

MAY - JUNE 2023

# The Town of Laurel Park

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE TOWN OF LAUREL PARK

# Spring

National Pollinator Week  
June 19-25

WORLD BEE DAY  
MAY 20TH

No Mow May

JUMP OFF ROCK HALF  
MARATHON

HENDERSONVILLE DOCUMENT SHREDDING  
AND DRUG TAKEBACK EVENT

Jump Off Rock  
Concerts

WE'RE OUT OF  
HIBERNATION  
AND HUNGRY,  
BUT PLEASE DON'T  
LEAVE SNACKS OUT  
FOR US!

# Commissioner's Corner

## *Projects around Town*

***By: Commissioner George W. Banta***

As I reported in the last newsletter, the top priority in Laurel Park for the current fiscal year is road resurfacing and infrastructure improvements. To meet these objectives, the Town has just awarded a contract to Austin Construction Company to replace or improve approximately 31 culverts around town. This contract includes \$633,565 for construction, \$65,000 for contingencies, and \$7,500 for surveying of easements. Our Public Works Department will replace an additional 9 culverts. Funding for this stormwater improvement project will come from the Town's share of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA funds). We expect construction to start within the next few weeks.

The Town is working closely with WGLA Engineering to coordinate the culvert replacement project so that we can follow-up this summer with road paving and resurfacing. This year, the Town has allocated a little over \$1,000,000 for road resurfacing. The majority of these dollars are coming from our general fund. Some additional monies are made available for paving through the state of North Carolina's Powell Bill Funds. The road improvement plan is kept current and reviewed annually so that we can best focus on key areas of concern. A request for paving bids should be published sometime next week.

As spring weather starts to warm up a bit, you will start to see Public Works out patching potholes and improving the ditch banks along roadsides. Remember, you can report a street/road issue by going on-line to the Laurel Park website. Click on the link and report the location.

The Laurel Green Stream Restoration project is expected to get started in the next few days. The contractor is currently in the process of mobilizing the necessary equipment and materials. The stream restoration project is designed to reduce erosion, stabilize the banks, and enhance the flood plain. Funding for this project comes from the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund, plus additional monies from the state. Once the project gets underway, Laurel Green Park will have to be temporarily closed for safety concerns.

You may have noticed a crew removing English Ivy from trees along the Town's rights-of-way. Back in July 2020, the Town identified approximately 3,000 trees infested with English Ivy and Oriental Bittersweet, both non-native invasive plant species. If managed correctly, English Ivy can be beneficial in stabilizing ditch banks and steep slopes, but if allowed to grow unchecked it has the propensity to overtake the tallest of trees and cause irreparable damage. The Town has hired two part-time individuals to cut and remove the invasive vines from trees along the Town's rights-of-way. We estimate that the crew has removed about 30% of the vines. Our objective is to save our valued tree canopy and encourage individual property owners to manage their English Ivy and protect their trees. The Town has been very fortunate and appreciative to have received funding from a resident of our community to cover the cost of removing these invasive plant species along the Town's rights-of-way.



**FOR EVERYONE'S SAFETY, PLEASE REDUCE YOUR  
SPEED AND DRIVE WITH CAUTION AROUND CURVES  
WHILE CREWS ARE MAKING IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR  
INFRASTRUCTURE!!**



# PLEASE AVOID DRIVING ON THE FRESHLY LEVELED AND SEEDED ROAD SHOULDERS!

Our Public Works Dept. is addressing safety and aesthetic issues by leveling the edges of the roads with dirt and planting grass seed. However, their efforts are being thwarted by people continuing to drive off the road. Not only is this a safety issue, but you're also wasting your tax money when they have to repeat the process in the same areas!



Please don't be a Mr. Magoo. Stay on the road...everyone will appreciate it.

## BRUSH PICKUP HAS CONCLUDED

We still pick up bagged leaves year-round, upon request. Leaves must be placed in a *paper bag* in order for us to accept them. Just go to our website and the "How do I..." tab, fill out the form and it will go directly to our Public Works department.

## MULCH SALES HAVE CONCLUDED AND DELIVERY HAS BEGUN

We are no longer taking new mulch orders, but if you get delivery and find that you need another load, please let us know as soon as possible and we will accommodate you.

## HARD TO RECYCLE EVENT



The next Household Hazardous Waste & Paint Collection event is May 9th 8:00am - 12:00pm at the Henderson County Transfer Station and Convenience Center

Check their website for details  
[www.hcrecycles.org](http://www.hcrecycles.org)

## Garbage & Recycle Delayed



Trash and recycle pickup will be delayed one day the week of Memorial Day, therefore collection will take place on Friday, June 2. If you've signed up for Blackboard Connect notifications, we'll send you a reminder!



