



FAMILIES CHANGE TOMORROWS

**High Country
Caregivers**
Families Change Tomorrows

Fall 2023

From Our Director

by Jacob Willis

I've got some exciting news to share about the growth and positive strides happening at High Country Caregivers as we work hard to meet the increasing needs of our community. The last quarter has seen HCC's biggest growth financially and programmatically.

Our number of children served exceeds 300, doubling the number from last year. In just one week in Yancey County, we welcomed 11 new children into our care. This kind of growth is only possible because of your continued support. Weeks like that are a stark reminder of how critical our mission is, prompting us to continue expanding and enhancing our initiatives.

A special thank you to everyone who contributed to the tremendous success of our fourth annual "A Night at Chetola." The night was dedicated to our friend Kent Tarbutton. Kent and Shelley mean so much to the HCC family and High Country Community! We could never thank them, their family, and Chetola Resort enough for their support. We will miss Kent, but in faith, know that we will see him again soon! Kent was so generous and kind. He truly was a light in the darkness and a beacon of hope. Thanks to generous donors like you, we raised over \$80,000! This money will help families stay together, and children will have life-changing experiences. Kent would have been very pleased, and I know he was smiling down on us all!



Jacob Willis
Director of HCC

Continued on page 2

Also, a big thank you to all those who participated in our inaugural Sporting Clay Championship. Not only did we enjoy a fun day of shooting, but we also raised valuable funds to further our mission.

Heartfelt thanks goes to one of our incredible partners, The Brookdale Foundation, for generously sponsoring and making our recent trip to their annual conference possible. Our partnership with The Brookdale Foundation Group has proven invaluable, providing us the means to empower our team with knowledge and vital connections. Their generous sponsorship of our trip to the annual conference has given our team insights to better fulfill our mission.

We're getting ready for our yearly Christmas Angels event, and we're excited to announce that we have 200 (and counting) kids signed up this year—an incredible 30 percent increase from last year. This growth is truly exceptional, especially considering that last year we more than doubled our numbers from the year before. We're reaching out to you for support to ensure every one of these 'Angels' has a special Christmas. There are two simple ways to sponsor a child: either pick up an ornament with a child's wishlist at HCC, purchase the listed items, and drop them off at our office—an incredibly rewarding experience for our generous donors. If shopping isn't possible, you can sponsor a child by donating online at HighCountryCaregivers.org or by sending a check to High Country Caregivers with 'Christmas Angels' clearly designated. Our dedicated staff and volunteers will handle the shopping and wrapping.

With your generous assistance, we're confident we can provide these children with a holiday beyond their wildest dreams. May your kindness be repaid in abundance. Thank you for being a part of this heartwarming endeavor.

SPONSOR A CHILD

'Tis the Season to Spread Joy: Sponsor a Christmas Angel

As we approach the holiday season, we are filled with gratitude and excitement for the spirit of sharing and caring. Your generous support enables us to continue our meaningful work. Last year, with your help, we successfully sponsored over 170 Christmas Angels, and we are reaching out to you once again to be part of this heartwarming initiative.

Our aim during the holiday season is to brighten the lives of children who may not have the opportunity to receive gifts otherwise. This year, we aspire to fulfill over 200 holiday wishes. To achieve this goal, we are seeking sponsors who can contribute \$250 per child, which will ease the financial burden on caregivers and ensure that each child receives essential winter clothing and cherished items from their wish list.

If you would like to sponsor a child:

- Call the HCC office at 828-832-6366 to pick up a special ornament, which provides details such as age, gender, size, and a heartfelt gift request from the child.
- If shopping isn't feasible for you, consider making a donation on our website at highcountrycaregivers.org. Simply click on the 'give' tab and select Christmas Angels. Alternatively, you can mail a check payable to High Country Caregivers to PO Box 3356, Boone, NC 28607, and our dedicated team will handle the rest.

Together, let's make this holiday season truly special for these amazing children. Your generosity and compassion will bring smiles, warmth, and holiday cheer to their lives. Thank you for being a beacon of hope and joy during this meaningful time of year.



