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# The Village Record



The Newsletter of  
Village of Flat Rock  
110 Village Center Drive  
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Flat Rock, North Carolina  
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Editor: Albert Gooch

Volume XXX Number 1

April 2021

## From the Mayor's Desk

*Nick Weedman*

### American Rescue Plan

The Village has been awarded \$990,000 from the American Rescue Plan and we are in the process of learning what can be done with the money.

This is not something for which we applied but rather a benefit from recently passed Congressional legislation. And details are extremely sketchy on the rules of the game.

Village Administrator Pat Christie and I participated in two Zoom meetings to try to learn more. One was with the North Carolina League of Municipalities and the other was with the National League of Cities. What we learned is the rules of the game are being devised and are expected within sixty days.

The Village will receive \$495,000 about the middle of May with another similar amount in one year. All funds must be spent by December 31, 2024 or they revert to the Federal Government.

While details are sketchy, the limited information received indicates the following are allowed:

- Offset of Covid-19 expenses incurred in the pandemic.

- Investments in infrastructure with emphasis on broadband.
- Support of local nonprofits and special purpose units of State and local governments impacted by the pandemic.

It was also revealed the money cannot be used to reduce local taxes directly or indirectly.

There will be close monitoring in the use of funds from the program. A participant in a city near Charlotte described getting a federal grant of \$175,000 for greenways, thinking they had met all guidelines. An audit by the Federal authorities concluded they had skipped essential parts of the requirements and had to reimburse the grant. The trouble was the money had already been spent on the greenways project. So, a reimbursement plan over several years was worked out.

The bottom line is that how we go about spending the money will be critically important. We are doing nothing until we have a full understanding of the rules of the game!

### North Highland Lake Road Project

The North Highland Lake Road Project was due to go out for bids in late February, but this has been delayed until May 2021. Evidence of the project is unfortunately visible with the tree cutting that has been done at the Pinecrest Presbyterian Church. Other trees taken in preparation for utility relocation were done across the road from the dam at Highland Lake.

The project was originally estimated to cost just over \$2.6 million but the latest estimate from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NC DOT) is \$6.3 million. The actual construction will begin in late summer or early fall and is scheduled to take two years for completion.

The Village will lose some of our park due to the construction and will have to relocate some of our trails near the road. NC DOT took the land through eminent domain and made a monetary offer that has been rejected as insufficient. Negotiations will start as soon as some details are worked out on drainage and other impacts on the Park.

### **New Speed Limit on Greenville Highway**

At the request of the Village, the speed limit on the Greenville Highway from just north of the Flat Rock Playhouse down to Boxwood Loop has been reduced from 35 miles per hour to 25. There has been a significant increase in business activity in the commercial district and a reduction for safety reasons was justified.

Unfortunately, the initial reaction is the new speed limit is not being followed as closely as needed. Since the change in speed limit went into effect, we have seen the Sheriff's Office take some enforcement activity which should prove useful. Other considerations are for warning flags to be installed on the new speed limit signs and for use of the Sheriff Office's radar warning sign which shows the speed limit and the speed of the vehicle being tracked.

We are also getting requests to review the speed limit on Little River Road and will ask NC DOT to evaluate what should be done there.

If you drive through the center of town, please do slow down for safety reasons.

### **Adopt-A-Highway Program**

Several citizens have noted that there seems to be increasing levels of trash on our major roads in the Village.

NC DOT has the Adopt-A-Highway program in which volunteers periodically remove trash from a designated highway. An Adopt-A-Highway group in Kenmure has for years cleaned a portion of NC 225 (Greenville Highway) from south of

of Kenmure to the center of the Village. This has proven to be highly effective.

We would like to see all the scenic byways in the Village covered under this program and will be contacting all the homeowner associations in the Village to ask that they organize a group to cover a section of local roads. Or, two or more HOAs could join to cover a section of road.

NC DOT provides safety vests, trash bags and other equipment and will put up signs recognizing each organization that volunteers under this program.

