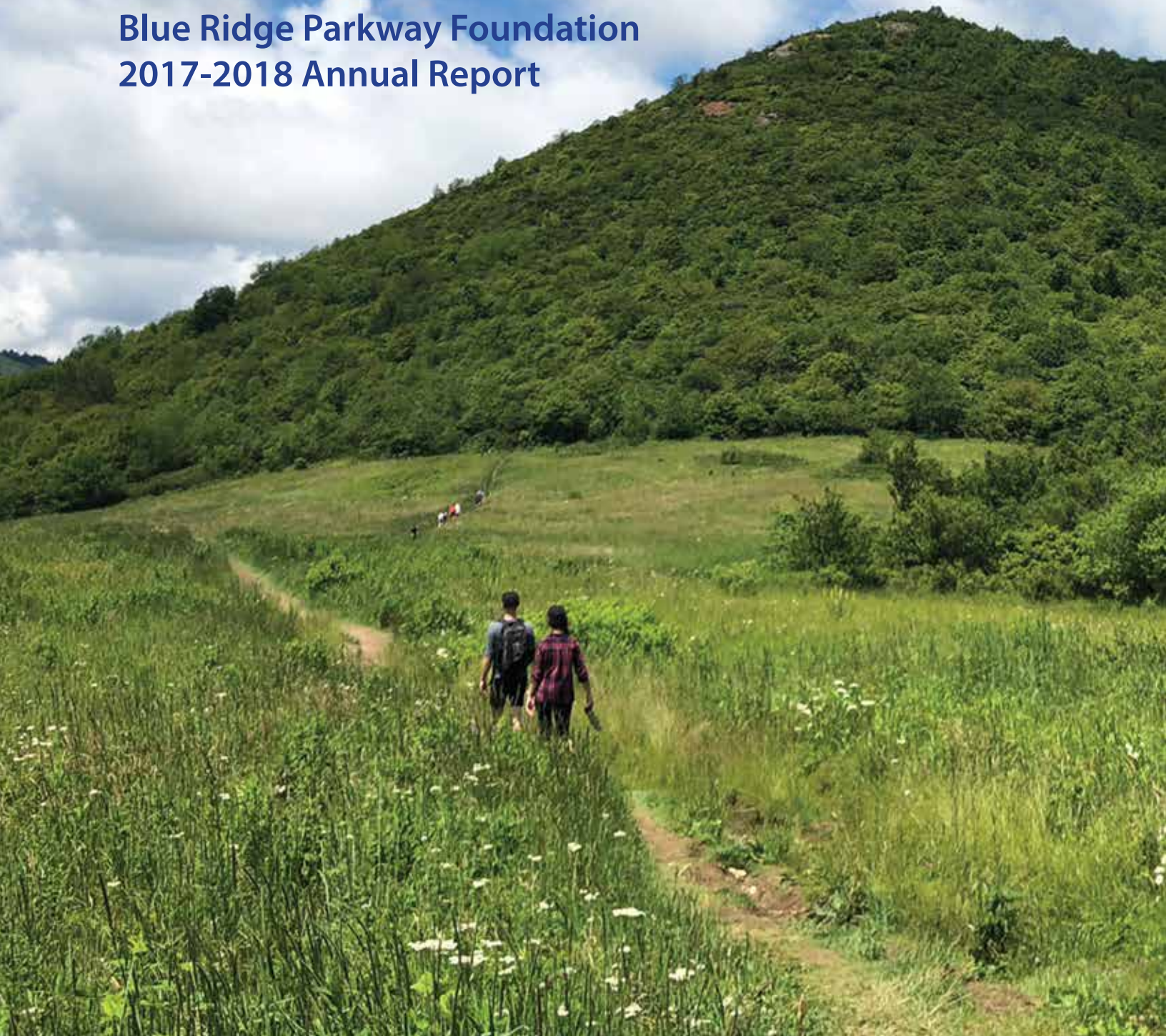




BLUE RIDGE
PARKWAY
FOUNDATION

Sharing the Journey

Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
2017-2018 Annual Report





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 Asheville, NC 28803

(866) 308-2773
 brpfoundation.org

The Spirit of Collaboration

The Blue Ridge Parkway is many things to many people. It's a portal to the cultural heritage and living traditions of the southern Appalachian mountain region, it's a place to discover thousands of native plant and animal species, it's a beautifully designed scenic drive along ridges and valleys, and it's a gateway to many communities across its 469-mile route.

The careful stewardship and protection of these resources, and the experiences this park offers, is a dynamic and complex operation. The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation's 20-year legacy of support has become an integral part of the work required to care for and protect the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Over the past year, my first on the Blue Ridge Parkway, I have seen the passion and dedication of the Foundation's Community of Stewards on many occasions. Thank you for being a community that cares so deeply for the Parkway.

This annual report outlines many of the ways you have cooperated with and supported the National Park Service mission in 2017-2018. This work is meeting many current Parkway needs and protecting resources for future generations.

The National Park Service has just entered its second century of service, and I am confident that, with your support and a growing community of stewards committed to innovation and collaboration, the park we all love has a very bright future ahead.

