



## NEWSLETTER

Summer 2009  
Volume 6, Issue 2

### News from the Mayor

Roger Snyder

#### Town's Website

How many of you have visited the Town's website? If not, make it a point of it. There's a lot of information there such as meeting minutes, important announcements, volunteer opportunities and contact information.

#### Local Support

I think it is important to remember to support our local businesses especially during these difficult economic times. They are the ones that support our community projects. So if at all possible, let's buy local.

#### Mills River Fire Department

On July 11, 2009, the Department will have its dedication of the opening of Station 4. It's located on North Mills River Road and will start at 12 Noon.

#### Boylston Creek

Mills River and the Transylvania County Commissioners are still following the proposed reclassification of Boylston Creek very closely. We continue to stay in touch with our state representatives about this and will provide details as they develop.

#### Town Budget

The Council just recently passed its fiscal year 2009 – 2010 budget. The Council kept the tax rate at 1 cent per \$100.00 valuation. I want to thank the Council and Staff for holding the line on expenses.

#### Safety Tip

As we head into the summer months, watch for people walking and riding on our roads. Please give them a little extra room as you pass by. When working outside, take an extra minute and work safe. Keep a watch on your neighbors and those outside pets.

*.....and as always, if the Council and Staff can be of any assistance, please let us know.*

### THE TOWN OF MILLS RIVER

5046 Boylston Highway, Suite 3  
Mills River, NC 28759

OFFICE: 828-890-2901 FAX: 828-890-2903

Office Hours: 9:00 am—5:00 pm Monday-Friday

[info@millsriver.org](mailto:info@millsriver.org)

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



### Council Members

Mayor: Roger Snyder  
Mayor Pro Tem: Lois Pryor  
Councilman: Wayne Carlant  
Councilman: Shanon Gonce

### Staff

Town Manager: Jaime Adrignola  
[jaime.adrignola@millsriver.org](mailto:jaime.adrignola@millsriver.org)  
Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Susan L. Powell  
[susan.powell@millsriver.org](mailto:susan.powell@millsriver.org)  
Administrative Assistant: Aurelie Taylor  
[aurelie.taylor@millsriver.org](mailto:aurelie.taylor@millsriver.org)  
Zoning Enforcement Officer: Pat Christie  
[pat.christie@millsriver.org](mailto:pat.christie@millsriver.org)

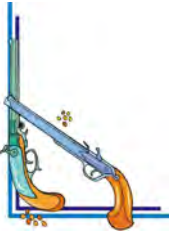
Email for Free Newsletter Subscription:

[newsletter@millsriver.org](mailto:newsletter@millsriver.org)

Website: [www.millsriver.org](http://www.millsriver.org)

## HISTORY CORNER

by Jim Brittain



My grandfather, William A. Brittain (1857-1930), owned a Gillespie rifle which probably was inherited from his father. William used it for hunting and hog killing and, in fact, called it his "hog rifle". After he died, the rifle became an exhibit at the Vance birthplace, north-east of Asheville. Subsequently, it was reported stolen and was never recovered. The Gillespie rifles were produced at a shop on South Mills River prior to the Civil War and resembled the hunting rifles know as "Pennsylvania" rifles or "Kentucky" rifles.

Mathew Gillespie (1788-1871), the patriarch of the Mills River family of gun makers, was a son of John Gillespie (1753-1822) and Jane Harvey Gillespie (1762-1808). Soon after the Revolutionary War, John and his family moved from an area near present day Clifton Forge in Western Virginia to George's Creek, not far from present day Easley, South Carolina. John and Jane became the parents of six children, some of who were born after the move to South Carolina. In 1801, John sold a 550 acre tract of land on George's Creek for \$750 and moved to the North Carolina mountains. He acquired a 314 acre tract on the East Fork of the French Broad River to the east of present day Rosman. He established a gun shop and his three sons, including Mathew, learned the craft from him. John died on a hunting trip to the Toxaway River in 1822 where his sons discovered his body after a three-day search.

