
The Village Record



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

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From the Mayor's Desk

Robert V. Staton

There comes a time . . . Yes, after twenty years of service to the Village of Flat Rock, the last twelve years as mayor, it is time for me to step aside. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the village and its citizens in several capacities that began in 2000 with an appointment to the Flat Rock Planning Board. I am grateful for the opportunity given to me for that service.

The Village of Flat Rock was chartered by the North Carolina General Assembly in April 1995, almost a quarter century ago. From its inception, the village has relied on volunteers who are important to village operations. Volunteers have always been important to the village. The organizers were volunteers. The council members and mayor are volunteers, as are the members of all village boards and committees. And we have volunteers who serve in a variety of capacities not involving the committee structure.

With our undertaking the development and operation of the Park at Flat Rock, many new volunteer opportunities were opened to us. In addition to an exploratory committee that recommended the purchase of the property for a park, and a park development advisory committee that worked with the late Ed Lastein, a visionary landscape architect, to develop a master plan for the park, we now have the Flat Rock Park and Recreation Commission that is involved in all aspects of development, operation and maintenance of the park.

We also have the Flat Rock Park and Recreation Foundation, Inc., established by the village council to raise funds for development of the park. Except for three paid, part time staff members – including a director of development, an advisor on grant opportunities, and an administrative assistant – all board members and others working with the foundation are volunteers. To date, the foundation has raised in excess of \$1,000,000 for the park. With no major capital improvements on the table at the moment, the foundation will concentrate on sustainability of the park and the implementation of programs to promote a healthy community.

Flat Rock is blessed with a host of intelligent, well educated, diversely experienced citizens who are unselfish and willing to give of their time, talent and treasure for the good of the community. We all benefit from that generosity and spirit.

During my time with the village, I have worked with, respected and appreciated all who have served as village council members. All were hard working, dedicated volunteers serving in the sincere belief that they were acting in the best interests of our citizens. I believe they were, and I respect and admire them for all they have done for our village. The current council is no exception. We have worked well together, accomplished much, and enjoyed each other's mutual respect. I thank them for their cooperation and effort over the years, and I am proud to number them among my friends.

Two current council members will be leaving the council with me. They are John Dockendorf and Ginger Brown, both of whom I recruited to village service. Notwithstanding his involvement in several businesses and the obligations of a growing family, John found time to serve on a park exploratory committee that concluded with the recommendation to the council that the village purchase the Highland Lake golf course for the development of a passive activity park. He followed that with service on the park development advisory committee and chaired the playground subcommittee that brought us the unique playground structure that is popular with children of all ages.

In 2015, John was elected to the council and has represented the village well in transportation matters during his term in office. John brought to the council the insight of the young family with active, growing children. Most of us are well beyond that stage in life, as were council members of the past.

Of all the council members I have known in the past twenty years, the one who stands out in my mind as the hardest working and most dedicated, talented, and capable is Ginger Brown. No one in my memory has had broader responsibilities as a council member than Ginger. There is no area of village operations with which she is not familiar. Her responsibilities have included land use and planning, operation and maintenance of the village hall and grounds, human resources, information technology, and services to the public.

Ginger's first love, however, is the Park at Flat Rock, with which she has been involved from the beginning – first as chair of the park exploratory committee, then the park development advisory committee. Since her election to the council, she has served a major role in all phases of planning, development, operation, and maintenance of the park. The great success the park has enjoyed to date is attributable to Ginger's dedication to making it the best it can be.

The village has benefited greatly from the services of John and Ginger, and I thank them for that service. They will be missed.

In addition to having worked with some terrific council members, I have been blessed with a

asupporting staff par excellence. They do not come any better than Michelle Parker, our village clerk, Martha Orr, deputy village clerk and tax collector, and Pat Christie, village administrator. I shall miss them. And, of course, kudos to Judy Boleman, a veteran of eight years on the village council before joining the staff as zoning administrator and then our first village administrator. Judy's background and experience served her, and us, well when she took on those roles. And she was fun to have around the office, as everyone who knows her will attest. Judy was my first official contact with the village government when in 2000 she recruited me to serve on the planning board.

Yes, there comes a time. As I leave this office, I shall look back with fond memories on my years with the village, and I shall treasure the friendships I have made in the process. Again, I consider it a great honor to have been given the opportunity to serve this community. I thank you for that opportunity.

PPROPERTY TAX UPDATE

Property tax collections for the Village of Flat Rock are proceeding smoothly. A total of \$1,237,340 was billed and as of the end of November \$727,251 or 58.7% of that billed has been collected. Property tax bills were mailed in late August and owners have until Monday, January 6, 2020 to pay with no interest charge. On January 7, 2020 accounts will be considered to be delinquent and an interest charge of 2% will be added to the account. Subsequently on the 1st of March and the first of each month thereafter an interest charge of ¾% on the unpaid balance of the tax bill still outstanding will be charged.

