

Roaming Around Reidsville

By Angela G. Stadler
Public Information Officer
City of Reidsville

In this inaugural column about what is happening in the City of Reidsville, we thought it best to use the title, “Roaming Around Reidsville,” for a variety of reasons. First, “Roam Reidsville” is the name of the City’s recently launched QR Code Video project that highlights some of the historical sections around the City. Residents and visitors alike can download a free QR Code app to their smartphone, click on the QR Codes found on downtown directional signs or at local attractions, and see short videos about the location.

“Roam Reidsville” started as a collaborative effort between Reidsville High School and the City. As a class project, RHS students videotaped a short history about the historic Penn House located at 324 Maple Street. The students had to research the facility, meet with Penn House Manager Judy Yarbrough, film the house and find historical photos to be included in the video. Reidsville Mayor Pro Tem Harry Brown narrated the video for the students.

That video served as the launching pad for the “Roam Reidsville” video tour, which was researched by City staff with the help of Reidsville Area Foundation interns Zach Tate and Abby Bryan, taped by local videographer Chase Nappier and narrated primarily by current and past Mayors and Council members. Additional locations on the tour include American Tobacco Company; Reidsville City Hall, Reidsville Municipal Building (Police Department); Reidsville Public Library; “Budding Future” sculpture; Kelly’s Way; Mural Park; Market Square; and RCARE (Reidsville Center for Active Retirement Enterprises). Another class of students at Reidsville High School is currently working on additional videos.

Secondly, the City of Reidsville has always liked to give a nod to the past as it looks to the future. That is why many of its City offices and departments are located in historical structures. Yet the City continues to look forward. No where has that been more evident than at the Reidsville City Council’s Annual Budget Retreat held Saturday, January 27, at The Penn House, which was so jam-packed with information that it continued on until January 30 and then February 20! The City Council got a look at several upcoming projects as the City seeks to encourage residential and commercial growth in Reidsville.

To do that, the City is focusing on its strengths. How better to do that than to capitalize on what the City currently offers and expand on those offerings to entice more visitors. The “Football Capital of North Carolina” is taking the concept of teamwork to a new level here in Reidsville. In the coming months, you will be seeing a lot of initiatives designed to recruit new residents and strengthen team spirit among our locals. “Team Reidsville” will focus on showcasing what the City has to offer, from unique downtown restaurants and shops to expanded recreational facilities. We will be introducing new reasons to come to Reidsville and re-introducing our own residents to local attractions such as Lake

Reidsville, Lake Hunt, a wonderful network of neighborhood parks and ever expanding miles of greenway trails and blueways.

Economic and residential development go hand-in-hand with the amenities a City has to offer, along with a revitalized downtown and robust commercial shopping areas. The City of Reidsville's official website, reidsvillenc.gov, will be paired with soon-to-be launched companion websites dedicated to economic development and tourism. These easy-to-navigate websites will showcase amenities that we sometimes take for granted and remind us why we love living in Reidsville!

More information on these initiatives will be found in future editions. Right now, let's highlight some of the things currently going on in the City of Reidsville.

Preventative Maintenance on Water System

Beginning March 5 and continuing through May 7, the City will be doing preventative maintenance service on our water distribution system. While this is going on, we will switch from our current chloramines to chlorine to optimize the water quality in our water system. This isn't a new process – we've done it twice before. The change could mean some minor taste and odor changes, but this is normal and doesn't affect water quality.

Reidsville Police Department's Citizens Academy

Last year's successful Academy means a repeat! The second year starts Thursday, March 8. Participants will get the opportunity to learn more about police work through this inside look at law enforcement. The 10-week Academy is designed so that these participants become partners with the police to help identify problems and solutions to issues facing our community.

Workforce Development Initiatives

The City continues to work with local industries and Rockingham Community College to provide "Employment Bootcamps." These classes teach soft skills to participants, who then have the opportunity to apply for jobs with the host company. So far, the City's Economic Development Department has partnered with local industries like Premiere Finishing, Unifi, Keystone Foods and Henniges Automotive to teach prospective employees what these companies are looking for in their workers. The City's Parks & Recreation Department has provided Career Readiness programs to high school students at the Teen Center, Reidsville High School and at the Reidsville Chamber of Commerce's annual Business Showcase.

Creating an Active Adult Community

The City of Reidsville, a Certified North Carolina Retirement Community, is positioning itself to be a truly Active Adult Community. We are the only City in North Carolina to receive the coveted American Association of Retirement Communities' "Seal of Approval." The AARC has recognized the City's commitment to providing amenities and a "best in style" lifestyle to its retired residents. The availability of top notch healthcare like that provided by the Moses Cone Health System and Annie Penn Hospital, as well as a State-of-the-Art senior center, RCARE, is helping in our efforts to recruit retirees who are not interested in sitting still but, instead, are looking for things to do, among them, opening new businesses and restoring historic homes.

Online and Phone Bill Pay Options

Last year the City began offering residents the chance to pay their utility bills online or through an automated phone service. While some of our citizens still prefer to stop by City Hall or call in their payment information, we were excited to be able to offer our residents these additional ways to pay. You can go to our website, reidsvillenc.gov, to find out how to take advantage of this new service.

An Expanding Parks & Recreation Experience

Reidsville already provides a lot of recreational offerings for a city our size. Lake Reidsville and Lake Hunt, along with nine City parks and an ever-expanding greenway system, are already available to our residents. In 2018, you can expect to see the City take this recreational experience up a notch throughout Reidsville, but again, we will be highlighting that in future articles here at *Eden's Own Journal*.