THANK YOU 2025 DONORS

BLUE RIDGE VOICE



Greetings from the Mountain















WOW! What a year!

The year was fast-paced, busy, and full of progress. We hit the ground running in January on a mission to partially reopen by summer, a task that felt daunting. Blue Ridge Center, Weatherford Hall and infrastructure repairs were our main priorities, allowing us to say "Welcome Home" to a portion of our groups in June after a spring sprint to get everything ready. **And what a wonderful "Welcome Home" it was.**

From January to June, we had disaster relief groups staying in a few of our undamaged spaces, serving in the local community. In June, we began welcoming back some of our youth, teens and families. **Our reopening was intentionally phased, allowing us to rebuild and recover as an organization,** not just in physical spaces but in our staff team, in our service and in our operations. I strive to be a lifelong learner, and I've often seen difficult times be our best seasons of learning. **God is always working. Even when I don't understand His purposes, I've learned to continue to seek Him.**

In 2025, these are the lessons He taught (reminded) me:

The deep love and commitment so many have to YMCA Blue Ridge is greater than I ever knew. We are still standing because of how much YOU all love this place and did not want to see it close. **YOUR prayers, gifts, and volunteer hours continue to sustain us.**

We are partners in mission with the groups that come here. We have so many groups that come to the Mountain and do wonderful work. This place and our programs are a part of what helps these groups be successful in their missions. Whether it's 100 years or 5 years, **our groups can't imagine doing what they do anywhere else.**

This place is beautiful, even with the scars of disaster. One great blessing this summer was hearing several of those new to the Mountain talk about what a beautiful place it is. At times it's easy to look and only see the damage or the changes from what it was before. This Mountain is still a place of inspiring beauty.

Big impact requires big risk. Reopening all our buildings by summer 2026 requires a lot of work and funding. **Our motivation – impact – serving teens, families and adults.** For the teens who will learn that they can **break generational patterns**, for the youth who **overcome fears**, for the families who **reconnect**, for those that **meet God** on this mountain, and so many more.

We take risks because they are worth it. You are worth it. Because of you, we are still here. For you and future generations, our work will not end. We will continue to recover and improve.

Please stay with us...there are exciting things to come as we reimagine.

Humbled and grateful,

Melissa

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Last year, due to effects of Hurricane Helene, we were unable to provide a printed donor list for our 2024 donors. In this issue, we have printed all of our 2024 and 2025 donors in a combined list*. We'd also like to thank all our donors who choose to remain anonymous.

***If you would like your name to appear differently in the future than how it is listed, please email Brianne at briannep@yblueridge.org.**

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In Memory of George H. Edmiston Sr.
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In Memory of my father, Chester Francis, and brother, Bill Francis who were both YMCA professionals
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THANK YOU 2024 AND 2025

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In Honor of Black Mountain Music Festival
Beckie Henry

In Honor of 2006 BRLS Honor Leaders
Jason Dew, Rebecca Friedman, Jessica James-Hill, Michael O'Hearn, Ken Porter, and Brooke Reid

In Honor of Mary Capers Bledsoe and South Carolina Youth in Government
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In Honor of those who attended BRLS from 1964–1969
Pamela Drouant Marcel

In Honor of BRLS Girl Power
Suzette Armatas, Melanie Cox, Genevieve Roy Holmes, and Angie Miller

In Honor of the 1984 Blue Ridge Singers
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Linda & Paul Schroeder

In Honor of Rob Burcham's Birthday
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In Honor of Michael Bussey for his great work with YMCAs
Robert Messick

In Honor of Jennifer Voskuhl Canipe and her summers spent on High Windy
Kaitlin Jurkiewicz

In Honor of Emily Breazeale Chapman for her birthday
Chase and Trevor Banks
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In Honor of Benjamin, Lisa and Rebecca David (former Honor Leaders)
James and Cheryl David

In Honor of Molly and Mike D'Avria
Bette and Rich Oesterle

In Honor of Mike, Molly, Steve and Kathleen D'Avria and families
Bob and Ria D'Avria

In Honor of Our Nephews – Joshua and Zachary DeBlieux
Deek and Leisa DeBlieux

In Honor of Karen DeBlieux
Capial One, N.A. Commercial Banking

In Honor of DH, KB, DJ...Thank you

In Honor of Jeannine and Gary Dickerson; Russ Harris and Karen Greenwaldt; Jennifer and Ron Hill; John and Becky Wills; and Susanne and Bill Wyatt
Chuck and Cindy Harris