**SCAN THE CODE TO
MAKE A DONATION**



Program & Event Updates

HCC Families Embark on a Journey Aboard Tweetsie Railroad

On September 30th, a total of 140 children and caregivers gathered at Tweetsie Railroad for a day full of fun! We could not thank the C.P. Abernethy Family enough for the opportunity for our families to come together on this day. They were able to ride on the No. 12 locomotive and many other attractions Tweetsie has to offer. Many of our children and caregivers have never had the opportunity to visit Tweetsie as a family, and we are so thankful again to have created a long lasting partnership with Dr. Ronald Key, his family members, and Tweetsie Railroad.

Here's to many more years of memories made at Tweetsie, we'll see you next year!



Eyes in the Wild: Appalachian Mountain Leadership Camping Trip

On the weekend of October 7, a group of our teens were able to gather at Table Rock Mountain and take part in an overnight camping adventure with Appalachian Mountain Leadership, also known as AML. AML is a non-profit organization that utilizes adventure programming to foster and inspire servant leadership. During this trip, they reached new heights at the peak of Table Rock while honing their leadership and teamwork skills.

A big thank you to Wonderlust Acres in Purlear for sponsoring this group of future leaders. Stay tuned for the next Eyes in the Wild Adventure!

• MISSION •



The High Country Caregivers mission is to provide advocacy, support, and education for kinship caregivers and their families.



GRAND CONNECTIONS

Celebrating Grandparents & Kinship Awareness

September was a truly special month for High Country Caregivers, marked by the celebration of both National Kinship Care Awareness Month and National Grandparents Day. This presented a wonderful opportunity for us to express our gratitude and admiration to our beloved grandparents and caregivers for the love, wisdom, and dedicated efforts they shower upon us.

In honor of this month, we had the privilege of treating our caregivers to a well-deserved lunch, a small token of our appreciation. Our caregivers from Avery and Mitchell were celebrated at No. 3 Grill in Spruce Pine, while those from Wilkes and Ashe enjoyed a delightful gathering at HillBilly Grill in West Jefferson. Additionally, our Watauga families celebrated over friendly conversation and a delicious meal at Grace Lutheran Church, featuring Chick-fil-A.

At High Country Caregivers, we see National Grandparent's Day and Kinship Awareness Month as more than just a designated day on the calendar; it's a poignant reminder of the invaluable role grandparents and caregivers play in all our lives.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to everyone who joined us in celebrating this special month. Your participation made it even more memorable, and we look forward to continuing to honor and cherish our remarkable caregivers throughout the year.

EVENT IN REVIEW

Chetola Hosts High Country Caregivers' Successful 4th Annual Gala

High Country Caregivers hosted the 4th annual "Night at Chetola" fundraising event under the tent on Thursday, September 14, at Chetola Resort. Over 150 people attended this star-studded evening, which included a five-course dinner, silent and live auctions. Guests enjoyed dancing the night away to the music of the award-winning eight-piece Motown Band, The Business.

Local philanthropist, entrepreneur, and volunteer Jenny Miller took the stage to emcee the "Fund a Need" portion of the evening. She encouraged guests to contribute directly to essential needs such as summer camp experiences, legal fees, extracurricular activities, and back-to-school clothes for the children and families supported by the organization. Executive Director Jacob Willis said, "It is heartwarming to see so many individuals come together to support our cause. With her energy and encouragement to engage the guests with High Country Caregivers, we raised more than \$80,000."

As one of our largest fundraisers, "this event showcases the generosity and community spirit of the High Country. All proceeds will support High Country Caregivers' "Fund a Need" programs and aid families navigating kinship responsibilities. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters for their unwavering dedication and participation," Willis added.

If you were unable to attend but are interested in supporting a "Fund a Need" opportunity, visit our website at www.highcountrycaregivers.org for more information.



EVENT IN REVIEW

Ready, Aim, Pull – Shatter the Clay

On Saturday, September 23, High Country Caregivers hosted the first High Country Sporting Clay Championship. Eleven four-person teams participated in the inaugural event, hosted by Chetola Sporting Reserve. Jacob Willis stated, "We are excited to host this Sporting Clay Championship. Combining a day outdoors, participating in the sporting clay championship, and supporting High Country Caregivers represents a perfect blend of sport and philanthropy."