The Gillespies arranged to purchase the iron needed to fabricate their rifles from the Sitton forge at South Mills River. It had been established by Philip Sitton (1770-1843). In 1810, Mathew Gillespie married Elizabeth Sitton (1788-1858), a daughter of Philip. In 1812, Mathew's sister, Isabel Gillespie (1796-1880), married Lawrence Sitton (1794-1873), a son of Philip Sitton. Mathew decided to establish his own gun shop at South Mills River near the iron works of his wife's family. Mathew and Elizabeth became the parents of a large family of 5 sons and 7 daughters. Their sons followed in the footsteps of their father and grandfather by learning the craft skill of gun making. Each of them inscribed their initials and the year on the rifles as they were finished. Mathew was a community leader who became a deacon in the Mills River Baptist Church near his home and served on the District school committee, along with his brother-in-law, Lawrence Sitton. Mathew and Elizabeth, along with other members of the Gillespie family, were buried in the Sitton-Gillespie cemetery on a hill near the sites of the iron forge and gun shop.

The long barrels of the Gillespie rifles were fabricated from wrought-iron bars from the iron forge. Several bars were clamped around a small rod and welded together by a protracted process of repeated heating and hammering. Blocks of walnut or maple were shaped with wood-working tools into the graceful stocks which were characteristic of these rifles. The completed weapon was made ready to

fire by first pouring a measured charge of black gunpowder from a "powder horn" into the muzzle. A spherical lead bullet precast in a bullet mold to the proper diameter or caliber was wrapped in a greased cloth patch. It was inserted in the muzzle and forced into contact with the powder by means of a ramrod. A gunlock mechanism was employed to ignite the powder in the barrel by means of a percussion cap where the trigger was pulled. The rapid burning of the gunpowder created sufficient pressure to propel the bullet toward a deer or other target. Of course, the rifle had to be reloaded after each shot so it was not a rapid fire weapon.

It is not know how many Gillespie rifles were made, but a number of them have been preserved by collectors or descendants of the gun makers. Photographs and measured dimensions of several of the surviving rifles were included in a book on the Gillespie's and their rifles published in 2004 by T. D. Glazener. One of the rifles described was made by Mathew's son, Philip Gillespie (1815-1864), in 1845. It has a barrel of about 45 inches in length and a total length, including the walnut stock, of just over 5 feet. The caliber is 0.40 inches. It has a percussion lock but lacks the "patch box" and "grease hole" that some of the Gillespie rifles had. The various fittings were fabricated from either iron or brass.

Philip Gillespie acquired a title to 347 acres of land on South Mills River in 1849. The property had originally been part of a 3,000 acre bounty grant from the state to Philip Sitton as an incentive to establish his iron forge. In addition to his gun making, Philip Gillespie farmed and operated a fruit distillery. He became the subject of local legend when he is supposed to have hidden a cask of his brandy and some gold coins prior to leaving Mills River in August 1863, to join Union forces in Tennessee. He died near Maynardsville, Tennessee, in January 1864, apparently without leaving instruction on the location of his treasure. Since then, many have searched for Philip's brandy and gold but if anyone was successful, they have not claimed credit.

Philip's younger brother, Wilson Gillespie (1825-1864), and his two brothers-in-law, George W. Underwood (1820-1864) and Robert O. Blythe (1811-1866), also left Mills River to join the Union Army in 1863. Wilson and George died in Tennessee in 1864. Blythe survived the War only to die in a mill accident in January 1866.

The advent of breech-loading and repeating rifles essentially ended the era of Gillespie style cap-and-ball, muzzle-loading rifles. However, in a concession to tradition, a special one-week season for deer hunting restricted to muzzle-loading rifles or shotguns is still scheduled each hunting season in North Carolina. Of course, most of the weapons used in these hunts have been modified to increase the accuracy and convenience of reloading as compared to the Gillespie rifles made before 1860.



## RECIPE CORNER

### Crystallized Ginger Shortbread

by Jaime Adrignola

1 cup butter, softened  
 2/3 cup crystallized ginger, chopped into small pieces  
 2/3 cup sugar  
 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract  
 2 cups flour  
 1/4 teaspoon salt  
 Optional: jam/jelly

- Preheat oven to 350.
- Cream butter and sugar until smooth.
- Beat in vanilla extract and salt.
- Add ginger and begin beating in flour a little at a time until a dough ball forms.
- Wrap in parchment or waxed paper and refrigerate for 1 hour.
- Make 1 inch balls and place on ungreased cookie sheet two inches apart. Press thumb into centers to flatten out dough balls on the cookie sheet.
- Bake at 350 degrees for 14-17 minutes or until edges are golden.
- Enjoy as is or add jam or jelly into center indentation.



## NEW DEPUTY CLERK

On May 28, 2009 Aurelie Taylor, Town of Mills River Administrative Assistant, was sworn in as the Town of Mills River Deputy Clerk at the Town Council Meeting that evening.