- J.D. Lee, Superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway

A Strong Community

Each year brings diverse challenges and fresh opportunities to the Blue Ridge Parkway, the most visited national park unit. And each year, you rise to the challenges and embrace the opportunities to make it a better place for us today, and for those who will discover its wonders in the future.

As you flip through these pages that chronicle another successful year, you may be hundreds of miles away from the Parkway, or you might be able to see it from your window. But it is not geography that defines our community. Our mutual love of the Parkway creates what we have always called our Community of Stewards, those

who have the best interests of the Parkway at heart.

Within this report, you'll see some of the faces of our community, including one inspiring girl who is advancing environmental preservation efforts thanks to a jump start from the Kids in Parks program. We've also highlighted Willard Gayheart, who has entertained visitors with music and tales at the Blue Ridge Music Center for 12 years. You'll meet the historian who is bringing stories of the Cone family to life through her research for new exhibits at Moses H. Cone Memorial Park.

Though your picture may not be on these pages, you're behind every accomplishment too. Whether you have entrusted us with a financial donation, volunteered for a hands-on project, celebrated at fundraising events, or purchased a Blue Ridge Parkway license plate, we thank you for being a steadfast steward of the Parkway.

- Carolyn Ward, Chief Executive Officer



Blue Ridge Parkway Superintendent J.D. Lee with Foundation CEO Carolyn Ward

Our Mission

The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation is the primary fundraising partner for the Parkway, providing support for initiatives along the 469-mile route, including natural resource protection, historical and cultural preservation, visitor amenities, and education and outreach.

Protecting Natural Resources

The Blue Ridge Parkway's uninterrupted nature corridor helps protect a diverse range of flora and fauna, including rare and endangered plant and animal species and globally imperiled natural habitats. It is one of the most biodiverse landscapes in the national park system. Together we are taking steps, large and small, to protect the Parkway's unique natural treasures.



PHOTOGRAPH BY VICKI DAMERON

Stopping Poachers

The best way to put an end to poaching is to catch the culprits before they leave with rare specimens from Blue Ridge Parkway land. Thanks to you and The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina, law enforcement rangers now have new tools to watch over vulnerable populations such as galax and ginseng. This new network of "force multipliers" captures images of activity at sensitive sites and alerts rangers in real time that the plants are under threat, allowing them to respond quickly. "At the end of the day, preventing the loss is the real win for the project," says Chief Ranger Neal Labrie.



Galax

Waterrock Knob Vision Plan

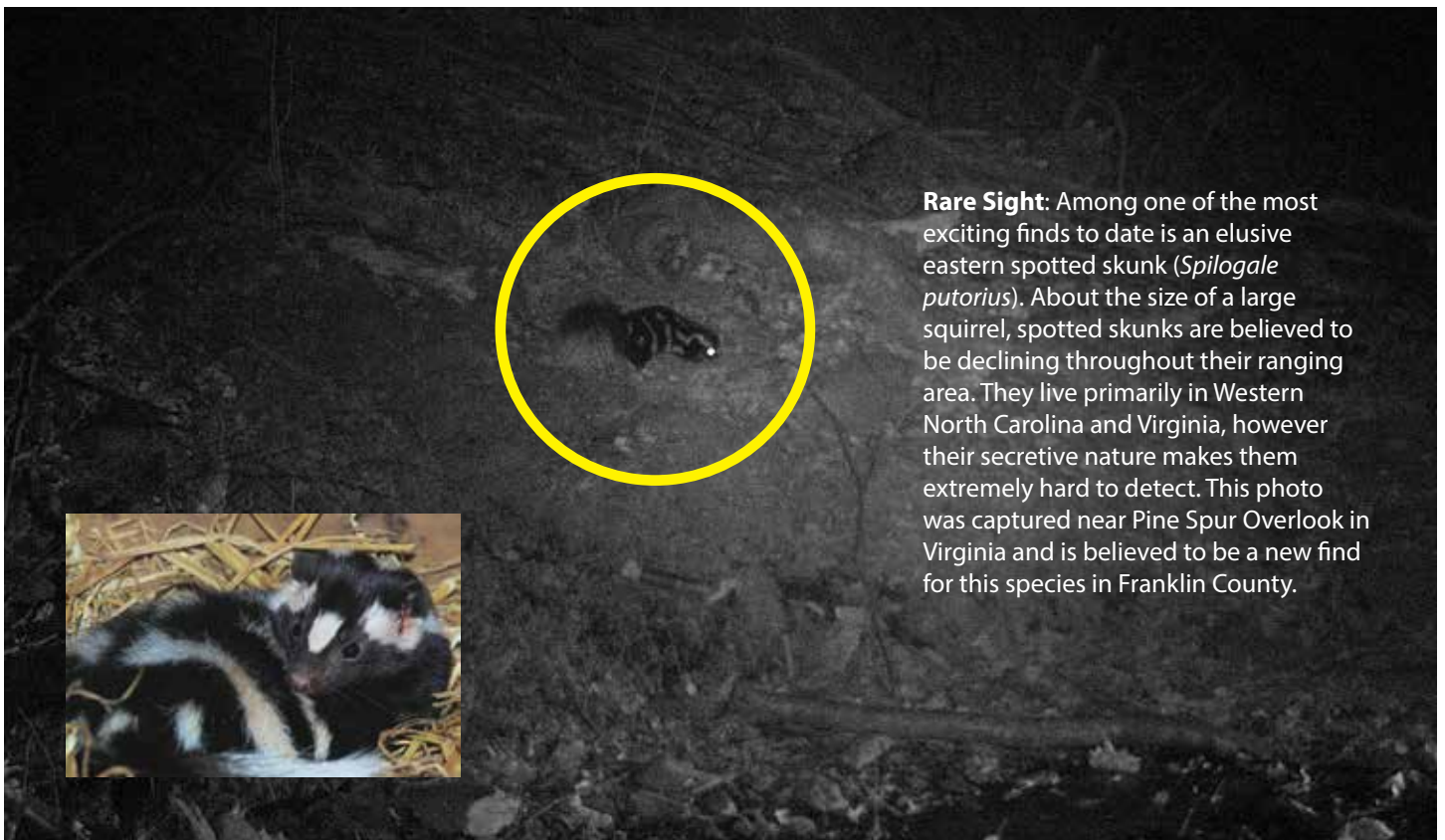
National Park Service staff, nonprofits, and neighbors came together to create the *Waterrock Knob Regional Vision Plan*, which will help guide the future of 5,329 acres near milepost 451 that are slated to become part of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The plan identifies key themes for how to address challenges and evaluate opportunities with conservation as the highest priority for this pristine landscape. The plan was created with support from the Pigeon River Fund and Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.