The tournament featured 13 stations with clays that mimicked game birds and wildlife moving across the landscape. The competition to finish in the top spot was intense. There was a shoot-off to break a tie, and one competitor shot a perfect score, but in the end, team Quinto took the overall top prize. "What a great event," said participant and local realtor Mike Quinto.



Continued on page 6

"Anytime you can mix fun with helping others, it's a win-win. High Country Caregivers is an important organization doing great work. We had a blast supporting them. Literally." His team of four each won a one-year pass to Chetola Sporting Reserve.

Thank you to our sponsors who ensured the success of this event. Chetola Sporting Reserve generously donated both the use of the range and four memberships for the winning teams. Cornbread Tactical provided the ammunition. Emergency Restoration Xperts (ERX), High Country Press Blowing Rock, and Carolina Signs and Wonders sponsored individual stations.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Jennifer Buchanan

Meet Jennifer Buchanan, an integral part of the High Country Caregivers team for the past three months. She has poured her enthusiasm and dedication into the kinship navigation program, showcasing her commitment to making a difference in the lives of those we serve. Armed with a Bachelor's in Health Administration from the University of South Alabama, Jennifer blends her education and passion to leave a lasting, positive impact in our community.

Family and roots run deep for Jennifer in Yancey County, where her mother's side of the family has longstanding ties. It's in this community and the surrounding communities that she has found her calling, using her education and expertise to make a meaningful impact.

In 2020, Jennifer, alongside her husband Daniel, opened their hearts and home to foster children, marking the beginning of a meaningful journey. Over time, they found themselves adopting three remarkable children—Dahlia, age 7, and Davien, age 4, both relatives, and Eliana, almost 2, a cherished addition to their family. Their youngest son, Phoenix, 9 months has brought immeasurable joy and love into their lives.

For Jennifer, this personal journey ignited a profound love for social work. With her unique perspective as a kinship caregiver, Jennifer firmly believes that this role has shaped her as a professional and as an individual.





ABOUT US

High Country Caregivers is a stand-alone, non-profit organization dedicated to providing resources for kinship caregivers and their families. Through a variety of programs and with your support, High Country Caregivers works alongside kinship caregivers to help them improve the lives of these children.

To find out how you can partner with us to change a child's life or make a donation, contact us at HighCountryCaregivers.org.



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THANK YOU

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- Bethelview Methodist Church
- Boone ABC
- Dogwood Health Trust
- High Country ABC
- High Country Charitable Foundation
- Kathleen Kennedy Foundation
- Kiwanis Banner Elk
- North Carolina Community Foundation
- Preyer Family Foundation
- Rumple Memorial Presbyterian
- Spruce Pine ABC
- St. Mary's of the Hills
- The Brookdale Foundation
- The Community Foundation of WNC
- The Kennedy-Herterich Foundation
- The Luke Garrison Foundation
- Valle Country Fair
- WNC Bridge Foundation
- Women's Fund of the Blue Ridge

Program partners are listed in alphabetical order.

EVENT SPONSORS



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Agent Barry Crawford



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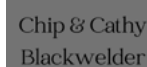
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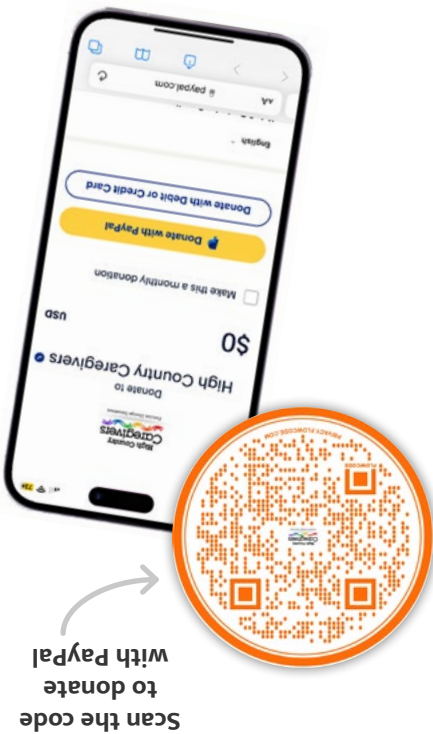
High Country Caregiver Foundation

PO Box 3356
Boone, NC 28607

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