

2023 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS





A JOINT MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR

In 2023 the generosity of our donors, support of our volunteers, and active participation of our members enabled Grayson LandCare to continue to provide valuable services to our community. Some of these services included hosting field trips, giving garden tours, educational meetings, contests for youth and adults, tastings, potlucks, and workshops. By supporting GLC you allow us to invest in small businesses, provide a local venue for healthful, local food and crafts to be available in our community at the Independence Farmers Market. Your donations and hours volunteering also supplied an average of over 360 boxes of food to more than 340 households per month through Food Independence, including produce grown from the Permaculture Garden. This year, some of the food donated and distributed at Food Independence was from local farms because of a grant from the Twin County Community Foundation. The Free Market was also able to keep an estimated 35 tons of material from being tossed into our landfill, and they continued to provide valuable medical equipment and household goods to those in our community—all free of charge. The Independence Elementary School Garden taught local children how to garden and sent them home with produce they grew themselves. As Grayson LandCare looks forward to 2024, we are envisioning ways we can be more responsive to the needs and desires of our community through the strength of our membership and the diversity of our projects.

In community,

Meagan & Michelle

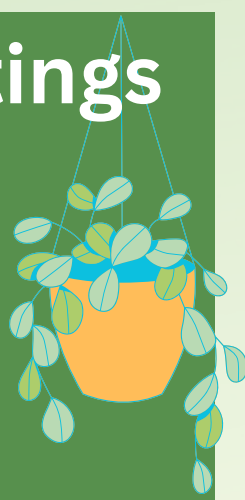


PERMACULTURE

20 Volunteers
570 hours



Monthly Meetings



Hosted monthly meetings with potluck suppers, garden work days and 2 winter book study events

Workshop Events

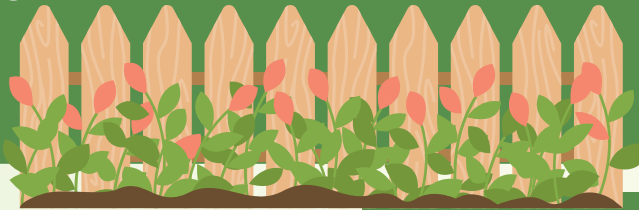
Hosted 3 workshops (Make and Take-Pallet Herb Garden, Hugelkultur Construction, Discussion of Invasive Plant Control) for GLC and the community at large.



Community Gardens

Planted Delicata squash, bell peppers and onions in the annual crop garden to be harvested and donated to Food Independence and other institutions

Expanded the memorial garden beds, created a dedicated blueberry patch; constructed 5 new annual garden beds, continued to manage the pollinator gardens, swales and fruit trees.



Art & Ag Adventure



Participated in the 2 days Grayson County Art & Ag Adventure, hosting 25 garden visitors.

Garden Tours

Co-hosted the June LandCare meeting with the Church of the Good Shepherd attended by 45 members and guests who toured the garden.

Grayson
Permaculture
Project

Church of the Good Shepherd
Food Forest





FREE MARKET



The Christmas Gift Shop will be held at the GATE Center on December 2, 11am - 3 pm, for children and parents to choose gifts for family members, friends and teachers. The Culinary Arts students from the CATE Center will bake and serve holiday cookies

MARKET TIMES



Continued serving agency clients with new or like-new dishes, kitchenware, towels and bedding.

Loaned 176 pieces of medical equipment to 94 people since opening the Medical Lending Library in 2021.

Estimate 34.8 tons kept out of the landfill this year, saving the County \$1914 in tipping fees

Appeared in the Daily Yonder, a national publication

Averaged 63 visitors, 13 bringing, 52 taking items daily, and \$35 daily donations



The
FREE
Est. 2017
MARKET

22

volunteers continuously improve how the Market looks and operates.





INDEPENDENCE FARMERS MARKET



23
vendors



150 customers
per Market



Photos courtesy of Daniel James Herd of Herd ventures



Hosted 24 regular Markets, 2 Winter Markets, year-round Online Market and 7 events

Upgraded to a mobile friendly Online Market platform



Distributed \$1500 in Healthy Kids Bucks to 147 kids with the Virginia Family Nutrition Program and \$1000 in IFM Kids Bucks to 350 Kids.

Supported 46 small businesses, 6 new, 3 under 18.

