

GRAYSON
LANDCARE

2026 Annual Report



A Joint Message from the President and Director

As Grayson LandCare approaches our 20th year of serving Grayson County, we are proud to now support eight vital community initiatives. Our growing family of projects includes the Independence Farmers Market, the Free Market, Food Independence, the Grayson Permaculture Group, the Kids/School Garden, the Seed Library, and our newest addition - the Chestnut Project.

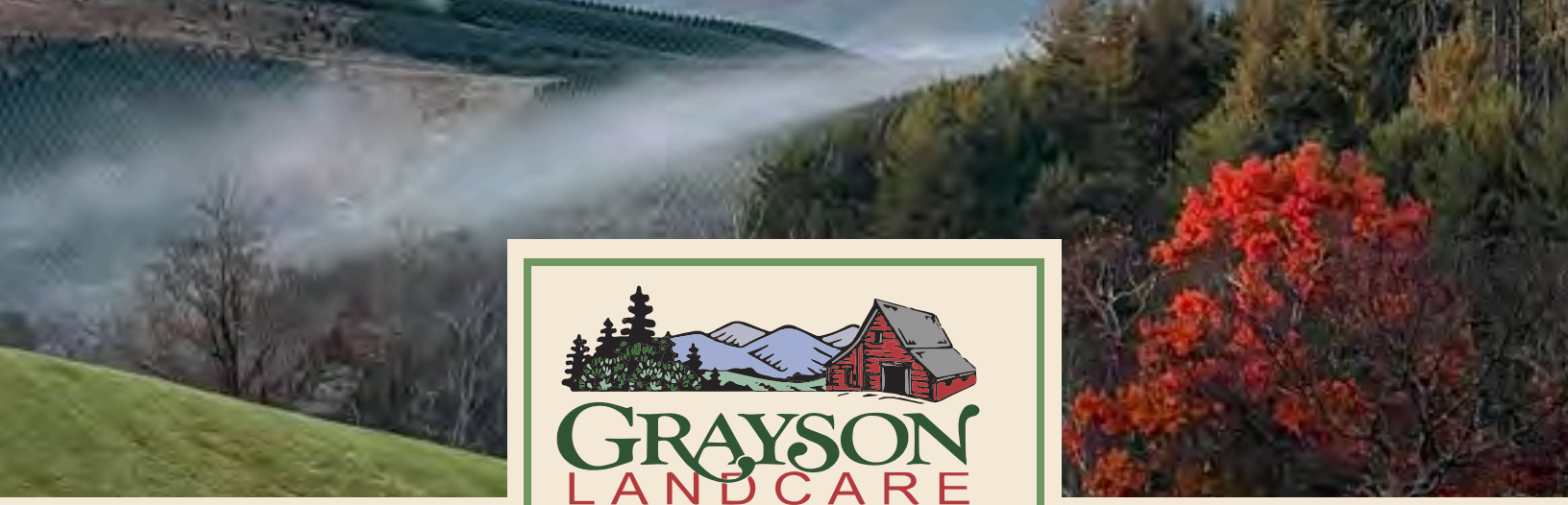
Many of these initiatives thrive because of wonderful partnerships with local organizations. We extend our deep gratitude to the Church of the Good Shepherd (Permaculture Garden), Independence Elementary School (School Garden), the Wythe-Grayson Regional Library (Seed Library), and The American Chestnut Foundation (Chestnut Project).

Ultimately, the heartbeat of Grayson LandCare is our volunteers. This year, 119 dedicated community members have generously given 6,500 hours of their time to make a lasting, positive impact right here at home.

As we look forward to 2027 and the next 20 years, we rely on our members to suggest ways for GLC to continue to be a positive force in our community.

Casey Johnson
President

Michelle Pridgen
Executive Director



GRAYSON LANDCARE

This year, we supported our 8 projects with office staff, fundraising, advertising, and logistical support.