Wildlife Cameras

Through your generosity, the Blue Ridge Parkway purchased 24 motion-activated cameras for the ongoing Parkway Wild project, which allows park scientists to monitor wildlife in remote locations. Among the citizen scientists placing and monitoring cameras this year are students completing service learning projects at Springhouse Community School in Floyd, Virginia. Parkway staff worked with instructors during the summer to integrate the trail camera project into the school's curriculum. As a result, the students are learning about ecology, cartography, navigation, and orienteering by setting out and monitoring a trail camera along the Parkway.



A white-tailed fawn photographed with a remote camera



Rare Sight: Among one of the most exciting finds to date is an elusive eastern spotted skunk (*Spilogale putorius*). About the size of a large squirrel, spotted skunks are believed to be declining throughout their ranging area. They live primarily in Western North Carolina and Virginia, however their secretive nature makes them extremely hard to detect. This photo was captured near Pine Spur Overlook in Virginia and is believed to be a new find for this species in Franklin County.

**Counting
the impact**

30 camera
volunteers

85 remote
sites

35 species seen
since 2009

Preserving History & Culture

The Blue Ridge Parkway is a journey through time that connects us to meaningful stories of people, places, and traditions that still influence and excite people. Efforts to preserve these touchstones take many forms, from saving historic structures to digging in archives to paint a sharper picture of the past. Our goal is to keep these cultural ties strong so that our past remains part of who we are today.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE DUNCAN



Nicky Sanders of the Steep Canyon Rangers

Blue Ridge Music Center

This year, thousands of music lovers came to clap along to performances by local and national acts, learn flatfoot dancing, explore the Roots of American Music Museum, and even jam during the Midday Mountain Music sessions at the Blue Ridge Music Center, milepost 213. Your support for programming is fulfilling the Music Center's mission to preserve the cultural heritage of the mountains and serve as a gateway to the area's rich musical offerings.

**Counting
the impact**

47 concerts
& events

168 midday
programs

41k attendees
concerts, events
& Midday Mtn. Music

Creating a map to Cone history

In most families, mementos and heirlooms are handed down through the generations. But in the case of the prominent Cone family, many of the treasured and everyday items of their lives can be found in far-flung museum collections and secure archives.



Carrie Streeter

Thanks to your support, intern Carrie Streeter is creating a treasure map to these pieces of history. *The Interpretive Resources for Moses H. Cone Memorial Park* is a much-needed guide for telling the family's story and creating enhanced exhibits at Flat Top Manor and across the grounds.

"It's a great privilege to get to spend time learning about this family and the vast network they represent," says Streeter, who is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of California San Diego and earned her master's degree at Appalachian State University.

The research has taken her



Holding History:

Moses and Bertha Cone's travel trunks are stored in the Parkway's archives.

from the Blowing Rock Historical Society to the Museum of Jewish Civilization in Connecticut and many other archives. The process has involved combing through documents, transcribing correspondences, and even using Ancestry.com to locate census records. "It's easy to get lost in the details of the research and the paper of it all," Streeter says.

But there are also instances when she is reminded of the real people and the lives they led. One of those

occasions was the opportunity to enjoy a meal and reminisce with Bertha Cone's grandnieces, who summured at the estate. They sat at a dining table from Flat Top Manor set with Bertha's monogrammed linens and fine silver. "I really treasure those moments," she says.