In addition to this, there is an annual litter pick-up period sponsored by NC DOT. Called the Litter Sweep, this year the event will run from April 10 – April 24. The Village Council will be participating in person and would like to have more of our Village citizens involved as well. See our Facebook page for the method to contact the local coordinator.

### **Park Ranger**

Our Park Ranger, John Wilkerson, has announced his retirement to be effective June 30<sup>th</sup>. John is a retired US Air Force officer and has done an outstanding job for the Village and the Park. He is the first to fill that role and has taken true ownership of Park oversight. Replacing John will be an extremely difficult task. John, your service to the Village, the Park and our citizens is highly appreciated.

### **Shred Day and Pill Drop Event**

The Village will host its annual spring Shred Day on Saturday, May 8, 2021, from 9 AM to 12 PM. As in prior years, the Henderson County Sheriff's Office will be on site to assist Village residents with the safe disposal of outdated prescription drugs. This is a drive thru event for the convenience and health safety of all, with the shredder located behind Village Hall.

Village residents can bring up to three file-size record boxes or their equivalence in bags for shredding. The shredder can handle staples and standard paper clips, but any 3-ring binders or metal binder clips can ruin everyone's day. The shredding will occur on-site to ensure the safety of your information. Your cardboard boxes will be returned to you immediately as the shred company will not take these.

There is no limit on the number of prescriptions and associated items you may bring among the following: pills, capsules, ointments, vitamins, liquids in their original containers, inhalers, and patches. Chemotherapy medications or sharps, needles and epi-pens are NOT accepted.

An additional hour has been added to Shred Day to help prevent traffic flow issues on Greenville Highway and Village Center Drive and give our residents more time to enjoy this opportunity. We know you love Shred Day, but please do not start lining up on Village Center Drive prior to 9 AM and end up blocking the arrival and set up of the shred truck.

**SHOULD THE EVENT NEED TO BE RE-SCHEDULED, WE WILL ADVISE YOU VIA THE VILLAGE WEBSITE AND OUR SOCIAL MEDIA OUTLETS.**

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### **Victoria Flanagan Historic Flat Rock**

Spring is here and when it comes to plants good health starts in the Flat Rock soil.

1. HFR, Inc. in conjunction with Henderson County Environmental programs is offering compost bins for sale until April 15th. Please visit the [historicflatrockinc.com](http://historicflatrockinc.com) website to place an order and for more details. Bins can be picked up locally May 14 and 15th. Bins are \$30.00 plus tax.

2. On Saturday April 17 from 9:30-11:30 AM HFR, Inc. will have its first garden adventure and workday right next door- at the Cultural Center and Museum. This will be a working session to decide on the landscape plan which will include proper drainage, lighting, native plant and tree placement.

3. Our next work day —will be Thursday April 22 , Earth Day with 2 sessions- 9:30 AM-12 Noon and 1 - 3 PM. Email [mountaingardeners@gmail.com](mailto:mountaingardeners@gmail.com) with questions

4. This is followed by an event Friday April 30 National Arbor Day at the Preserve and Bird Sanctuary in the heart of Flat Rock- there will be a tree dedication of a Franklinia, in memory of Wes Burlingame—and a brief introduction to the Bartram Family—the first family of Botany in America. 11 AM– Noon

5. Bearfootin Bear 2021- HFR, Inc. will have its first bear on display—his name is Bartram R. Bear- stay tuned for details for the May reveal.

6. Also in May- a memorial for Chris and Mary Jane McDonnell on Monday May 24 - which was a special day for them, from 5:00 PM- 5:30 PM— at the Preserve and Bird Sanctuary—a toast to Blue Birds !

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### **A Message From Pam Tiles**

As bears begin to exit their dens, we also are exiting from a long hibernation, into a glorious springtime in the mountains. The Covid pandemic curtailed most of life as we knew it, however encouraging signs are on the horizon.