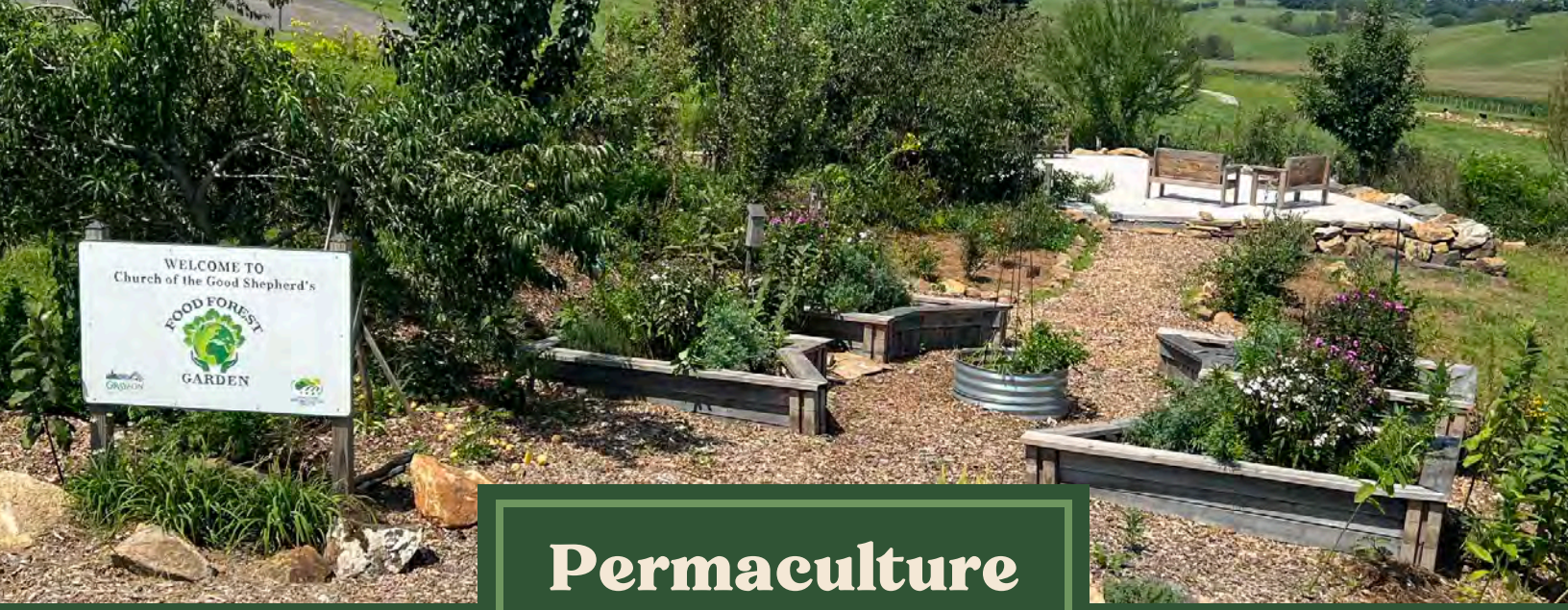
We sponsored the hay bale contest and youth poster contest to advertise the Grayson County Fair, which saw the addition of new events and had record attendance.



The Chestnut Project developed a new test for rating resistance and held 3 events.

Across our 8 projects, 119 volunteers contributed over 6,500 hours to our community.

Our Annual Auction and meeting in 2025 raised $9,522 in memberships, donations, and bids. In addition, GLC received support from Grayson County, the Winston Salem Foundation, the Matthews Foundation, and the Twin County Community Foundation.



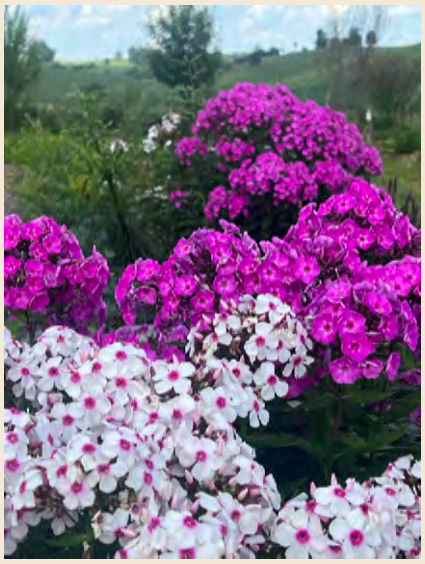
Permaculture

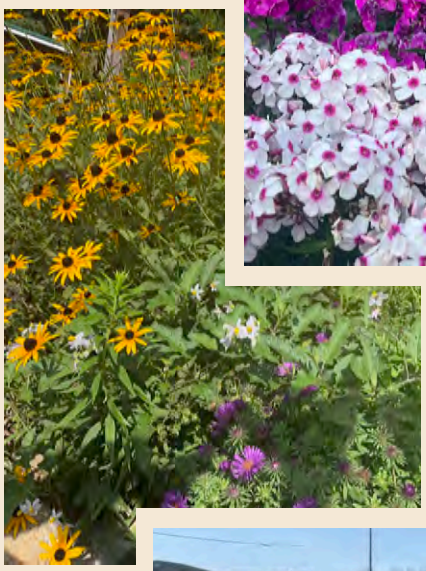
Hosted 5 workshops in the garden, including fruit tree pruning, garden guild planning, homesteading with Permaculture, herbal medicines, and garden cleanup.