The Foundation is closing in on a three-year goal to raise more than \$3 million to address crucial repairs at Moses H. Cone Memorial Park. To learn more, visit brpfoundation.org/remakehistory

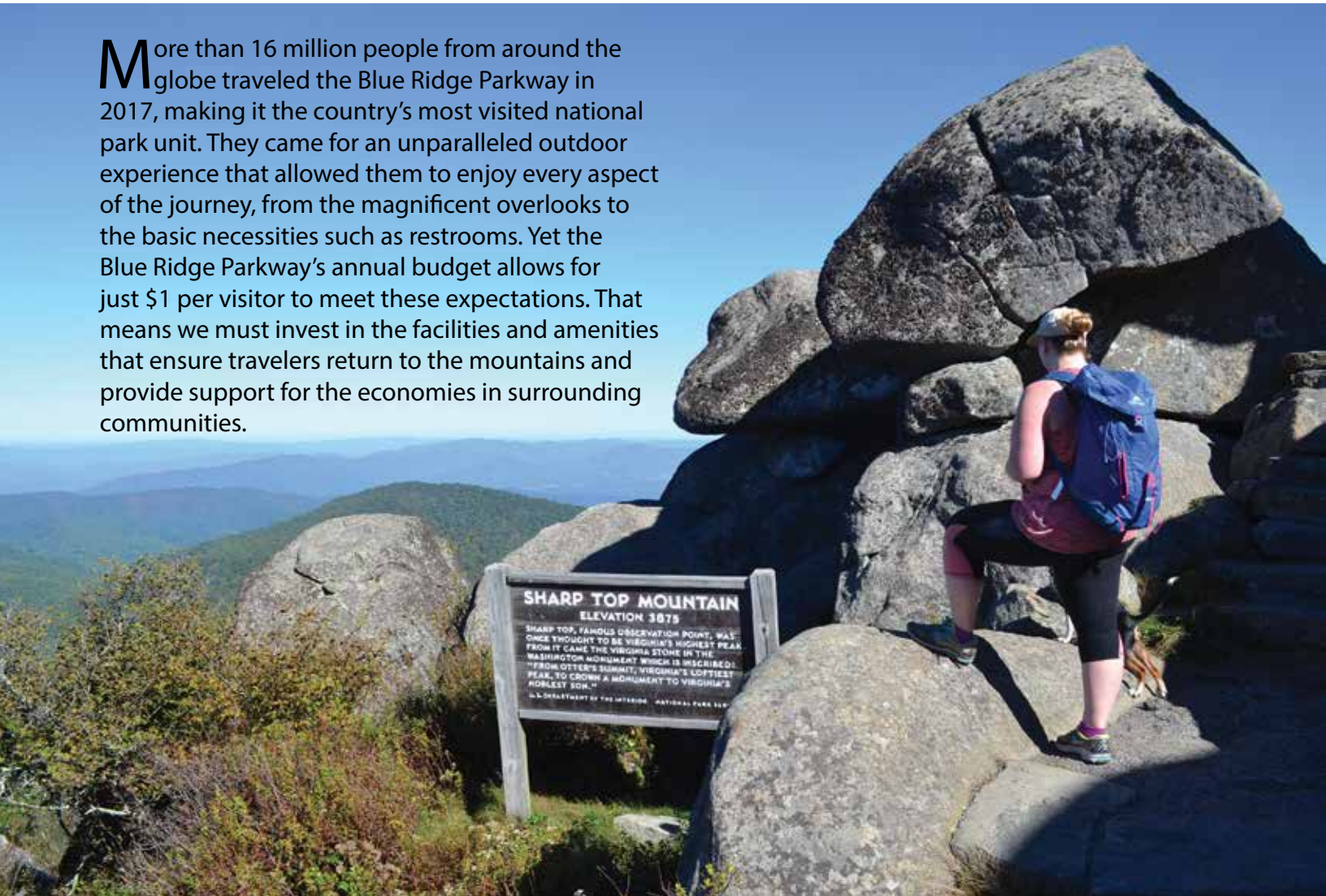


Humpback Rocks Farm

The historic log buildings at Humpback Rocks Farm, milepost 6, in Virginia will stand to tell the tales of early mountaineers thanks to your support for repairs. National Park Service staff and volunteers received instruction from the Historic Preservation Training Center to replace rotted wood and restack stones to fix the circa-1890s structures.

Enhancing Visitor Experiences

More than 16 million people from around the globe traveled the Blue Ridge Parkway in 2017, making it the country's most visited national park unit. They came for an unparalleled outdoor experience that allowed them to enjoy every aspect of the journey, from the magnificent overlooks to the basic necessities such as restrooms. Yet the Blue Ridge Parkway's annual budget allows for just \$1 per visitor to meet these expectations. That means we must invest in the facilities and amenities that ensure travelers return to the mountains and provide support for the economies in surrounding communities.



Sharp Top Shelter

After a complete transformation, Sharp Top Shelter is a more enjoyable spot to wait out passing storms at the summit of its namesake peak. With your financial support, crews scrubbed away and painted over years of graffiti, reset windows, sills, and door frames, replaced the roof, and painted the clapboard siding on the building constructed in 1858 at Peaks of Otter, milepost 86, in Virginia.



Renew the Views

The designers of the Blue Ridge Parkway created 216 overlooks to offer astonishing views of rippling mountain peaks and verdant valleys. Over time, vegetation obscured many of the original vistas. This spring, the National Park Service's Arborist Incident Response (AIR) team removed obstructions at overlooks from milepost 420 to 435 in North Carolina. Thanks to your generosity, many of the views on the southern end of the Parkway are long-range vistas again.

