



Spring Holds New Promise

Spring being the time of new growth we look forward to a busy and profitable season for our businesses in Madison County. The *Farmer's Market* has opened for the season. It was a cold wintry first day but several hardy vendors gathered around the warmth of the barbecue cooker and got the job done.

Spring is also the time for a "new crop" of graduates to move on from *Madison High School* to explore their future. The annual *Chamber Scholars Banquet* in May recognizes many of our outstanding students and highlights their achievements. Other educational news includes the ground breaking for a new dormitory at *Mars Hill College* to support a sharp rise in enrollment and to support future student body growth. Numerous festivals such as *Trailfest*, *Bluff Mountain*, and *Plow Days* are on tap to entertain us and the visitors to Madison County.

The rafting and hiking season is off to a good start with most of our April weather being warmer than usual – softball and baseball can not be far behind. *Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre* opens its season June 1 and closes in August with an original production based on the Shelton Laurel massacre. Many of our civic clubs, fire departments, community centers, churches and other non-profit groups have dinners, breakfasts, auctions and many other fundraising events that are great to attend and help support vital work in the communities all across Madison County.

Let's get out and enjoy all the things that make Madison County a great place to live.

*O'Neal Shelton, President
Madison County Chamber of Commerce*

Volunteers Needed

You can help make important contributions to the vitality of Madison County. Help distribute business directories, or meet and greet folks while you promote local businesses as a volunteer at the local farmers market and other area events. Contact us today! We have everything you need! 689-9351

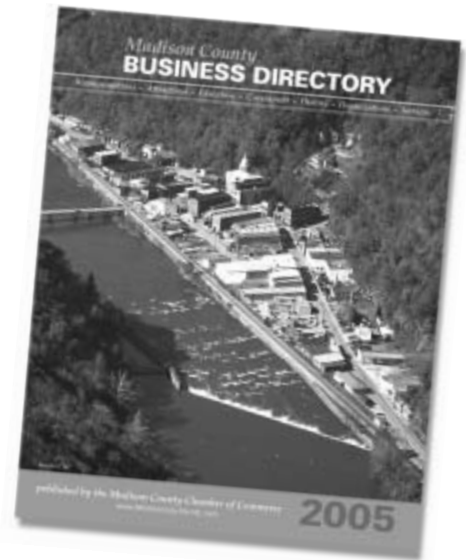
2005 Madison County Business Directory: a Great Resource

by Simone Bouyer

6,000 Madison County Chamber of Commerce Business Directories have been printed for 2005 and are available at several locations in Mars Hill, Hot Springs and Marshall, including all of the Public Libraries and the Visitor's Center. All chamber members should have received a copy of the 2005 Business Directory in the mail.

The cover of this year's directory features an aerial shot of Marshall taken by Steve Duncan last fall. He would like to take to the skies again later this year to photograph Hot Springs.

The 2005 Business Directory reflects the pride and self-reliance of the businesses, people and the close knit communities that have made Madison County such a good place to live. The directory is dedicated to the people in business here – the people who work hard to make a living, who stand by their neighbors,



The directory includes more than 150 small business enterprises, service people, and individuals in business for themselves, many with 3 or fewer employees.

people who would rather spend their dollars here, if practical, before driving out to the surrounding cities.

The directory includes more than 150 small business enterprises, service people, and individuals in business for themselves, many with 3 or fewer employees. Madison County Chamber of Commerce members are community minded folks who support Madison County. They represent the diversity and strength of our business economy across the county. We encourage everyone to use this directory – you'll not only be supporting local businesses, you'll be joining us as friends and neighbors.

Look for the Madison County Business Directory, it contains accommodations, attractions, education and health information, government history, as well as organizations and services not found in other publications.

You can help distribute the directory – our area libraries have agreed to be distribution

points. Directories are needed at area shops and offices. Cases of the directories are also available at the Visitors Center, now located on Anderson street in Mars Hill.

Take pride in Madison County, support local businesses. By joining the Madison County Chamber of Commerce you help us promote the many wonderful people and businesses that can only be found right here.

Contact the Chamber by calling 689-9351, or write: PO Box 1085, Mars Hill, NC 28754 for more information. Membership applications can be found on the next page, or online at www.madisoncounty-nc.com.