In Honor of Hollis and Cathy Downs
Pam and Nick Horn

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Raymond and Sue McClinton

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Elsie McKee

In Honor of the Milton Family and Our Friends the Stone Family
Frances McMichael

In Honor of Adrian and Fran Moody
Deborah Moody Schellhase and Dennis Schellhase

In Honor of Chuck Moseley
Sissel K. Topple

In Honor of Natural Way of Living and the Blue Ridge Staff
Jim Van Huysse

In Honor of Michael and Jack O'Hearn in thanks for all BRLS has done for them
Susan O'Hearn

In Honor of the Palm Beach Delegation
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In Honor of Thomas Powell
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Calvin and Marilyn Porter

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In Honor of Mr. And Mrs. Wil Rhodes
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In honor of all of our Social Media donors and fundraisers
YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly

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In Honor of the Summer Staff of 1987, 1988, and 1989
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In Honor of Steve Tarver for being an amazing mentor and friend
Nanci and Wayne Rutledge

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John M. Wolford and Rhonda S. Cooper

In Honor of Tierney Walton for G's Season of Giving
Sheila Stroup

In Honor of my granddaughter Tierney Walton and daughter Claire Walton
Sheila Stroup

In Honor of Pat and Zan West
John M. Wolford and Rhonda S. Cooper

In Honor of Sylvia Smith Williams
Tonya and Kevin Hammond

In Honor of John M. Wolford and Rhonda S. Cooper
Pat and Zan West

In Honor of John Wolford
Deacon Kevin Reid
Randall Rogers

2025 IMPACT REPORT

25 DISASTER RELIEF GROUPS



Provided $250,000

for youth and teen scholarships, family programs leadership development and asset sustainability. Free chaperone packages, volunteer hours, and program subsides also help keep our programs and services available to all.

Served 172 total groups

with approximately **9,700 guests. Over 4000 of those guests were youth/teens**



28 FAMILY GROUPS

40 TEEN-FOCUSED GROUPS





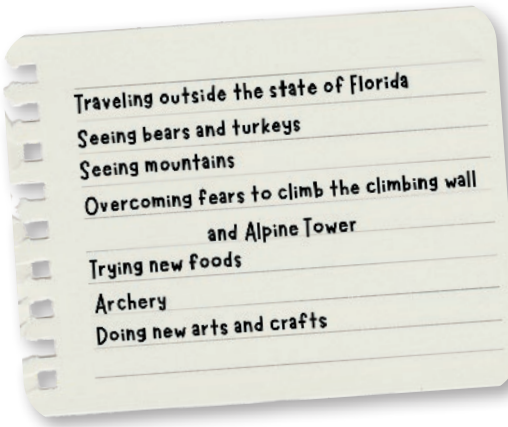


13 COLLEGIATE/ YOUNG ADULT GROUPS





YOU made a difference for Artie!



Artie lives with his grandmother in Florida. He is a 6th grader who enjoys riding his bike, playing video games, dinosaurs and caring for his pets. Because of your financial support, Artie was able to attend Thanksgiving Family Camp. During camp, Artie made a list of all the "firsts" he experienced.

Artie is super excited to return for Summer Family Camp and have more life-changing experiences!

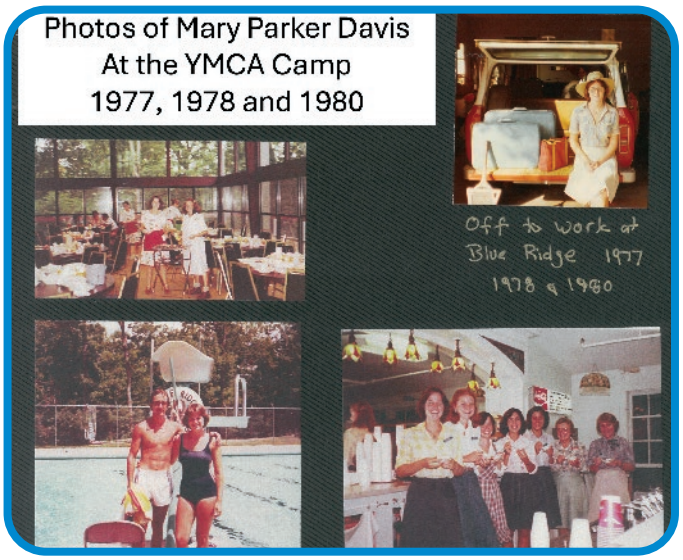
What she [Mary] wanted was to be able to provide the kind of opportunity she had for future generations. – *Mark Davis*