26,636 Henderson County residents have been partially vaccinated and 18,722 others are fully vaccinated. Groups 1-4 are currently eligible for vaccinations. Appointments may be made online at Henderson County, Dept. of Public Health or by telephoning at 828-585-4790, M-F from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM It was anticipated that on April 7th. Vaccinations for Group 5-all adults would begin. Restriction changes set by Gov. Cooper are being enforced from March 26th to April 30th. The list of restriction changes can be found on the Village of Flat Rock website under Gov. Cooper Executive orders. Please remember face coverings are still required in indoor settings

Here's to a happy and healthy Spring!



## Kudzu Program

Did you know that the Flat Rock Council supports kudzu eradication in the village?



***Pueraria montana var. lobata***, **KUDZU**, is a deciduous twining, mat-forming, ropelike woody leguminous vine, 35 to 100 feet long with three-leaflet leaves. Large semi-woody tuberous roots can reach depths of 3 to 16 feet at maturity. Since 2002, Flat Rock volunteers have teamed up with property owners to do battle with kudzu. If left untreated, the vines will smother a tree's canopy, blocking out the light and preventing photosynthesis. Where the vines run along the ground, leaf nodes along the stem will send down roots. Leaf nodes are about a foot apart. Kudzu is a very aggressive non-native invasive.

This program is on-going. Currently, the committee treats several properties in the village. Spraying is scheduled in late August to early September when kudzu is in bloom and absorbing nutrients in preparation for winter dormancy.

**Please be vigilant.** If you see kudzu growing on your property or your neighbor's property, telephone the village and ask for treatment help. A volunteer will visit with you, identify the extent of kudzu on your property, and offer to place your property in our program.

If you have any questions, please contact David Dethero by telephoning him at 828-692-5375 or e-mail him at [daviddethero@villageofflatrock.org](mailto:daviddethero@villageofflatrock.org)

## FLAT ROCK PLAYHOUSE & STUDIO 52

### SPRING 202

Make this summer Rock! Flat Rock Playhouse is excited to announce its education program, Studio 52, will be hosting in-person and virtual summer camps for Rising 1st - 12th Grade artists. **Studio 52 Summer Camps** offer training in Acting, Musical Theatre, Dance, and Improv with returning instructors Tania Battista, Lisa K. Bryant, Matthew Glover, Anna Kimmell, and Bill Muñoz. Registration is now open and camps run June 21 through July 30. Studio 52 Summer Camps are made possible by Walnut Cove Members Association and the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. [www.NCArts.org](http://www.NCArts.org). Registration opens on April 19!

Studio 52 has crafted COVID-19 safety guidelines including: Limited class sizes with a student to staff/counselor ratio of 8/2; Masks requirements are at all times by staff and students; Use of outdoor spaces for increased ventilation during classes and performance; Modified activities to ensure proper social distancing; Hand sanitizer stations in every space; Staggered bathroom breaks and routine cleaning of bathrooms; Temperature checks upon arrival each day; Individually assigned materials for classes, rehearsals, and performances; Outdoor drop off and pick up; Routine cleaning of all shared spaces and surfaces; and the option to transition to virtual learning at any time should a participant report exposure or illness.

The full list of camps including dates and times can be found online at [frpstudio52.org](http://frpstudio52.org). You can register online or by telephoning the Box Office at (828) 693-0731. Payment plans are available through the Box Office. To stay updated on all of Flat Rock Playhouse's theatre arts education opportunities, make sure to **follow Studio 52 on Instagram** (@\_studio52) and Facebook ([facebook.com/frpStudio52](https://facebook.com/frpStudio52)) and sign up for its emails here: [e.wordfly.com/join/FlatRockPlayhouse/](https://e.wordfly.com/join/FlatRockPlayhouse/).

**The Park at Flat Rock** is a great place to walk among nature. In this 66-acre park, you will find many ponds and wetland areas, a pollinator garden, and eye-pleasing greenspace. You will also find a place of beauty, friendly park users and Flat Rock pride. **The Park at Flat Rock** is an absolute gem and an asset not just to Flat Rock, but the entire community of Western NC.

### **UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS: SPRING 2021**

As we move further into 2021 and updated Covid-19 guidelines are announced, we plan to offer more health & wellness and educational programming. We are in discussion to work with additional, local partnerships and to relaunch the Park's nature walks. We are THRILLED to announce the 2021 Pardee in the Park schedule!