Contact the Chamber

PHONE: 828 689-9351

PO Box 1085, Mars Hill, NC 28754
chamber@madison.main.nc.us

Chamber 2005 Board Meeting Highlights

- February 2005 -

• A Special Project is being planned by the Department of Parks & Recreation with assistance from Madison High and Mission Health Services.

A 2 story, 1.4 million health facility is being planned by the Department of Parks & Recreation. The main floor would house a workout and fitness center, dressing rooms and multi purpose rooms which could be used for therapy, aerobics, tumbling, wrestling and other community events and activities.

Lynn Bowles from the Department of Parks & Recreation spoke about the 1.4 million health facility being planned. This joint project would be located on the 25-70 Bypass in the field below Madison High School where football practice is currently being held. The old Ingles lot would provide parking.

The facility would be 2 stories, with a gym on the top floor and an indoor walking track. The main floor would house a workout and fitness center, dressing rooms and multi purpose rooms which could be used for therapy, aerobics, tumbling, wrestling and other activities. The space would be flexible enough to be used by the community for all types of events.

The plan is divided into two phases, with Phase II, the most expensive part of the plan, including a swimming pool, a kitchen area and a rock climbing wall. The facility would be paid for by grants, and is planning to break ground in September of this year. Plans for the facility should be finalized by July. Matching funds are being provided by the State Trust Fund, the Department of Parks & Recreation and contributions from members of the community.

The facility will be open to the public; membership fees will cover operating costs. Once the facility is built it will need equipment, staff and on-site therapists. The gym will be used for youth and adult leagues,

high school practice, not games, and also serve as an emergency shelter and distribution center.

Lynn Bowles can be reached at 649-3635 or email lbowles@madisoncountync.org. Her office is located

in the old Ingles center in Marshall.

• Loretta Shelton has been helping the education committee along with support from Frank Fisher's assistant to organize and promote the 2005 Chamber Scholarship fund. The application can be downloaded from the Chamber's website, www.madison-county-nc.com.

- March 2005 -

• Several Chamber expenses dropped in cost, allowing the Chamber to pay Claudia Reavis more for bookkeeping. Our current map will need to be reprinted in 2006. Funds have been carried over from 2004 to cover the cost of printing the directory. All funds in excess of the projected budget are currently in savings.

• The Madison County Partnership held a planning meeting on March 24 at the Rural Life Museum. Simone Bouyer, Jerry Plemmons and Phyllis Stiles were in attendance and many ideas were presented on ways the Partnership can continue to provide services and activities for area businesses and farms.

• According to Ross at the Madison County Cooperative Extension office, a grant will be used to turn the old glove factory near the Elderberry Nursing Home into an agricultural center.

• Sections of the Blue Ridge Parkway are still closed from Asheville to Virginia due to flood damage. The visitor's center at Linville Falls is closed due to damage.

- April 2005 -

• The Chamber scholarship fund attained its goal of \$10,000. The chamber applied \$1200 from its savings to the fund. Loretta Shelton is currently the head of the education committee.

• The Madison County Community Foundation is holding an annual fundraiser to support all non-profit organizations in Madison County. The Community Foundation is inviting area organizations to sponsor a raft for \$500 each. The event will be similar to walk-a-thons, where \$5 sponsors will be sought for each organization's raft. Each organization will keep half of the funds they raise.

The Foundation also helps organizations establish endowment funds, providing the organizations with a structure for giving. Not into rafting? Buy a raft or a slot on a raft and give that spot to an at-risk student from Madison Middle School. The Community Foundation also uses the event to give 50-60 at-risk youth the chance to experience rafting on the French Broad. All donations are accepted. The event will include a cookout and spa time.

A rafting experience can be used as great team building exercise for an organization's staff, board, or clients taking about 4 hours total. Last years event raised \$6,000 for the Madison County Community Foundation's unrestricted grant-making fund. Grants awarded to organizations ranged from \$500 to \$1000. The Chamber will be an event sponsor, and Hot Springs businesses will be helping by supplying rafting guides and equipment, foods, locations, etc. for the June 5 event.

Reasons to Join the Madison County Chamber of Commerce:

- ✓ Free business listing in the Madison County Business Directory
- ✓ Free business and event listings on www.madisoncounty-nc.com

Your Name: (Mr. Ms. etc.) _____

Company Name or Organization: _____

Business Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail: _____ Web Address: _____

Business Category: (Health Care, Real Estate, Crafts, etc.) You can select up to 3 categories free.