The 10-day clearing schedule was planned with careful consideration of wildlife habitat, like that of the Northern flying squirrel. The felled trees will create habitat for birds and other animals. As the wood decomposes, it will aid new plant growth by returning important nutrients to soil.

In spring 2019, the AIR team will begin clearing more overlooks.



Before



After



From the Top: Roof work begins at Bluffs

Doughton Park

With your gifts, repairs are underway at Bluffs Restaurant at Doughton Park, milepost 241, in North Carolina. Known for its fried chicken and ham biscuits, the former coffee shop, which opened in 1949, is getting a new roof before work begins on the interior.

Support from the N.C. General Assembly and Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has also been critical. In 2017, the state appropriated \$350,000 toward building repairs. ARC provided a \$300,000 grant to purchase new restaurant equipment and furniture.

In spring and summer 2019, these grants will be put to work to further the repairs needed to welcome a new operator.



Education & Outreach

The first lesson the Blue Ridge Parkway often teaches us is that nature is fascinating. Then we move on to the deeper lessons we can learn from our hikes, observing wildlife, introducing new people to the outdoors, and the wonders of this unique landscape. To reach a greater understanding of how amazing this park truly is, there must be opportunities for education and paths for new generations to find their way to this knowledge. That's why it is important to continuously engage visitors with this enriching place.



Polyphemus Moth

Learning about Moths

During National Moth Week in July, interpretive rangers with the National Park Service set up educational stations and offered identification activities to teach visitors about these important insects. Your gifts provided more than 200 visitors with new knowledge of moths' impact on the environment and humans impact on their habitats.



A newly installed panel at Craggy Gardens Visitor Center highlights hidden wildlife

New exhibits at Craggy Gardens

Thanks to you, engaging new interpretive panels highlight the many intriguing aspects of the high-elevation environment of the Great Craggy Mountains, a subrange of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The displays illustrate the harsh weather and growing conditions above 5,000 feet, plants and birds that survive here, hidden wildlife, and more. Now visitors get a better picture of what can be found at this popular spot and what needs protection.



Blue Ridge Parkway Outdoor Guide

You may not wear a ranger hat, but you helped thousands of visitors find their way on the Parkway this year. Your support printed 100,000 copies of the *Outdoor Guide*, a free publication featuring trail maps, safety information, bear encounter guidance, and more.



Kids in Parks

Before Audrey Elliot discovered Kids in Parks, she had little interest in spending time outdoors. But in 2015, she and her parents came across a TRACK Trail, and learned that she could earn prizes for completing fun adventures.

“The Kids in Parks program gave us that extra nudge to get Audrey outside and more willing to visit other parks,” says her father, Michael.

Kids in Parks’ educational brochures and incentives, such as a nature journal, backpack, and trail stickers, motivated Audrey to visit 13 additional TRACK Trails.

And this young adventurer went even further; she is now a Junior Ranger at nearly 70 state and national park sites and the youngest Buddy Bison Student Ambassador for the National Park Trust.

Kids in Parks served as a catalyst for Audrey’s evolution

into a nationally recognized park advocate, and she’s not alone. More than 450,000 kids have participated in the program since its inception in 2008 for a total of one million adventures.

We are proud to report the program is cultivating an energized generation of stewards that understands the value and appeal of public lands and can advocate for protecting our parks’ natural, historical, and cultural resources today and in the future.

*Counting
the impact*

170 TRACK
Trails

47 trails in Parkway
communities

1M adventures
completed

Thank You, Volunteers!

We are so grateful for our volunteers, who are amplifying the Foundation's impact on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The number of Volunteer Corps members and their hours of service continue to grow. They are lending their expertise, time, and hard work to a wide range of projects from research to campground clean-ups and more. It's amazing what can be accomplished with a strong group of helping hands.



PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG LANCASTER

Hello!: J.D. Lee talks with Foundation volunteers.



Cheers to Teamwork!: Staff with Twin Leaf Brewery in Asheville cleared and organized a storage room for the Blue Ridge Parkway curatorial department and built five massive shelves.



Project Parkway: More than 200 volunteers made an impact during the first Parkway-wide volunteer day. Assisted by National Park Service staff, they spruced up all eight campgrounds in preparation for spring.

Midday Music's Founder

Seven days a week, spring through fall, musicians gather to pick and play and tell the stories of mountain music at the Blue Ridge Music Center. They volunteer their time and talents to entertain and educate visitors for the pure love of the music. Among them is Willard Gayheart, one of the founders and longest participant in these free midday music sessions. He and the late Bobby Patterson kicked off the program 12 years ago.

"Bobby and I went out there one day and it kind of took off," says Gayheart, who claims playing the guitar for visitors is keeping him young at 86. From that small start, the sessions grew and now take place daily on the breezeway. This year, 44 musicians volunteered more than 2,000 hours of their time, including Gayheart, who plays twice a week for nearly four hours with his son-in-law, Scott Freeman.

One of Gayheart's favorite aspects of the gig is meeting visitors from around the globe. This summer alone he recalls talking with people from



In addition to being a musician, Willard Gayheart is an artist who works in pencil. His drawings of Appalachian life, pictured behind him, are on permanent display in the small theater at the Music Center.

