.

Flat Rock Merchants Association.

What is Storm Water and Why Do I Care?

Storm water is the water that runs off of streets, parking lots, rooftops, and other hard surfaces whenever it rains. Storm drains or ditches carry run-off directly to nearby streams, without passing through a water treatment plant.

Storm water run-off is a problem because it carries pollutants from the surrounding landscape into our waterways. Metals, salts, oil, etc. from roads and parking lots; fertilizers and other products from golf courses and landscaping; pet waste; grease, soap, and chemicals that may get dumped out the back door; anything that gets deposited on the pavement or sidewalk eventually ends up in a nearby stream.

In addition to chemical and organic wastes, tons of dirt gets carried by storm water run-off. In fact, sediment in streams is the #1 water pollutant in western North Carolina today. Finally, many pollutants get into our creeks through unofficial connections to the storm water system. All drains in homes and businesses should be connected to a municipal sewer system or a septic system. But many are connected instead to the storm drain pipes. These connections are called *illicit discharges*. They may be unintended, and can be easily fixed, once they are identified.

In an effort to address this prevalent source of water pollution, the Federal Clean Water Act requires local communities to manage storm

water run-off and to control non-point source pollutants. This is done through creation and implementation of local Storm Water Management Plans. Although Flat Rock is not required to have a specific Storm Water Plan it must comply with the post-construction storm water management requirements because it is in Henderson County which is being required to implement it's own storm water program.

In compliance with the law, the plan includes a variety of strategies for managing storm water run-off. These include:

- Reducing run-off volume by adopting a post-construction run-off ordinance. This will encourage builders to include storm water controls such as wetlands, grassed swales, porous pavement, cisterns, etc., in all new construction and redevelopment. These controls help direct rainwater into the ground, rather than running off the site and carrying pollutants. They are cost effective when included in the original construction design.
- Controlling erosion and sediment run-off from construction sites.
- Mapping the storm water drainage system and developing a program to identify and correct illicit discharges.
- Practicing what we preach by training by use of town/city/village pollution prevention measures in local government operations.

Finally, we need everyone to do his or her part in reducing non-point source pollutants and minimizing storm water run-off from their home or business. Here are a few things you can do to help.

- Scoop up after your pet, even on the grass.
- Make sure your septic system is in good condition, and have it maintained regularly.
- Apply fertilizers and other garden prod-

ucts sparingly. If anything ends up on a hard surface, sweep it back into the grass or dirt.

- Plant, mulch, or contain any areas of bare soil.
- Never dump anything down a storm drain. "Only rain down the drain."
- Consider installing a rain garden, rain barrel, porous pavement, or other landscape feature to capture run-off from your roof and driveway.
- Make sure your business disposes of all liquid and solid waste appropriately. Make sure dumpsters are covered, and never dump anything – liquid or trash – on the ground or pavement.
- If you use chemicals, oil, solvents, etc., store them in good quality containers. Only pour them in an area that has containment structures, such as a berm around the area, to catch spills.
- If you notice an illicit discharge – something entering or draining from a storm drain that isn't rainwater – contact Dave Bucher.

For more information on the Flat Rock storm water program, please contact Dave Bucher.

Storm Drain Markers

Dave Bucher

In conjunction with the Storm Water Program (see above article) the Village is making available Storm Drain Markers as shown on page 7. Where there is curbing and storm drains are used it may be desirable to install the markers as a reminder to people not to deposit contaminants such as paint in the storm drains.

If you have any interest in the storm drain markers, please contact the Village Hall. The markers and adhesive to attach the markers are available free of charge.



Dying Tree

Dave Bucher

We regret to inform our citizens that the large walnut tree on the Village Hall property, adjacent to the Book Exchange and Highway 225 is being removed. Based on the professional opinion of the Arborist, the tree is in irreparable decline and has become a hazard and needs to be taken down.

200th Anniversary of Flat Rock

Dries Jansma

As you can see on the Historic Flat Rock signs at the entrances of our Village, the name Flat Rock appeared first officially in 1807. It means of course that we have a special birthday to celebrate next year. Plans are being made, but the best plans of.....will not succeed if we don't have volunteers to work on this project.

If you are interested in volunteering, please call or email the Village Office. It should be fun and rewarding. Join us, and thank you!!!

Dries Jansma, Anniversary Committee.

Kudzu Knockout

Ann Christenson

The Flat Rock Kudzu Committee arranged with Helena Chemical Company of Spartanburg to spray on August 14th for the 2006 season. You may have noticed orange flags marking the 18 sites in the program. (The good news is there were 19 sites originally, but one is completely gone!)

Progress is definitely being made as a majority of the areas are greatly reduced since the first treatment in 2002.

Being a member of this committee is very interesting and we are looking for new members. Please call the Village Hall to express your interest.



Committee members Kim Rogers, Ann Nolan and Helena Chemical Co. representative. Missing committee members are Ann Christenson and James Holmes, Chairman.

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

Address Service Requested

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 9:00 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 April issue of "The Village Record" is December 14, 2006.

Village Directory

Mayor:

Ray E. Shaw, Jr. 698-2449

Council Members:

District 1

Robert V. Staton 696-4020

Nick Weedman 693-5300

District 2

Judy M. Boleman, Vice Mayor 698-8912

David Bucher 696-3269

District 3

Terry A. Hicks 697-9022

Jim Wert 693-0132

Village Clerk:

Rowena M. Sweezy 697-8100

Deputy Village Clerk:

Michelle D. Hill 697-8100

E-Mail Address:

vofr@bellsouth.net

Website:

villageofflatrock.org