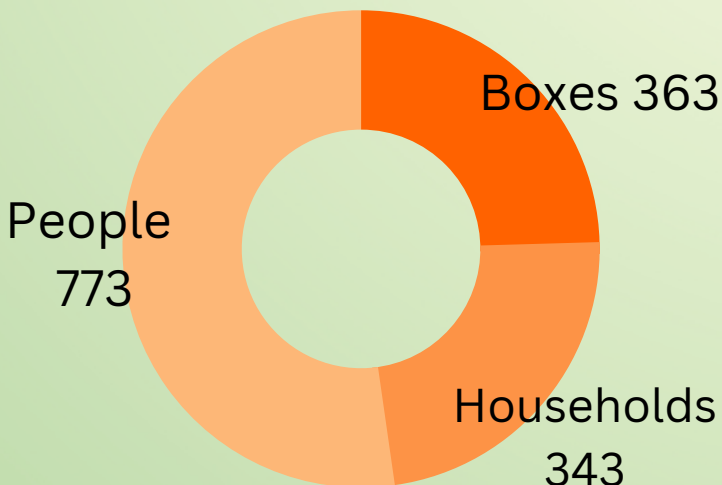
8 community partners and 23 volunteers donated more than 200 hours.



Photos courtesy of Daniel James Herd of Herd ventures



FOOD INDEPENDENCE



Provided an average of 363 boxes to 343 households with 773 people per month . We expect record demand during a time of higher prices and reduced corporate food donations, likely distributing over 400 boxes/month this holiday season.

Food is picked up, delivered, stored, packed, and distributed by a devoted cadre of over 50 volunteers.



50%

**OVER
10,000**



2023 INCREASE IN DEMAND

During the four months following the end of the SNAP Covid supplement (March-June), the number of boxes and households increased by more than 40% and average number per household increased by over 50% from 2022 due to an increase in younger families needing assistance. These were all record distribution numbers compared to all past months. As we enter this holiday season, we expect record demand during a time of higher prices and reduced corporate food donations, likely distributing over 400 boxes monthly

DRIVE-THROUGH DISTRIBUTION

Over 10,000 pounds of food are provided through drive-thru distribution at the pantry and two community-based delivery programs for home-bound and isolated households monthly. Each box plus add-ons contains about 50 pounds of shelf-stable products (beans, rice, pasta, veggies, fruit products, tuna, etc.), bread, fresh produce (often local), meat and other items.

THANK YOU!

Twin County Community Foundation for the grant to purchase additional local food

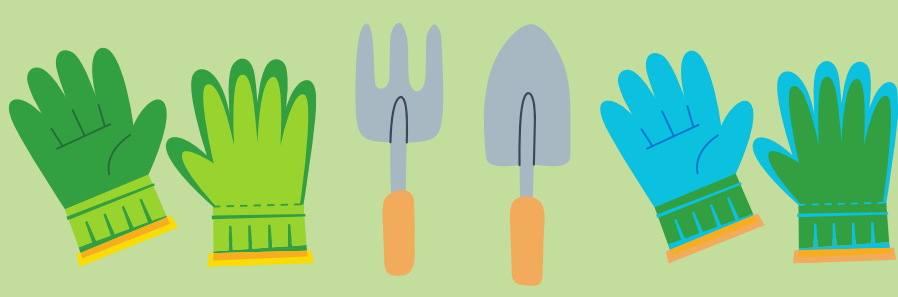


INDEPENDENCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GARDEN

270

students visit the outdoor garden and see the Tower garden as they enter and leave school daily





Beginning in September, 75 5th grade students receive an hour of garden instruction twice a month



2nd and 3rd graders participated in the afterschool and summer school program and planted, harvested and tasted herbs, vegetables and edible flowers.

3rd grade students won 1st place in the Grayson County Fair with tomatoes and potatoes.





GRAYSON COUNTY SEED LIBRARY



Co-hosted a seed saving workshop and a seed swap with the Wythe Grayson Regional Library in Independence.



Prepared and distributed over 300 seed packets.





GRAYSON LANDCARE

605 people voted for the 9 entries in the Annual Haybale Contest sponsored by GLC to advertise the Grayson County Fair.



Hosted 11 monthly meetings and field trips

Supported our 6 projects with office staff, fundraising, advertising and logistical support

Hosted the Grayson LandFair for highschool students



SUPPORTED BY:

Ches R Helmick

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING


**LANDCRAFTED
FOOD**

River Ridge



Skyline National Bank
ALWAYS OUR BEST


Earth Mama
MUSIC
ROUSE HOUSE MEDIA



Matthews Trust



Twin County Community Foundation
Serving Carroll County, Grayson County and the City of Galax

FUNDS HELP SUPPORT


Food Independence
Grayson County, Virginia


Grow with us
Grayson County
Seed Library



The
FREE
MARKET
Est. 2017