Denmark, Netherlands, Australia, Switzerland, and New Zealand. "People from other countries hear the music for the first time, and they are just awed."



Painting at Price: Trustee Jim McDowell and friends have taken the lead on repainting the buildings at Julian Price Campground. *Above right:* Trustee Craig Lancaster, Charlie Sullivan (National Park Service), Hanes Boren, McDowell, and Tracy Brown

Celebrations

20th Anniversary Party

To celebrate two decades of protecting the Blue Ridge Parkway and honor extraordinary people who make up our Community of Stewards, the Foundation hosted a celebration on November 9, 2017, at Lioncrest at Biltmore in Asheville, North Carolina. During the evening, seven individuals, groups, and companies were recognized with awards for championing our mission. In honor of the Foundation's work to save hemlock trees on the Parkway, each guest received a hemlock seedling to plant in their yard as a thank you for taking part in the festivities.



Special thanks

Host Committee:

Alfred & Beth Adams
Lou & Sara Bissette
Paul & Wyndy Bonesteel
Olson & Marylyn Huff
Chase & Clary Pickering

Presenting Sponsor:

BILTMORE



1 Beth Lastinger, Gary & Theresa Landwirth, and Lane Lastinger
2 Alison & Turner Norris, and Marissa Jamison

3 Clary & Chase Pickering with Foundation CEO Carolyn Ward
4 Marylyn Huff, Martha Campbell, and Maggie Ray

5 Sara & Lou Bissette
6 LuAnn Fitzpatrick, Thomas Montgomery, Sabra Kelly, and Broaddus Fitzpatrick

The Denim Ball

Mother Nature parted the rain clouds just in time for the third annual Denim Ball on August 3, 2018, at Chetola Resort at Blowing Rock, North Carolina. More than 230 guests attended to celebrate the remaking of history at Moses H. Cone Memorial Park. The event raised more than \$115,000 for repairs and improvements at the country estate thanks to an outpouring of support from individuals, sponsors, local businesses, and the community.



Special thanks

Denim Ball Committee:
Billie Brandon Howell, Deborah McDowell, Lauren McDowell, Karen Robertson, Deatra Sellers, and Emily Stallings

Sponsors: Blowing Rock Tourism & Development Authority, Cone Health,

Chetola Resort at Blowing Rock, Modern Automotive, Mountaineer Inn & Log Cabins, The Rosemyr Corporation, Blowing Rock Historical Society, The Blowing Rock Attraction, Boone Rent All, Excalibur Direct Marketing, Footsloggers, and Mast General Store

1 Chris & Catherine Boss, Alfred & Beth Adams, and Jeni & West Fowler
2 Carolyn Ward, Willa Mays, and Tracy Brown
3 Linda & Larry Jerome

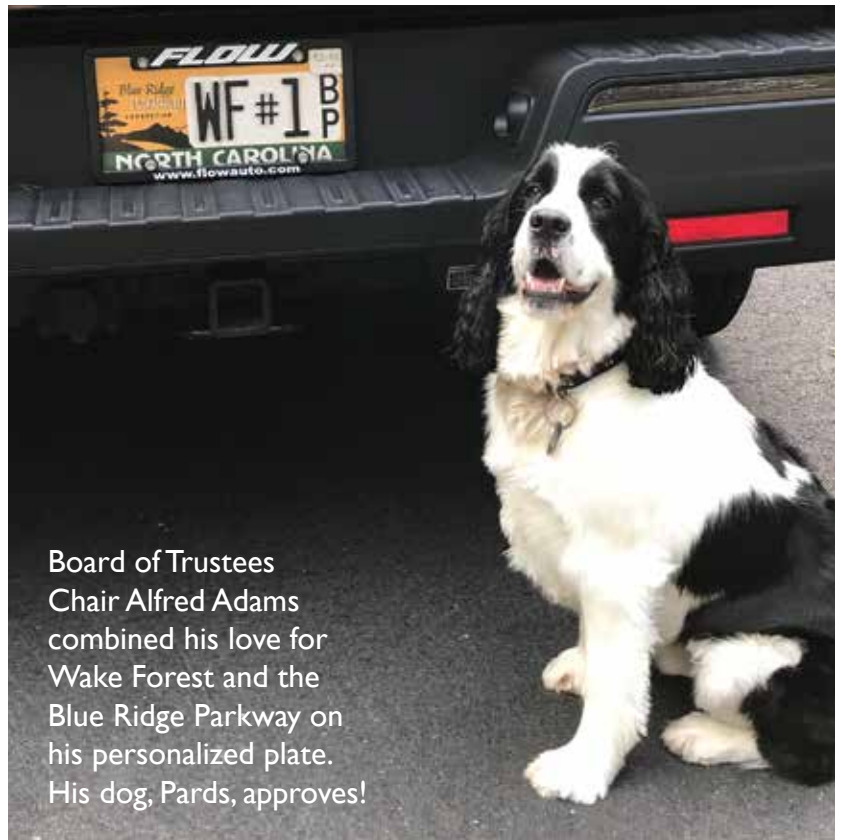
4 Jonathan & Ever Owen
5 Seated: Cindy Matthews, Agnes Harvin, Pat Shore Clark, and Jo Hennelly. **Standing:** Tom Matthews, George Harvin, and Jim & Joyce Zellner

Blue Ridge Parkway License Plate

If you live in North Carolina, purchasing a gold and green Blue Ridge Parkway specialty plate for your car or motorcycle is one way to proudly display your commitment to the scenic route. For each new or renewed specialty plate fee, \$20 is dedicated to the Foundation to protect and enhance the scenic route and \$10 supports the North Carolina Wildflower program. The entire specialty plate fee of \$30 is tax deductible.