The Village of Flat Rock has been collecting a property tax since 2005 and has a collection rate of 100% on real and personal property taxes billed. Henderson County formerly billed vehicle property taxes and about \$300 over the past ten years are delinquent on those taxes.

Property owners in Flat Rock have an outstanding payment record which is highly appreciated.

If you have questions or comments about your tax bill, feel free to telephone Tax Collector Martha Orr at 828-697-8100. Tax accounts may be viewed on line by going to www.villageofflatrock.org. and

clicking on the property tax tab on the right hand side of the page.

HIGHLAND LAKE

Highland Lake is the historic name and the name currently in use for the body of water identified in 1965 and later editions of U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps as *Madonna Lake*. The impoundment originated ca. 1795 to provide power for John Earle's grist mill, and it was known as Earle's mill pond. It was subsequently known by the surname of the owner of the mill. From ca. 1873, Rhett's mill was located on Rhett's mill pond, the last name by which the impoundment was known before it became Highland Lake.

Although our limited research has not revealed the date of origin of the name Highland Lake, it is reasonable to believe it was in use by the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century. In 1910, the lake and surrounding property were acquired by organizers of an exclusive private club known as the Highland Lake Club. Although the club had a short life, the name of the lake remained unchanged through subsequent ownerships at least until 1955 when it was acquired by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Raleigh for a diocesan retreat center and summer camp known as Our Lady of the Hills. It was during the diocese's ownership of the property that the lake's name was changed to Madonna Lake in honor of the Virgin Mary. The lake was known by that name until 1985 when the property was acquired by the Lindsey family who resumed the historic name of the lake and operated the property as the Highland Lake Inn and Conference Center, by which name the property is operated today by its current owner.

Today the lake is again commonly known in the community as Highland Lake. The two public roads that pass by the property are North Highland Lake Road (SR 1783) and Highland Lake Drive (SR 1825). A nearby major subdivision developed by a Lindsey entity is known as Highland Lake Village, which is within the Highland Lake Planned Mixed Use Development.

Located within the Village of Flat Rock near its northeast corner, the lake is approximately 2,400 feet long and varies in width from 200 to 600 feet. Its water source is a mountain stream known as

King Creek, a stream that flows northward through the lake and exits at the dam on North Highland Lake Road.

Highland Lake is the historic name of the lake that began as Earle's mill pond near the end of the eighteenth century. It is the name by which the lake was known for the first half of the twentieth century and has been known again since 1985. Today, most people in the community are likely unaware that the Highland Lake property was for thirty years a Catholic retreat center and summer camp or that the lake was then known as Madonna Lake.

As a result of efforts of Mayor Bob Staton, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names, on August 7, 2019, approved a change in the official identification of the lake from Madonna Lake to Highland Lake. The records and maps of the U.S. Geological Survey now correctly reflect the historic name of the lake as it is known today.





Tracey Daniels,
Development Director

The Park at Flat Rock is a great place of community pride and individual commitment. With your help, The Flat Rock Foundation has raised more than 1.3 million dollars to help purchase land and build current Park amenities. This was accomplished with approximately 420 donors. The generosity from this number of persons is something notable – *and worthy of celebration and sheer gratitude*. **Thank you, Flat Rock.**

Now that most of the amenities for The Park at Flat Rock's master plan are complete, the Foundation turns its focus to longevity, sustainability and educational programming. Educational programming will be fostered through community partnerships and targeted grants. There is much work to be done to help support The Park. You can have a part in these ongoing efforts. Support does not have to come from donations alone. Support our Park by attending events. Support our Park by following us on Facebook and joining our newsletter mailing list. Spread the word, "share," "like" and "love" our Park.

WHAT'S NEW:

Check out the Foundation's newly designed website! www.flatrockparkfoundation.org. The new website will have new features added in the next coming months including park-related nature education and a downloadable activities calendar for additional community engagement. In October, The TOT LOT officially opened to provide a safe and engaging play and learning area designed specifically for children ages up to five years. A new shelter for adults and children acts as a hub between our two playground areas. With the upcoming holidays and winter school vacation, the Park is a perfect place to bring families, grandchildren and dogs to get outdoors for some pretty views and fun.

WHAT'S NEXT:

FRIENDS OF THE PARK: In 2020, the Park Foundation will launch a **Friends of the Park** initiative. Support your favorite park with a yearly donation of \$30 or more. This Giving Society will include Friends, Patrons, Sustainers and Legacy memberships; benefits and details will be announced in March.

PARDEE IN THE PARK: Mark your calendars for Wednesdays! **Pardee in the Park** will be back early in Spring 2020 with WEEKLY programming. Free fitness classes, health and nutrition discussions and a monthly walk-with-a doctor (and/or health provider) are all coming to The Park at Flat Rock.