Description of Business Activity: Please limit to 20 words, .50 cents for additional words.

Business Entities (Corporation, LLC, Partnerships, etc.) should pay dues based on number of employees. Number of Employees: (Full Time/Part Time/Seasonal): _____

I would like to join the Chamber as a:

Business/Industry

- 1-4 Employees \$40.00
- 5-8 Employees \$75.00
- 9-14 Employees \$90.00
- 15-25 Employees \$120.00
- 26 + Employees \$270.00

Professional

- Lawyer, Doctor, Dentist, Vet, etc. \$85.00
- Real Estate \$100.00
- Financial (Bank/Utility) \$220.00
- Educational \$120.00
- Non-Profit Organization/Club/Church \$35.00
- Individual (Non-Business Listing) \$25.00

Please mail your check along with this application to:

Madison County Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 1085, Mars Hill, NC 28754

Dues are not refundable! Memberships run from January through December, after July 1 dues are 1/2 off for first time members only. Inquiries may be made by calling 689-9351 and/or 680-9546. Or, e-mail the chamber at: madisonchamber@main.nc.us

Madison County Advertise Here
for Just \$20

Chamber of Commerce

We are dedicated to helping you succeed!
Promote your business in our quarterly newsletter.

EVENTS NEEDED: Submit your public events
for FREE inclusion on our web site.

chamber@madison.main.nc.us
(828) 689-9351

Chamber Board Meetings

Madison County Chamber of Commerce Board Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month. All interested parties are encouraged to attend. Meetings begin at 8am at the Mashburn Medical Center in Marshall.

Upcoming Meetings:

- Tuesday, May 3, 2005
- Tuesday, June 7, 2005
- Tuesday, July 5, 2005
- Tuesday, August 2, 2005
- Tuesday, September 6, 2005

Chamber Officers 2004-2005

- O'Neal Shelton** - President
- Tammy Williams** - Vice President
- Jennifer Hott** - Treasurer
- Simone Bouyer** - Secretary

Visitor's Center Now on Anderson Street in Mars Hill

Larry Burda spoke to the Chamber on the Visitor Center's move to the blue Hoffman house on Anderson Street, just next door to the Verizon equipment center. Parking is available in back of the building with the town providing additional space for RV parking just behind the current parking area. A ramp will be built and restrooms have been updated for handicapped access, making it an ADA approved facility.

Both the Visitors Center and the Chamber are grateful for the years that Mars Hill College allowed us to use the Jarvis House.

Lila Nikla is managing the Visitors Center in its new location. Claudia Reavis, the executive secretary for the chamber, has an office on the main floor. The Visitor's Center runs on volunteer help and minimal funds provided by TDA from NC's 3% room tax on hotels and motels over 5 rooms.

As agri-tourism picks up the Visitor Center hopes to organize tours for county organizations, businesses and volunteers interested in all that Madison County has to offer.

If you would like to learn more about Madison County, or if you'd enjoy greeting Madison's many visitors, please contact Lila Nikla at 689-2582. Volunteers are needed to cover three hour shifts Monday through Saturday mornings, 10 am to 1 pm, or afternoons, 1 to 4 pm.



75 Anderson Street, the new location of the Madison County Visitor's Center

Building Opportunities with Brownfields

On February 24 an educational and networking seminar was held in Asheville to discuss the nuts and bolts of how the Brownfields program works. Thanks to the Land of Sky Regional Brownfields Initiative (RBI), participants had the opportunity to learn how underutilized sites can become prosperous community assets.

What are Brownfields?

Brownfields are defined as abandoned, idled, or underused properties where redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination. Brownfields are inherently good projects if they are fundamentally good real estate deals. A few of the challenges involved include the amount of time involved: 6 months to implement the Brownfields agreement; 1 to 3 months for insurance underwriting; 2 to 12 weeks for environmental assessments.

In western North Carolina, local communities are adopting Brownfields redevelopment as a strategy for planned economic development. Developable land is limited by our mountains - communities must decide where and how new development will be accommodated. Once cleanup liability for safe reuse can be defined, Brownfields can compete with "greenfields" as viable investment opportunities.