## MEETING & OTHER DATES

Jul 3	Independence Day	Town Hall Closed
Jul 6	Municipal Filing Begins	12:00 PM
Jul 7	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Jul 9	Town Council	7:00 PM
Jul 17	Agricultural Advisory	9:00 AM
Jul 17	Municipal Filing Ends	12:00 PM
Jul 21	LGCCA	3:00 PM
Jul 21	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Jul 23	Town Council	7:00 PM
Jul 28	Parks and Recreation	7:00 PM
Aug 4	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Aug 11	Board of Adjustment	7:00 PM
Aug 12	Finance Committee	7:00 PM
Aug 13	Town Council	7:00 PM
Aug 18	LGCCA	3:00 PM
Aug 18	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Aug 21	Agricultural Advisory	9:00 AM
Aug 25	Parks and Recreation	7:00 PM
Aug 27	Town Council	7:00 PM
Sep 1	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Sep 7	Labor Day	Town Hall Closed
Sep 9	Finance Committee	7:00 PM
Sep 10	Town Council	7:00 PM
Sep 15	LGCCA	3:00 PM
Sep 15	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Sep 18	Agricultural Advisory	9:00 AM
Sep 22	Parks and Recreation	7:00 PM
Sep 24	Town Council	7:00 PM
Oct 6	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Oct 8	Town Council	7:00 PM
Oct 13	Board of Adjustment	7:00 PM
Oct 14	Finance Committee	7:00 PM
Oct 16	Agricultural Advisory	9:00 AM
Oct 20	LGCCA	3:00 PM
Oct 20	Planning Board	7:30 PM
Oct 22	Town Council	7:00 PM
Oct 27	Parks and Recreation	7:00 PM



Happy Birthday Mayor!

## LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS ADS

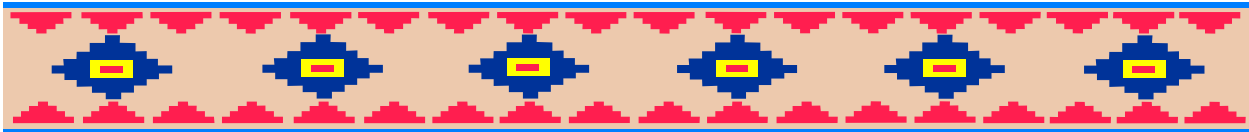
The Mills River Town Newsletter is printed quarterly: at the end of March, June, September, and December. In order to defray the cost of publishing, the newsletter will be taking small business ads. These ads will be business card size and black and white. The business must be located within the town limits. There is a \$50 fee for each quarterly advertisement and since there is a limited amount of space, ads will be taken on a first come, first serve basis. The ad must accompany payment and checks should be labeled for the newsletter. The fee collected goes directly for newsletter costs. Site selection within the newsletter is to be determined by the newsletter committee. The committee reserves the right to refuse an ad. Both ad and payment will be returned if this occurs. Thank you for your support.

## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

The Town of Mills River newsletter is published and distributed quarterly. Articles submitted may be edited for brevity. Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each of the following months: March, June, September, and December. Submit articles in writing to:

Paula DeLorenzo  
9 White Birch Drive  
Mills River, NC 28759

or by email to [p828@bellsouth.net](mailto:p828@bellsouth.net). Articles can also be dropped off at the Mills River Town Hall. If you need assistance, have questions, or need more information, feel free to call Paula at (828) 890-8131 or email.



## MILLS RIVER LIFE ENRICHMENT CENTER

(MRLEC)

137 Old Turnpike Road  
Mills River, NC 28759  
Phone: (828) 808-5581  
[mrlec08@yahoo.com](mailto:mrlec08@yahoo.com)

**MRLEC** is a non-denominational outreach ministry for the senior adult population of Mills River. Programs vary including meaningful presentations and fun activities for senior adults. A nutritious and delicious meal is provided at each program.

**MRLEC** meets every Thursday at 10:00am in the fellowship hall of the Mills River United Methodist Church. **Lunch reservations are required.** Please call the MRLEC office at (828)808-5581 by 12 noon the Tuesday before the program.