SPRING FLING & FALL FROLIC: The Flat Rock Park Foundation will host TWO yearly, signature public events. Both events will focus on FUN and physical activity for ALL ages. We are in the early stages of planning the SPRING FLING. Our event committee is looking for food and craft vendors, as well as health related businesses (yoga, crossfit, gymnastics and more). Sponsorship opportunities are also available. Be a part of the Spring Fling, Fall Frolic (or both!). Please contact us at Tracey@villageofflatrock.org for more information.

ANNOUNCING: I LOVE MY PARK photo contest

With creativity, imagination, and skill, take a photo that best shows why you love The Park at Flat Rock. Winner of the photo contest will receive a prize and will be announced at The Spring Fling event (date to come).

Photo contest rules:

Photo must be from within the Park at Flat Rock.

You must “like” the Park at Flat Rock Facebook Page

Tag 3 friends in your post.

Share your photo on Facebook using both hashtags **#ParkatFlatRockPhotoContest2020**
#ILOVEMY PARK

The end of each year is a time of reflection *and also a time to look forward*. Plan on making The Park at Flat Rock a part of your routine. This special park is one of Flat Rock pride. It’s a community asset that can be enjoyed by all ages.

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 and 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.

CONTACT US:

Tracey Daniels

Development Director

828-697-8100

tracey@villageofflatrock.org



*So Many Ways to Enjoy
the Park at Flat Rock*



NEWS FROM THE FLATROCK PLAYHOUSE

Flat Rock Playhouse welcomes the holiday season as a chance to celebrate the joys of 2019 and the exciting promises of the new year. The celebration began on November 29th with lively tradition, *A Flat Rock Playhouse Christmas*, which runs through December 22nd. Bringing together the Flat Rock Chorus, local student dancers, and professional performers, *A Flat Rock Playhouse Christmas* promises a unique community production full of wholesome spectacle and entertainment.

Over the past year, Flat Rock Playhouse (FRP) has celebrated another season enriching local lives. Almost 11,000 K - 12th grade students experienced the performing arts with FRP between the family series productions, educational classes, internship opportunities, and community outreach ventures including The Rootabaga Stories and Letterland Alive.

Alongside producing Broadway-quality musicals, comedies, and concerts, Flat Rock Playhouse worked with over 250 volunteers. Volunteers support this unique non-profit by ushering, transporting actors, maintaining the gardens, supporting the annual gala, participating in productions, and generously creating a heartfelt atmosphere for the young professionals.

Looking forward to the new year, FRP recently announced the 2020 Season: Puttin' on the Hits. Combining classic titles with FRP hand-crafted productions, will provide audiences a stellar season with something for everyone.

The Music on the Rock Concert Series will *rock you* this year with hit legends: *The Music of Queen*, *Donny Edwards as Elvis*, *Rumors: The Ultimate Fleetwood Mac Tribute Show*, *Jumping Jack Flash: The Music of the Rolling Stones*, and *Sizzling Summer Nights*.

The Mainstage Series showcases a dynamic set of musicals and plays that will delight audiences of all generations. Musicals include *Million Dollar Quartet*, *A Chorus Line*, *West Side Story*, *Autumn at the Opry*, and *A*

A Flat Rock Christmas

Mainstage Series plays include *Steel Magnolias*, *Hellen on Wheels*, and classic mystery, *Catch Me If You Can*. *Steel Magnolias* will take audiences to the town of Chinquapin, Louisiana where six distinctly individual women gather to support each other in good times and bad.

Helen on Wheels is a delightful heart-warming new comedy proving that feisty older ladies have the right to cause hell, play bingo and bear arms. When Helen Wheeler's son thinks it's time for her to move closer to him, she faces her own battles with loss, loneliness, and independence.

Finally, last performed on the FRP stage in the '80s, *Catch Me If You Can* transports audiences to a mountain lodge for a hilarious whodunit full of twists and turns.

Rounding out the 2020 season, Studio 52 Family Series productions include classic children's stories: *Charlotte's Web* and *The Hobbit*. Both productions explore the power of friendship, adventure, and wit.

Season subscriptions are on sale now through April 24, 2020, and single tickets will go on sale January 13, 2020. Gift certificates are on sale throughout the year and can be used for season subscriptions as well. For more information telephone 828.693.0731 or visit www.flatrockplayhouse.org.

Olivia Palmer
Marketing and Development Associate
Flat Rock Playhouse
The State Theatre of North Carolina
Box Office: [\(828\) 693 - 0731 x230](tel:8286930731)



The Staff, Mayor and Council



Wish You a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

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 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 16, 2020

Village Directory

Mayor:

Robert V. Staton 696-4020

Council Members:

District 1

Nick Weedman, Vice Mayor 693-5300

Sheryl Jamerson 698-3330

District 2

Paige Posey 606-7078

Ginger Brown 698-3465

District 3

John Dockendorf 606-1991

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