Jump Off Rock Half Marathon and 10k is taking place on Saturday, May 13th. Portions of roads throughout Town will be limited to traffic that morning from 7 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Please allow extra time to travel.

## DON'T FORGET

May 15th, 5:00 PM is the deadline to file a formal Property Reappraisal Appeal to Henderson County

# Mark your bins

Waste Pro (normally) uses separate trucks for recycle and trash.

If you use two identical bins, they need an indication that you have recycle in one of them.

If they aren't distinguishable, the recycle guys won't open it, then the trash guys will open it and see the recycle bag and leave it. If you try "RECYCLED" stickers and they fail to stick, try using blue duct tape to mark the top and sides of the recycle bin.





# Friends of Laurel Park



## Jump off Rock Concert Series

May 13th	Tuxedo Junction	Flat Rock Pizza Truck
June 10th	Asheville Jazz Band	No Food Service
Sept 16th	Two Step Too	Flat Rock Pizza Truck
October 6th	Autumnwud	No Food Service
TBD	Historical Bus Tour	

**The Friends of Laurel Park have a busy 2023 calendar of events underway!**

The first of our five Jump Off Rock (JOR) music events was held April 15, with the next ones scheduled for May 13th, June 10th, September 16th and October 6th.

Also, a historical bus tour will again occur, with dates still to be decided in July or August.

The Friends hosted a March workshop at Rhododendron Lake Nature Park, with Will Coffee presenting ways to control invasive vines within the town.

On April 29th, we partnered with the Parks and Greenways Committee for an Arbor Day tree planting and spring nature walk at Jump Off Rock. The Friends continue to work with the P&G Committee on footpath developments, and Jim Wilson continues to serve as the FLP representative on the town's Centennial Committee.

Yam Yoga started their Monday evening free yoga events at JOR at 6 pm.

***The Friends thank their many sponsors and donors for their support.***

Check the FLP website at [www.friendsoflaurelpark.org](http://www.friendsoflaurelpark.org)

## **SHRED AND DRUG TAKEBACK FRIDAY, MAY 19TH**

The City of Hendersonville will sponsor its popular Document Shred Event for City residents on Friday, May 19, 2023, from 9:00 am to 10:30 am This year's event will be held in Patton Park located at 114 E. Clairmont Drive in Hendersonville.



The Hendersonville Police Department will also offer a Drug Takeback as part of the event in order for community members to safely dispose of their unwanted or expired medications.

***Residential Security Check Forms will no longer be mailed after completion. Please provide your email address or choose the "PICK UP" option if you would like them returned to you. Forms that are not picked up within 30 days of completion will be shredded.***

# Parks and Greenways Board

With Spring just around the corner, the P&G Board has been busy! Here are just a few of the many things going on:



The Board teamed up with The Friends of Laurel Park to celebrate Arbor Day at Jump Off Rock.



Three large Serviceberry trees were planted at the park. These native trees will provide spring blooms for pollinators in addition to beautiful fall foliage.



Improvements at Laurel Green Park include 45 new perennials planted near the entrance on White Street. Thanks to all volunteers who helped with this project.



Work continues for the new pollinator garden at Canal Park. Native plants will surround a new walking path through the park.



## Laurel Park Volunteer Gardening Days - A fun way to meet your neighbors!

- May 10th at 10:00 am - Jump Off Rock
- May 24th at 10:00 am - Canal Park (Planting pollinator gardens)
- June 14th at 10:00 am - Canal Park (Planting pollinator gardens continued)
- June 28th at 10:00 am - Rhododendron Lake Nature Park

Watch for future dates and locations on the Town's website.

## Bee Keepers in Laurel Park Organize



June has been designated Pollinator Month by Bee City, USA. As an official Bee City, Laurel Park is making a concerted effort to support this ecosystem. If you are a Bee Keeper, or know someone who is, please contact Town Hall at 828-693-4840 or email [tamin@laurelpark.org](mailto:tamin@laurelpark.org) to support our efforts.

## BIRD BOX BUILDING WORKSHOP



***Come join Joe Sanders and build your own Bird Box!***

The class is free.

If you would like to purchase the materials kit to build yours, the box is \$45 and the mounting pole is \$12.