Mary Parker Davis Aquatic Facility

Mary Parker Davis worked on our summer staff in the late 1970s and carried a love for YMCA Blue Ridge throughout her life. Scan the QR code to see a video of Mark, Mary's husband, discuss why they became financial supporters of YMCA Blue Ridge and why he gave a major gift in memory of Mary for the future Mary Parker Davis Aquatic Facility.







Disaster Relief Groups

While closed to the public, YMCA Blue Ridge partnered with disaster relief volunteer groups while they served in the community. Beginning in January 2025, we had 25 groups bringing over 500 workers to volunteer in areas throughout Western North Carolina. They repaired homes, distributed food and cleared debris. YMCA Blue Ridge is committed to being a part of Western North Carolina's long term recovery and we plan to host these groups for as long as they are needed.





With the support of the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly—and your generosity in providing significantly lower-cost, dorm-style housing for some of our teams—we're able to send out more teams and make additional rooms available. Your location creates space for spiritual growth while fostering community, unity, and team building. We are deeply grateful for the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly!

– Rosie King, Field Teams Operations Manager, Convoy of Hope





The Blue Ridge YMCA is not only beautiful. Staying there during our week of work with Habitat for Humanity: Asheville gave us a richer experience of the area, as we were immersed in the mountains and its people.

– Bill Kriege, Rockhurst University

Teen Groups



97% showed measurable growth in one or more essential capacities for thriving (capacities include self-regulation, identity, academic success, social skills and community engagement)



And I think the Blue Ridge magic specifically with our teens is we allow the teens to take the mask off. That's kind of what we talk about, take the mask off and really try to figure out who they are.

- Jessica James-Hill, Blue Ridge Leaders' School volunteer and donor

We impact teens in unique ways on the Mountain, allowing them to have a home away from home where they find mentors, develop life-long friendships and learn by doing. Leadership development in our young people is a priority for YMCA Blue Ridge and our goal is to impact more teens every year.



91% felt adults carved out time during the day to listen to them



Our motivating philosophy continues to be that if we are going to make any significant societal changes, we must start in the hearts and minds of young people.

– Melissa Bailey Logan, President & CEO

86% felt safe and supported by their peers

85% felt encouraged to do something new, even when it seemed difficult



Go Outside, Grow Outside

Living in the digital age, young people often do not have opportunities to spend meaningful time in nature. Our Go Outside, Grow Outside program seeks to breakthrough this barrier by getting kids, teens and families outside and active. We offer tailored programming for school, church, family and other groups including experiential learning, teambuilding, crafts and outdoor adventure activities.

I am a teacher and it was great to see students working together and having fun.



52 total groups with **2862** participants

I got to be a leader to all my friends during the ropes course.



27 of the groups were school groups

Activities were really fun and used lots of teamwork. I enjoyed working together with other people.

It was great. We problem-solved and never gave up trying and overall just a great day.

YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly
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Black Mountain, NC 28711-9722
(828) 669-8422
www.blueridgeassembly.org

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IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE

Together with the YMCA Blue Ridge Family and our incredible matching partner, Blossman Gas, we've successfully met our Million Dollar Challenge! Every dollar donated helped get us one step closer to fully reopening our campus and filling it with love and laughter.

We cannot thank Blossman Gas and Stuart Weidie more for their leadership and generosity!

Our work in 2026 is just beginning!

Follow us on social media to see our continued progress!

BLOSSMAN CHALLENGE

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REGISTER FOR FAMILY CAMP TODAY!

At YMCA Blue Ridge, we believe that families are the foundation of healthy, values-driven young people. That's why we're excited to invite your family to the Mountain for some much needed outdoor recreation, adventure, and fun.

Our all-inclusive packages provide lodging, meals, outdoor recreation and program activities. You can feel free to schedule your own adventures in the local area as well. Activities include games, crafts, hiking and other adventure programs like our climbing wall or challenge courses.