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

Participated in 5 public events, setting up a booth and engaging both children and adults.

Participated in the Grayson County Ag & Art Adventure, hosting over 45 garden visitors.







17 volunteers donated over 500 hours.



Grayson County Seed Library

Hosted a seed saving workshop and packed and distributed over

300 seed packets.



Grow with us
Grayson County
Seed Library

Attendance at the Seed Open house doubled.



Free Market

In the past 12 months

10,393 visitors

2,845 item donations

$6,462 financial donations

The financial donations covered our expenses: rent, utilities, insurance and supplies.

- Served 20 agency clients with new or like-new dishes, kitchenware, towels and bedding.
- Loaned medical equipment (walkers, wheelchairs, etc.) to 65 customers in the last 12 months.
- Partnered with Food Independence to hand out stuffed animals and toys to the children of each client family in December.
- Built partnerships to get particularly needed items to other organizations: Luggage to the Women's Shelter in Sparta, school supplies to our local elementary school, and musical instruments and cases to the High School band director.

22 volunteers gave 3,200 hours of service,

continuously improving how the Market looks and operates, as well as assisting customers and receiving donations.

Served approximately 200 parents and children

at our annual Free Christmas Gift Shop, where they selected new and like-new items for gift-giving.



Independence Farmers Market

- Supported 47 small businesses, 9 new, 4 under 18.
- 5 community partners, 23 volunteers, and 46 high school students donated more than 300 hours.
- Distributed 1500 Healthy Kids bucks with community partner WIC thanks to a grant from the Twin County Community Foundation.
- Added 5 4th Friday evening Markets with food trucks and music.

24	3	8	year-round
Regular Markets	Winter Markets	Events	Online Market

5 community partners, 23 volunteers, and 46 high school students donated more than 300 hours.

28
average vendors per market

260
average customers per market

375
record attendance

Over
6,000
total visitors this season













Food Independence

Average per month:

385	365	850
boxes	households	people

- We had an all time high monthly distribution of 468 boxes for November (Thanksgiving) 2025.
- It was our second year hosting the Kid's Summer Food Boxes to Grayson County youth.
- Received Twin County Community Foundation funding to purchase produce and other fresh foods.
- Received donations from individuals and businesses for food and other operating expenses.
- Welcomed Beverly Fermor to steering committee and voted in as Treasurer (September 2026).



50 volunteers donated over 200 hours monthly.

(Including Interns and ROTC from Grayson HS)

We sourced more than

150,000 lbs

of food from October 2025 through September 2026.



Chestnut Project



- Organized volunteers to cull the Department of Forestry Orchard at Matthews State Forest.
- Displayed a new seedling resistance test at the Grayson Ag Fair.
- Organized a Chestnut hunting hike at Hale Lake where the hikers found about 6 large trees for grafting.
- Organized a grafting workshop at App State for early 2027.
- Procured about 300 American Seedlings for a new recurrent genomic selection (RGS) test at Matthews State Forest and Clint Morse's Independence Orchard.

Created a new website anchoring the project as a partnership between Grayson Landcare and the Virginia Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF):

graysonchestnutproject.net



Independence Elementary School Garden



37 1st graders participated twice a month during class time to plant, harvest, and taste herbs, vegetables, and edible flowers. Lessons were integrated to meet the SOL standards.

Students won 1st place in the Grayson County Fair with potatoes and 3rd place with flowers.

GRAYSON LANDCARE

Supported by

Edward Jones

LANDCRAFTED FOOD

River Ridge

Skyline National Bank
ALWAYS OUR BEST

Earth Mama
MUSIC
ROUSE HOUSE MEDIA

Grayson County, VA
Elevated By Nature

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

GRAYSON LANDCARE

Independence • Virginia
Farmers Market

GRAYSON PERMACULTURE GROUP

The FREE MARKET
Est. 2017

Kids Garden