For an additional fee, you can personalize your plate, like the tags featured here. We love seeing how creative plate holders can be with just four characters.

To get your own plate, request it at your N.C. Tag office or visit GetThePlate.org.



Board of Trustees
Chair Alfred Adams
combined his love for
Wake Forest and the
Blue Ridge Parkway on
his personalized plate.
His dog, Pards, approves!



A fan of
Asheville, N.C.



BRPF = Blue Ridge
Parkway Foundation



A fly-fisherman's plate



Show how you FEEL
about the Parkway



When Waterrock Knob (WRK)
is where you work



A fan of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail

Ways to Give

Your gifts are always appreciated! The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation will work with you to achieve the giving plan that suits your goals. Popular options include:

Monthly Giving

A recurring automatic payment charged to your credit card or bank account provides sustaining support for the Parkway.

Honorarium or Memorial Gift

A tribute gift is a thoughtful way to recognize those in your life who value the Parkway, or to commemorate a milestone such as a birthday, wedding, anniversary, or retirement. (See the list of 2017-2018 honors & memorials on page 26.)

Workplace Giving

Employees of businesses that participate in EarthShare's Workplace Giving, the Combined Federal Campaign, and the N.C. State Employees Combined Campaign can choose to designate their contributions to the Foundation.



Employer Matches

Ask your human resources representative if your company offers a matching gift program to boost your impact on the



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN ROLLAND / APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Parkway.

Bequests

Bequests are one of the easiest ways to ensure the future of the Parkway. If you already have a will, a simple codicil can be added to include the Foundation in your estate plans. Individuals who choose to leave a lasting legacy by specifying a gift for the Foundation in their will or trust become members of The André Michaux Society. (For a list of members, see page 26.)

Stock & Appreciated Assets

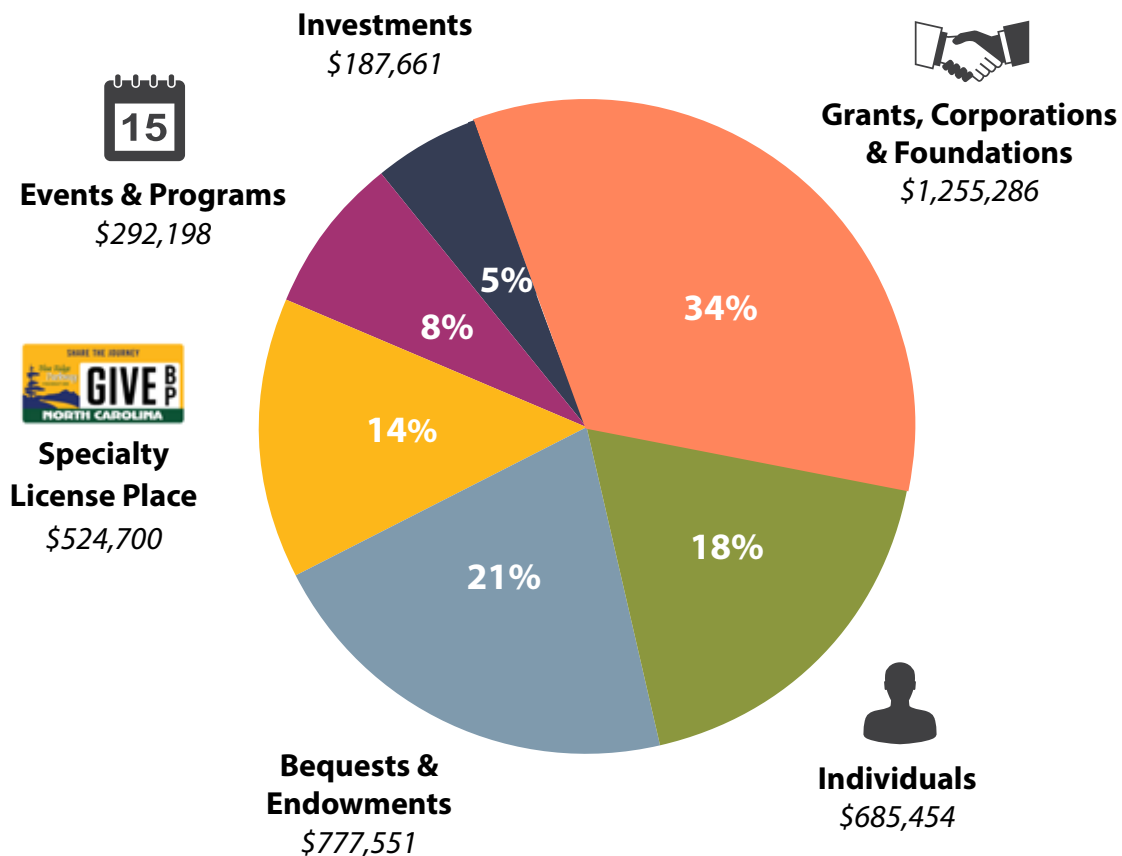
Gifts of stock or other appreciated assets are an effective way to support the Parkway. If you own stocks, securities, or other property that has appreciated since acquisition, you may face capital gains taxes if you sell. Donating that asset to the Foundation avoids the tax, and you can receive a charitable deduction for the full market value of your gift.