The town of Fletcher is partnering with the RBI to develop an abandoned lumber treatment facility into a new Town Hall. In Hendersonville plans are underway to transform an old hosiery mill into a cultural arts center. Brownfields sites are frequently located in town centers where a redeveloped property has a significant impact on the area. This type of development greatly reduces municipal sprawl.

The Land of Sky Regional Brownfields Initiative is a partnership among Western North Carolina's economic developers, local officials, bankers, environmental planners, realtors, community members. The RBI provides both financial and technical assistance to those seeking Brownfields agreements for properties. Support from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Economic Development Administration (EDA), Advantage West and others enables the

RBI to provide funding assistance for Brownfields in the region. The program also helps Brownfields owners secure funding for environmental cleanup and prepare for future redevelopment.

A community realizes many benefits by redeveloping a Brownfield. Removing environmental contamination on a property is a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization and creates an opportunity for new neighborhood business.

Brownfields redevelopment minimizes potential environmental health hazards to the community. As abandoned properties become inhabited once again, communities are revitalized, historic buildings are preserved, neighborhood safety is improved and our sense of place is enhanced.

Any organization can contact Land of Sky RBI staff for confidential, non-regulatory, free consultation. The RBI program does not directly solicit site owners for participation in the program. Site owners or representatives submit application forms to the RBI program which then evaluates and selects sites for assistance. RBI is able to guide site owners and prospective developers through the various processes involved, including: selection and management of any needed consultants, contractors, and/or other specialists; community outreach functions; serving as liaison with the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR) and the EPA.

Applicants should have a clear idea how the proposed Brownfields development benefits residents and businesses; a description of steps to be taken if proposed project has a negative impact; and costs of financing and development.

For more information on the Regional Brownfields Initiative, visit the website at www.ncbrownfields.org, or contact the Land of Sky Regional Council, 25 Heritage Drive, Asheville, NC 28806.

- Ron Townley, Senior Planner (828) 251-6622, ron@landofsky.org.
- Tracy Wahl, NCDENR Project Manager (828) 251-6622, Tracy.Wahl@ncmail.net

8th Annual French Broad River Festival May 6-8

The Eighth Annual French Broad River Festival, a benefit for American Whitewater, will take place in Hot Springs, at the Hot Springs Campground and Spa. Come spend Mother's Day weekend with family and friends listening to the sounds of the Dirty Dozen Brass Band and other great regional music, shopping for new outdoor gear at the Silent Auction or with one of our many vendors, and watching or participating in either the Kayak Rolling Rodeo, the mass start Bicycle Race, or the French Broad River Raft Race.

Admission to the festival is \$50. This includes camping, music, registration fees for whitewater events (if you have your own boat), one raffle ticket, and good times. If you don't have your own boat, but would like to be in the raft race, a limited number of tickets are available for \$75. These include a spot in a raft for the raft race with a guide plus everything the \$50 ticket offers. These are available online at www.ticketweb.com. For more information visit www.frenchbroadriverrfestival.com or phone (828) 712-4820.

Ongoing Events

Traditional Music at the Depot

Every Friday, 7pm, Main Street in Marshall. Free, donations accepted.

Live Country Music and Dance

Every Friday, 7pm, at the Walnut Volunteer Fire Department, on US Hwy. 25/70 near Walnut.

Live Music at Paddlers Pub

Bluegrass Jam every Friday, 7:30 pm. Various local bands every Saturday, 7:30 pm. Located on Bridge Street, in Hot Springs.

Country, Dance & Swing at Maggie's Place

Every Saturday, 7pm - 1am, 37 Dogwood Street in Mars Hill. For more information call 689-3208, or email: danceatmaggiesplace@yahoo.com

Welcome 2005 Chamber Members

The Madison County Chamber of Commerce is growing in leaps and bounds. We want you to be proud of the Chamber and be aware of all your neighbors and friends who join us as Chamber members.

Shambhala Mosaics by Zane

David Zane
68 Green Valley Drive
Mars Hill NC 28754
828 689-9624
e-mail: shambhalamosaics@earthlink.net
Website: shambhalamosaics.com

Art - Mosaic art ranging from mirrors to tables. Custom orders welcome. Workshops taught in various locations. Showing in several mountain galleries.