### Program Schedule

#### July 2009

7/2 "Ask Your Pharmacist" w/ Jerry Poteet  
7/9 NO MRLEC  
7/16 "Caring for the Caregiver" w/ Jeremy Wilde  
Musical Entertainment by the VBS Children  
7/23 NO MRLEC  
7/30 Bingo

#### August 2009

8/6 Photographer, Thomas Nebbia presents  
"Silk Road of China"  
8/13 Spiritual Direction with Arts and Crafts  
8/20 Bingo  
8/27 Gentle Yoga

#### September 2009

9/3 "Different Types of Home Health Care" w/  
Jeremy Wilde and Linda Lauzon  
8/10 Bingo  
8/17 Kenmure Show Chorus  
8/24 To Be Announced

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Mills River Life Enrichment Center is to minister to the mind, body, and spirit of seniors in our churches and community by establishing a Christian based community center offering a place for fellowship, service and enjoyment

**\*Our Facilities are Handicap Accessible**

## 2009 OUTSTANDING CITIZEN AWARDS

On June 10, 2009 the Town of Mills River presented its Outstanding Citizen awards to three elementary school students. Mayor Roger Snyder presented these awards at the awards ceremonies held at Mills River School and Glenn C. Marlow Elementary School. Congratulations to these outstanding students!



Rachel Sitton  
Mills River School



Isabella Denman  
Mills River School



Isabella Perron  
Glenn C. Marlow  
Elementary School

## MILLS RIVER FARM MARKET

The Mills River Farm Market opening day has been moved to **Saturday, August 1<sup>st</sup>**

- Mills River Commons Shopping Center from 9 am- Noon.
- Interested vendors should visit Town Hall or [www.millsriver.org](http://www.millsriver.org) to submit an application as soon as possible!
- Vendor cost for the season is \$40 with no additional per Saturday cost.
- Vendors not interested in paying for the season pay \$5 per Saturday of participation.



## LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS' AWARDS

The Mills River Library volunteers were presented with awards for their dedication and commitment on May 29, 2009. Not all volunteers could be present, but those in attendance partook of a buffet and received awards from Mayor Roger Snyder. Thank you, volunteers, for all that you do in making the Mills River Library an efficient and pleasant place to read, obtain, books, search the Internet and attend Story Time!



Library Volunteers in Attendance



Special Plaque Presented to Roz Ledford

## NEWS FROM YOUR MILLS RIVER BRANCH LIBRARY

by Roz Ledford

**2009 Summer Reading Program.** School's out, summer vacation is in full swing and the Mills River Branch Library is in the midst of the annual **Summer Reading Program** (SRP). There are two programs running simultaneously - the Children's Program – "*Be Creative at your Library*" (Age 0-11) and the Teen Program "*Express Yourself at your Library*" (Age 12-17).

The SRP began on June 15 and will run through August 1, 2009. If you haven't registered there is still plenty of time to do so. In addition to the reading aspect of the program, which offers prizes to participants for the amount of reading they accomplish, we have craft programs available for both children and teens. However, advanced registration is required for these programs. You can call the Branch (890-1850) if you have questions or need additional information. We are also holding a "Portrait Contest" for children age 0-11 and a photo contest for the Teens. Information for both contests will be available in the registration packet participants will receive when they register at the Library. In addition to the prizes for reading, drawings will be held at the end of the program for all participants who complete the SRP requirements.

In order to reach as many children as possible, the **Friends of the Mills River Library** sponsored Mr. Bill Grimsley's "*The Magic of Reading*" program at both Mills River Elementary and Glenn Marlow Elementary on June 8<sup>th</sup>. It was an absolute treat to watch nearly 1,000 first through fifth graders enjoy this fantastic program. It was a terrific hit at both schools. During the program, Mr. Grimsley talked with the children about the importance and fun of reading and encouraged them to participate in the SRP at the Mills River Branch.

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**Four Year Anniversary.** On April 24, 2009, the Mills River Branch Library celebrated its fourth year of operation with only volunteer staffing. The Mills River Town Council held a brunch for the volunteers on May 29<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the anniversary. Mills River Mayor, Roger Snyder, presented a framed Certificate of Appreciation and a letter to each volunteer.

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**Friends of the Mills River Library Book Sale Events.** The Friends of the Mills River Library is currently holding a **Summer Book Sale** at the Branch. Paperback books are 25 cents and hard covers are 50 cents. Stop in and check it out. This sale will run through the end of August.