***Bring your own Hammer***

*Kids Welcome*

**When: Saturday, May 20th  
9:00am - 12:00pm**

**Where: Town Hall  
441 White Pine Dr.**

***Please sign up by May 12th at Town Hall and make checks Payable to Joe Sanders***



We're often asked to do our part in helping the environment thrive. Today, we are asking residents of Laurel Park to do nothing instead.

It's called "No Mow May." You guessed it - consider not mowing your lawn until June. By waiting until at least June to mow spring lawns, you'll give bees and other pollinators just emerging from hibernation the food they need to do the crucial work of pollinating our plants essential to our food and flower supplies.

The effort started in 2019 in the UK where 97 percent of wildflower meadows have disappeared since the 1930s, putting populations of pollinating insects in decline and threatening the natural ecosystem and agriculture that depend on pollination. It quickly spread to the United States and to our local area.

A study by the Center for Biological Diversity found that more than half of bee species are declining, with a quarter in serious peril because of habitat loss, pesticide use, climate change and urbanization.

Consider going to

[https://beecityusa.org/wpcontent/uploads/2023/03/NMA\\_CITY\\_2023\\_ENG-1.pdf](https://beecityusa.org/wpcontent/uploads/2023/03/NMA_CITY_2023_ENG-1.pdf)

to print a free sign to post in your yard so that your neighbors know what you're up to.

Hopefully, they will join you!

# You are in Bear Country

## BE BEARWISE

AT LEAST ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR WE GET A CALL FROM A NEW RESIDENT ASKING IF WE KNOW THERE IS A BEAR AROUND LAUREL PARK. YES-THERE ARE MORE THAN ONE, AND WE COEXIST WITH THEM. BUT, WE NEED TO BE SMART ABOUT IT AND FOLLOW SOME GUIDELINES

---

- NEVER FEED OR APPROACH BEARS
- SECURE GARBAGE, RECYCLING AND FOOD
- IF YOU ARE EXPECTING FOOD VIA DELIVERY SERVICE OR THROUGH THE MAIL/UPS/AMAZON, BE SURE TO RETRIEVE IT FROM YOUR PORCH OR MAILBOX IMMEDIATELY
- REMOVE BIRD FEEDERS WHEN BEARS ARE ACTIVE
- NEVER LEAVE PET FOOD OUTSIDE
- NEVER GET NEAR A MOTHER AND HER CUBS!
- CLEAN AND STORE YOUR GRILL
- ALERT YOUR NEIGHBORS TO BEAR ACTIVITY

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WHAT TO DO IF YOU ENCOUNTER A BEAR, GO TO: <https://bearwise.org>

---

## New to Laurel Park?

Be sure to stay on top of what's happening in town by signing up for notifications on **Blackboard Connect**.

Just go to [www.laurelpark.org](http://www.laurelpark.org) and click the box on the left side of the home page. You'll hear about:

Garbage holidays

When brush and leaf collections start

Utility issues

Special Events and More

# invasive specie alert



## Japanese Knotweed



Like most invasive species, Japanese Knotweed is detrimental to its surrounding environment. Although it can appear self-contained at first glance, it is an ever-expanding issue. It spreads by strong underground stems (creeping rhizomes) that can damage foundations, roads, walls, and other structures. It quickly spreads to dominate an ecosystem, depleting minerals and nutrients from the soil, and can be particularly problematic in riparian areas where the dead stems can accumulate and cause flooding, or it can contribute to streambank erosion.

Japanese Knotweed grows in dense stands and reaches incredible heights very quickly. This makes it almost impossible for herbivores to feed on or trample it to keep it under control. Its roots are also incredibly hardy and the only way to permanently remove a stand of Japanese Knotweed is to completely dig out and remove its rhizomes, a nearly impossible feat. In addition, its fruits are very small and easily spread by waterways and the wind. It is often still planted in gardens by those who are unaware of the damage it can cause, making management a continuous battle.

For more information on identifying and controlling Japanese Knotweed and many other species, go to:

[plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/reynoutria-japonica/](https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/reynoutria-japonica/) [text](#)



## VALLEY HILL FIRE ACHIEVES OUTSTANDING ISO RATING



Recently, Valley Hill Fire Department (VHFD) completed a review of their required ISO Fire Protection Rating with outstanding results. As of March 23, VHFD achieved a Level II rating, up from its previous rating of Level III. This is a very significant accomplishment for Chief Tim Garren and his team. Very few fire departments in North Carolina have insurance ratings below Level III. For the residents of Laurel Park, that Level II rating is something to celebrate and appreciate.