Western Carolina Business Journal

Rick Corbitt
201 Westgate Parkway
Asheville, NC 28806
828 252-7771
Fax: 828 255-7707
e-mail: rick@wcbj.biz
Website: www.wcbj.biz

Business news publication covering Western North Carolina.

Atnegam Farm

Hershel & June Williams
15 Atnegam Lane
Leicester, NC 28748
828 683-3678

Watergarden plants, fish, succulents (over 50 varieties). Living wreaths, topiary, hypertufa and classes.

Support
Our County
Businesses

- Directory Corrections -

Corrected e-mail address:

Wolf Mountain Realty and Rentals

383 Wolf Laurel Road
Mars Hill, NC 28754
Dinah Carver, Broker in Charge
Connie Carver, Vinie Bailey, Bob Moser
Toll Free: 1-800-221-0409
828 680-9777
Fax: 828 689-3540
e-mail: dddinah77@aol.com
Website: www.wolfmountainrealty.com

Full real estate services and resort rentals including cabins, condos and villas.

Corrected business address:

Bee & Thistle Antiques

55 North Main Street, in Weaverville
Mail: PO Box 844
Marshall, NC 28753
Sherye L. Perry
828-658-9929
Fax: 828 658-9929
e-mail: slperry@madison.main.nc.us
Website: www.bee-thistleantiques.com

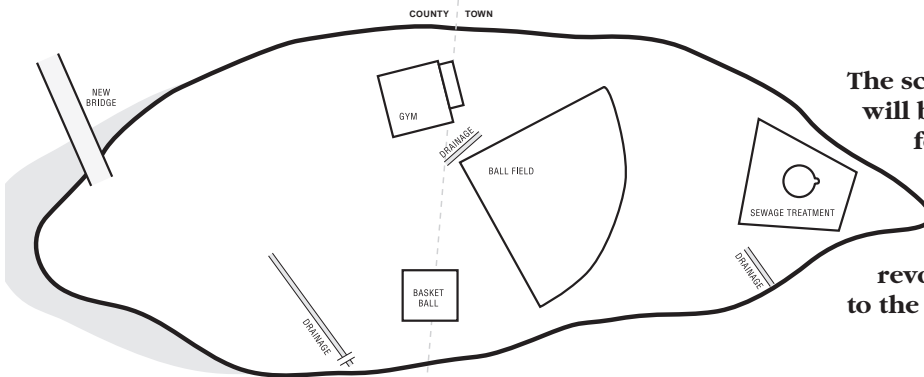
Antiques - exclusive line of candles, soaps and gifts; art and books.

We apologize for any incorrect information listed in our 2005 business directory. If your listing is incorrect, please don't hesitate to contact us by calling 689-9351.

Madison County
Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 1085
Mars Hill, NC 28754

BULK RATE
U.S. Postage
PAID
Mars Hill, NC 28754
Permit #48

Plans Sought for Marshall's Blannahassett Island



The school building on Blannahassett Island will be removed. Community ideas are sought for use of the island. Shown here is a drawing of the island without the two school buildings.

Suggestions for the island should revolve around ways to draw the community to the island at all times of the day.

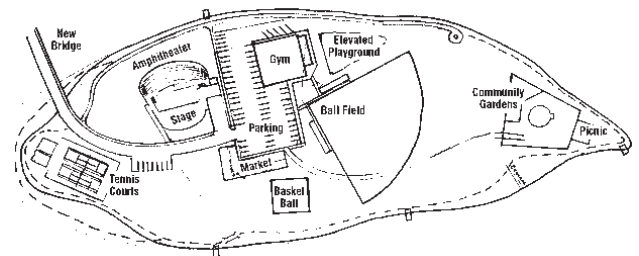
Some ideas that have been mentioned:

- An amphitheater for concerts, events and community theater
- Covered picnic areas
- Central parking area near the gym
- Elevated playground large enough to support two different age groups and activities
- Community vegetable and flower gardens
- Fishing piers
- Elevated tennis courts and a practice wall

- A continuous paved trail around the island for wheelchairs, strollers and skating
- Permanent bleachers for the ball field
- Trees and lighting

Proposals can be submitted to Lynn Bowles at the county administration office, 649-3635 or email lbowles@madisoncountync.org.

Plans should be flood proof or flood resistant. The gym building and the ball fields will remain.



Above plan submitted by Doug Mackenzie