**Pardee in the Park: FREE YOGA CLASSES**  
**April 24<sup>th</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>**  
**Thursdays @ 5:00 PM**  
**Saturdays @ 10:00 AM**

On the **4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month** (April through October), join **PARDEE UNC** at The Park at Flat Rock for a fun, family-friendly day of activities, special health & wellness discussions, guest vendors and more. More details will be announced as the year progresses. **Mark your calendars now!**

**Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup>** will feature the following topics and activities:

- Christie Jones MSN, FNP: Urgent Care vs ED and common spring injuries.
- Karen Winch PTA: proper body mechanics and how to prevent injury.
- NC Cooperative Extension: get your yard ready for spring!
- Vendors, local community information, Friends of the Park... and more!

### **NEW: KIDS IN PARKS: TRACK TRAIL COMING TO THE PARK AT FLAT ROCK**

#### **VILLAGE OF FLAT ROCK PARTNERS WITH BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY FOUNDATION & HENDERSON COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR HEALTH**

Launching at the end of April, **The Park at Flat Rock** will have its very own **KIDS IN PARKS: TRACK TRAIL** with customized adventures and activities. Funding for this program comes from the **Henderson County Committee for Activity and Nutrition (HC CAN)**, an action team of the **Henderson County Partnership for Health**, which is focused on community health improvement. The Village of Flat Rock and the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation's Kids in Parks program serve as community partners. This family-friendly program will encourage park visitors to get unplugged, get outdoors and get cool prizes!

**Kids in Parks** offers an expanding network of family-friendly outdoor adventures called **TRACK Trails**. Each **TRACK Trail** features self-guided brochures and signs that turn Park visits into a fun and exciting outdoors experience. Best of all, participants can earn **PRIZES** for tracking adventures!

In addition to getting prizes in the mail, participants can **TRACK** adventures in their own online nature journal and see how many trails they have visited, miles hiked, and more.

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“It is important to us that the TRACK Trail at the Park at Flat Rock provides recreational experiences for all visitors—with and without disabilities. The TRACK Trail at the Park at Flat Rock aims to follow best practices as recommended by the Henderson Co. Dept. of Public Health and the NC Division of Public Health, Children and Youth Innovative Approaches. Our TRACK Trail provides the greatest degree of accessibility possible for a wide range of disabilities,” explains Tracey Daniels, Development Director for the Flat Rock Park Foundation.

Pardee UNC Community Health Manager Milton Butterworth explains further, “CAN is excited to support a community health improvement strategy like Kids In Parks. After all, by increasing physical activity, the healthier we all will be and the more prepared we are to lessen the effects of pandemic challenges moving forward!”

More information about KIDS IN PARKS can be found at this website: <https://www.kidsinparks.com/>. The Park at Flat Rock will have its own information page, brochures and activities soon!

### **FRIENDS OF THE PARK AT FLAT ROCK: Our first anniversary!!!**

In April 2020, The Flat Rock Park & Recreation Foundation launched a new giving circle called **The Friends of the Park at Flat Rock**. Even though it has been an “odd” year with a pandemic, we are thrilled with the response! We currently have more than 145 charter members (and grow our membership every month).

If you have not already joined, please consider joining before June 30, 2021 to become a “**charter member**.” You will play a major part in preserving and enhancing the beauty of our 66-acre park. 100% of your contribution goes directly towards maintaining our 2.8 miles of walking trails, planting trees and native shrubs, preserving our riverbanks, and providing free educational programs to park patrons and guests of all ages. **A recurring monthly or yearly payment schedule makes it easy to join The Friends and supporting The Park throughout the year.**

Full details on **Friends of the Park** can be found on our website and also on the enclosed remit envelope.

**SIGN-UP FOR OUR MONTHLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER** – The Foundation sends out **one** informative newsletter the last week of the month with updates on FREE events, programming, park projects, and more! We share beautiful photos from our park users. It is an email that will lift your spirits and feature our park pride.