**The Mills River Friends will also participate in the dedication of the George Mullinax Fire Station on North Mills River Road July 11, 2009, from 12:00 Noon to 3:00 p.m. by holding a book & jewelry sale event. All proceeds will benefit the Mills River Branch Library.**

### Library Hours

Monday – Thursday	9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Friday	1:30 – 5:30 p.m.
Story Time:	Tuesday & Thursday at 11:00 a.m



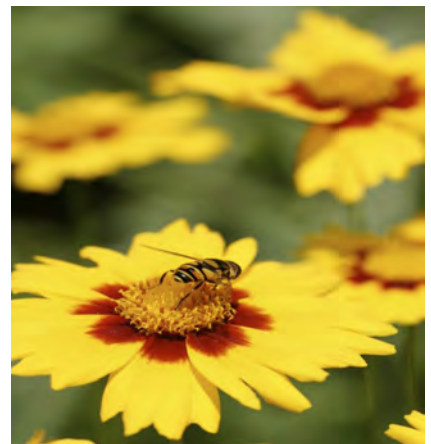
### ICE CREAM SOCIAL AND RAFFLE

August 22, 2009  
MILLS RIVER COMMUNITY BUILDING  
5:30 – 7:30 P.M.

\$5.00 Adults  
\$3.00 Children 12 and under

Fund Raiser for Mills River Branch Library

Sponsored by Friends of Mills River Library



## PARKS COMMITTEE UPDATE—SUMMER 2009

by Pat Christie



Summer is a good time to be thinking about parks and what you want to see in Mills River's first park. The committee has been working with a consultant to come up with a conceptual plan that reflects the needs and desires of the Mills River Community. Over the last few months, they have reviewed and revised several draft plans and recently presented their recommendation to Town Council.

Town Council endorsed the conceptual plan and gave their approval to move onto the next phase of the process which is to give the public an opportunity to look at it and comment. As you read this, the conceptual plan should be available on the town's website at [www.millsriver.org](http://www.millsriver.org).

Opportunities for public input will be announced via the website, flyers, posters, and a mail out. The input sessions will take place after school goes back in session with tentative dates of Saturday August 29<sup>th</sup> (9:00 AM-1:00 PM), Tuesday September 8<sup>th</sup> (9:00 AM-7:00 PM), and Saturday September 12 (9:00 AM-1:00 PM).

Don't miss your chance to see and offer input on the proposed conceptual plan for the first Mills River Park!

### Call Before You Dig – Keeps You and Your Neighbors Safe

Digging in the dirt is a pleasure for some and work for others. But did you know that North Carolina law requires you to notify your area utilities at least 48 hours (two working days) in advance of an excavation project?

By simply dialing "811," you can talk toll-free to the North Carolina One Call Center who will handle everything for you – except the digging part!

**At no charge**, North Carolina One Call will notify all your local utilities, including PSNC Energy. PSNC Energy will then locate and mark its company-owned underground natural gas facilities in the area of your dig. That way you or your contractor can be sure to avoid them when installing the new swimming pool, sprinkler system or even trees and shrubs.

Remember calling before you dig doesn't cost a thing, but not calling could result in property damage or serious injury.

North Carolina One Call Center, 811

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



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

### Digging Damage – Know What To Do

Natural gas is a colorless, odorless, non-toxic yet flammable substance. We add a "rotten egg" odor to help you detect a potential leak. Be sure you know the warning signs of a damaged natural gas pipeline:

- ✦ Smell of rotten eggs
- ✦ Hissing sound near the pipeline or natural gas appliance
- ✦ Dirt or debris blowing from a hole in the ground
- ✦ Persistent bubbles from a wet or flooded area in the ground
- ✦ Vegetation over or near the pipeline is discolored or appears dead

**DO NOT** attempt to find the leak yourself.

Leave immediately, go to a nearby phone and call PSNC Energy at 1-877-776-2427 and 911.

**SHERIFF**



**HENDERSON COUNTY SHERIFFS DEPARTMENT**  
**MILLS RIVER DIVISION**  
by Corporal Ken C. McCraw

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

**Crime Prevention Tips**

- Always lock your doors and windows.
- Lock your car and don't leave valuable items inside or in view.
- Make sure your outside lighting is working properly.
- Take pictures or videos of your valuables, and document serial numbers
- If you are away for an extended time, have a trusted friend or neighbor check your residence, pick up mail, bring in the newspaper, etc.

**Law Enforcement Services**

For Emergencies: 911  
Non-Emergencies: 697-4911  
NC Highway Patrol 693-4141  
NC Wildlife Resources Commission  
1-800- 662-7137  
(to report wildlife violations)

**The Town of Mills River**  
**5046 Boylston Highway**  
**Suite 3**  
**Mills River NC 28759**