An ISO (Insurance Services Office) fire rating, also referred to as a Public Protection Classification (PPC), is a score from one to ten (I, II, III...X) that indicates how well-protected your community is by the fire department. In the ISO rating scale, a lower number is better: one is the best possible rating, while a ten means the fire department did not meet ISO's minimum requirements. The median and most common rating is Level V.

Insurers use ISO ratings to calculate homeowners' insurance rates. Lower ISO ratings means lower insurance rates. Comparing the impact of fire ratings (Level I through Level X) on insurance premiums demonstrates a difference of hundreds, even thousands, of dollars for homeowners and businesses.

But it's not just about the savings on insurance premiums...

From a more personal perspective, an ISO rating provides a measurable amount of security. Knowing our own Valley Hill Fire & EMS works hard to maintain the highest tier of skill and preparedness when fire or other emergency situations arise is an incredible asset, especially considering Laurel Park is in a moderately high-risk wildfire zone.

Congratulations, Chief Garren and VHFD members on your outstanding achievement!

And many thanks for your excellent service in our community!

For more information, go to: [How Does the Fire Department Rating Benefit the Community?](#)

---

### ***Lightning Safety: What You Need to Know***

- NO PLACE OUTSIDE is safe when thunderstorms are in the area!!
- If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you.
- When you hear thunder, immediately move to safe shelter: a substantial building or a metal topped vehicle.
- Stay in safe shelter at least 30 minutes after you hear the last sound of thunder.

### ***Indoor Lightning Safety***

- Stay off corded phones, computers and other electrical equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity.
- Avoid plumbing, including sinks, baths, and faucets.
- Stay away from windows and doors and stay off porches.
- Do not lie on concrete floors, and do not lean against concrete walls.
- If you think your house has been struck by lightning call 911 immediately and have the fire department respond.**

# CALENDAR



NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK



April 30-May 6

Municipal Clerks Week



May 6

Wildfire Community Preparedness Day

May 10 & 24

Volunteer Gardening Day, 10am (10th - Jump off Rock, 24th - Canal Park)

May 13

Jump Off Rock Half-Marathon & 10k Race



May 14-20

Police Week

May 19

Hendersonville Shred and Drug Takeback Event 9am-10:30am at Patton Park

May 20

Bird Box Building Workshop



May 21-27

Public Works Week

May 29

Memorial Day - Town Offices Closed

June 2

Trash Pickup on Friday due to Memorial Day Holiday



June 14 & 28

Volunteer Gardening Day, 10am (14th - Canal Park, 28th - Rhododendron Lake)

TBD

Volunteer Appreciation Day

## Public Meeting Schedule

### Town Council Regular Meeting

May 16 @ 9:30 am in person and via Zoom

June 20 @ 9:30 am in person and via Zoom

### Town Council Work Session

May 11 @ 9:30 am in person and via Zoom (Budget Workshop)

June 15 @ 9:30 am in person and via Zoom

(Budget Public Hearing)

### Parks & Greenways Board

May 9 @ 9:30 am in person and via Zoom

June 13 @ 9:30 am in person and via Zoom

### Centennial Committee

May 8 @ 11:30 am in person and via Zoom

June 12 @ 11:30 am in person and via Zoom

### Bicycle Advisory Committee

May 8 @ 3:00 pm in person

June 12 @ 3:00 pm in person

### Planning Board

May 9 @ 3:00 pm in person and via Zoom

June 13 @ 3:00 pm in person and via Zoom

### ABC Board - at the ABC Store

May 23 @ 8:30 am in person

June 27 @ 8:30 am in person

### Zoning Board of Adjustment

May 11 @ 4:00 pm in person and via Zoom

## Call Hendersonville for water and sewer service issues

Hendersonville handles the water and sewer services for Laurel Park.

For your home service or to report water leaks in the street, please call: M-F 828-697-3052

After business hours and weekends 828-891-7779

## Town Contact Information

**Town Hall** 693-4840

9:00 am – 5:00 pm Mon - Fri

**Police Office** 692-9399

(non-emergency)

**Police Non-Emergency** 697-3025

**Valley Hill Fire** 692-2581

**Mayor:** J. Carey O’Cain

**Mayor Pro Tem:** Paul Hansen

**Commissioners:** George W. Banta

Kristin Dunn

Deborah Hinson Bridges

**Town Manager:** Alex Carmichael

**Police Chief:** Bobbie Trotter

**Finance Director:** Position Open

**Public Works Director:** Brandon Johnson

**Asst. to the Manager:** Jordan Jones

**Town Clerk:** Tamara Amin