**HELP US MAKE OUR 2020-2021 FISCAL YEAR GOAL:  
OUR goal is to raise an additional \$15,000 by June 30, 2021  
to assist with completing the Flower Meadow, supporting trail improvements and  
sustaining our beautiful Park for generations to come.**

**Enhance. Endure. Educate.  
WILL YOU make a gift today?  
ALL donations are tax deductible. 100% of your donation goes  
directly to benefit The Park at Flat Rock.**

**See you at the Park!**

*Tracey*

Tracey Daniels, Director of Development  
828-697-8100 (office)  
[www.flatrockparkfoundation.org](http://www.flatrockparkfoundation.org)

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### The Park at Flat Rock Trails Update John Wilkerson, Park Ranger

A few park goers have asked me about the status of the trails, so an update is in order. Overall, the trails are in excellent condition however there are a few spots we will work to improve in the coming months.

Trail maintenance is a moving target as you never know what Mother Nature will throw at you. Also, we have the challenge of much of the park being in a flood plain. Additionally, the wet, cold winter weather make things a bit more challenging. During the winter the hard, frozen ground results in surface moisture draining more slowly. Finally, we have received record rainfalls over the last few years. For 2018-2020 we are over 80 inches above normal! The ground is very saturated. Having said all of that the park and its trails drain well after moderate rains. Just remember when you come to walk in the days after heavy rain or snowfall, don't wear your nice, new shoes!

I am pleased to report the significant trail damaged caused by the October 2020 flooding was repaired in January. Approximately 1,000 feet of trail in the southwest corner of the park was washed out. The contractor added new granite fines and compacted them resulting in an awesome walking surface.

I mentioned there are a few sections of trail we plan to improve. First, there is a short section of the Lastein Trail between the Highland Golf Villas and the Maybank-Rhett Nature Center that is slow to shed water. I am working with a contractor on a solution which should be implemented by the summer.

No decision has been made, but we are considering paving a 200-foot section of the Lastein Trail behind the Bryan Playground as it washes out during heavy rain. Additionally, we may pave the remaining section of the loop around the Nature Center as it washes out when Dye Creek overflows its banks. Your opinion on these proposals is welcome.

Certainly, the trails needing the most attention are, a short section of the Lastein Trail between the lily pad pond and Highland Lake Road and the connecting Barber Bypass. This area stays wet and muddy primarily due to an underground spring and ground water flowing down the hill from above and below Highland Lake Road. Winter conditions simply make it worse. We have not taken steps to improve this area yet as it will be affected by the N. Highland Lake Road project. As the road project progresses, we plan to drain and pipe the excess water away and expect the trails to be much improved when it is all said and done. We appreciate your patience!

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments about the trails or anything else in the park (email: [john@villageofflatrock.org](mailto:john@villageofflatrock.org); telephone: 828-435-0397). See you on the trails!



**Saturday, May 1st | 10 am to 12 pm**

**FLAT ROCK SEEKING  
TREE CITY USA RECOGNITION**

- \*Tree Planting w/Scouts
- \* Mayor Nick Weedman Dedication
- \* Forest Service Information w/Ranger
- \* Friends of the Park Information

**Trees provided by Ace Hardware & Raymond's Garden Center**



**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 10:30 AM until 12:00 Noon

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

**The Historic Landmarks Commission** meets the second Thursday of each month after the monthly council meeting (if there are agenda items).

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

*The deadline for articles to be included in the September issue of "The Village Record" is March 30, 2021*

## Village Directory

### Mayor:

Nick Weedman 693-5300

### Council Members:

#### District 1

Pam Tiles 317- 408-5127

Tom Carpenter 551-3282

#### District 2

Anne Coletta, Vice Mayor 595-0707

Susan Gregory 703-509-8230

#### District 3

David Dethero 692-5375

Albert Gooch 698-0045

### Village Clerk:

Michelle Parker, CMC 697-8100

### Deputy Village Clerk/Tax Collector:

Martha Orr, CMC 697-8100

### Village Administrator

Pat Christie, CZO 697-8100

### Park Ranger

John Wilkerson 435-0397