All contributions to the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation are tax-deductible as allowed by law. The Foundation's tax identification number is 31-1512730.

Financials

	2017	2016		2017	2016
PUBLIC SUPPORT & REVENUE			EXPENSES		
Contributions	\$1,493,847	\$1,327,372	Program Services	\$2,130,864	\$1,366,022
Grants	\$1,212,936	\$217,500	General and Administrative	\$68,775	\$65,352
In Kind	\$58,073	\$51,702	Fundraising	\$276,310	\$197,892
North Carolina Specialty Plate	\$524,700	\$534,480	Total Expenses	\$2,475,949	\$1,629,266
Net Gains (Losses) Investments	\$185,266	\$62,397	Change in Net Assets	\$1,246,901	\$804,851
Endowment Income	\$2,663	\$7,418	Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$3,424,817	\$2,619,966
Investment Income, net	\$2,295	\$1,015	Net Assets at End of Year	\$4,671,718	\$3,424,817
Other	\$243,070	\$232,233			
Total Support & Revenue	\$3,722,850	\$2,434,117			

Support & Revenue \$3,722,850





Thank you, Community of Stewards!

The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation is thankful for the individuals, businesses, and foundations who contribute to the safekeeping of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Donors who contributed \$100 or more between January 1, 2017, and December 31, 2017, are acknowledged on the following pages. They form a Community of Stewards that is truly committed to preserving and protecting the scenic route today and forever.

FOUNDATIONS

AmazonSmile
Anonymous Trust
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Benevity/American Endowment Foundation
Blowing Rock Community Foundation
Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC Foundation
Blumenthal Foundation
Cemala Foundation
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United Way of Asheville
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Blue Ghost Brewing
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Boondocks Brewing
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Booneshine Brewing Company
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Casa Rustica Restaurant
Catawba Valley Brewing
Chetola Resort at Blowing Rock
Clemens Welding & Machine Shop
CoBo Sushi Bistro & Bar
Cone Health
Coyote Kitchen
Creek Bottom Brewing

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Glade Valley B&B
Glass Lady
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Green Man Brewery
Green Park Inn
Gregory Alan's
Hawksnest
High Country Yoga
High Gravity Adventures
Highland Brewing
Hi-Wire Brewing

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Hotel Floyd
Hound Ears Lodge & Club
IBM Corporation
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Innovation Brewing
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Kilwin's Chocolates
Last Straw
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Mellow Mushroom
Monkee's of Blowing Rock
Mountaineer Inn & Log Cabins
Mysterium Escape Adventure
Mystery Hill
New Belgium Brewing
Noble Cider
One World Brewing
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"For my family, driving up the mountain from Wilkes County to Bluffs Restaurant was a monthly trip. Guests and relatives would always join us for fried chicken, grits, cobbler, and the real deal ham biscuits. Ms. Ellen Smith would always have a high chair for my teddy bear, Boo Boo. I give to the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation so this very important stop along 'America's Favorite Journey' will be saved."

- Julie Hettiger, donor

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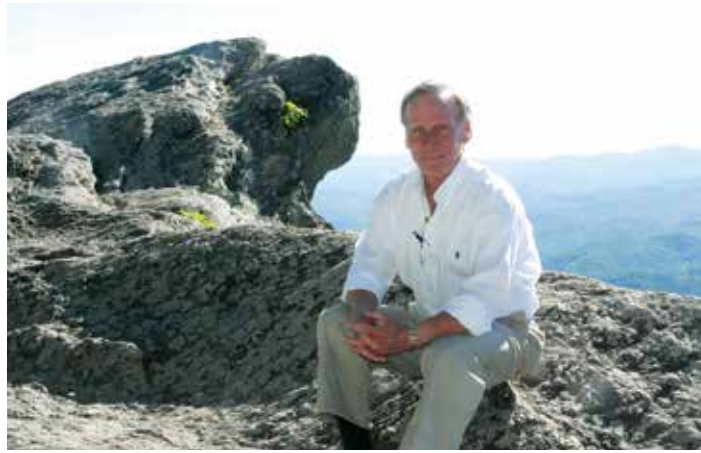
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"My dad and uncle worked on the Parkway for five years and it was a wonderful time period. They loved the value of being outside on the Parkway and working, and what it did for the surrounding areas and the people. That's why we created the endowment. We'd like our family to remember them and remember that they helped create this park, because it's a gift to all of us."

- Doris Asbury Luening, who along with her husband, David, established The James Erwin Asbury and Nesbitte Samuel Asbury Memorial Fund

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"Giving back to our local communities is an important part of the Catawba Brewing mission statement. As a company, we value outdoor activities and the natural beauty of Western North Carolina, and the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation is a nonprofit that's particularly near and dear to us."

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Photo by Andy Massengill

