

# The Greenway News



## The Yadkin River Greenway Council Newsletter

### THE GREENWAY... TO BUILD AND PRESERVE!

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#### A Message from the President

We've all heard of the "Seven Wonders of the World"!

Over the years, as the greenway has continued to grow, Council members like to say that we have continually added to the greenway's own list of "wonders"! They range from bridges that dot the greenway sections, to overcoming various geographical and geological challenges, a viaduct and the latest "wonder"...a highway bridge underpass!

The underpass construction was completed in early 2015. It's located under the HWY 268 bridge that spans Moravian Creek and is part of the Moravian Creek to Wilkes Community College expansion project.

Thanks to the generous financial support of the community, 2015 was a record year for the Friends of the Greenway fund raising program. In addition to this, funding by various corporate and governmental entities allowed the Greenway to continue to expand and help meet the recreational and physical fitness needs of the visitors to and citizens of Wilkes County.

The Council would like to thank our partners in interest, the Towns of Wilkesboro, North Wilkesboro and Wilkes County for their continued protection and preservation of this valuable asset. Their efforts continue to sustain its growth and development.



The Yadkin River Greenway at  
Sunrise!!!

As always, I would like to thank our Council members for their efforts and congratulate them on their continued success!

Since its inception back in 1992, the Greenway has grown to over 7.5 miles in length in seven unconnected sections. When the Moravian Creek extension and link up to the existing WCC trail system is completed, the project will effectively increase the greenways length by over two miles!

Several other exciting expansion and connection projects are in the planning stages and on the drawing board! I look forward to seeing what new "wonders" might materialize in 2016 and am confident, that as long as this great endeavor continues, "wonders" will never cease to amaze!

As always, I look forward to seeing **YOU!** on the Greenway!

Charlie White, President

## OVERMOUNTAIN VICTORY TRAIL MASTER PLAN UNDERWAY

The National Park Service, in conjunction with the Yadkin River Greenway, is working to complete a Master Plan for developing on-the-ground sections of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail from W. Kerr Scott Lake to Elkin. The study area involves a 19 mile route that passes primarily through Wilkes County and sections of Surry and Yadkin Counties.

Boone based Destination by Design is heading up the development of the master plan for the project. The plan includes mapping and GIS gathering components along with the identification of key historic sites, topographic data and other related information. A key factor in the development of this corridor is that the National Park Service has deemed that the trail corridor can be placed anywhere within a half mile distance from the actual historic route and still be considered eligible for certification as an on-the-ground section of the Overmountain Victory Trail. Over the past years, several sections of the Yadkin River Greenway have been certified as sections of the Overmountain Victory Trail.

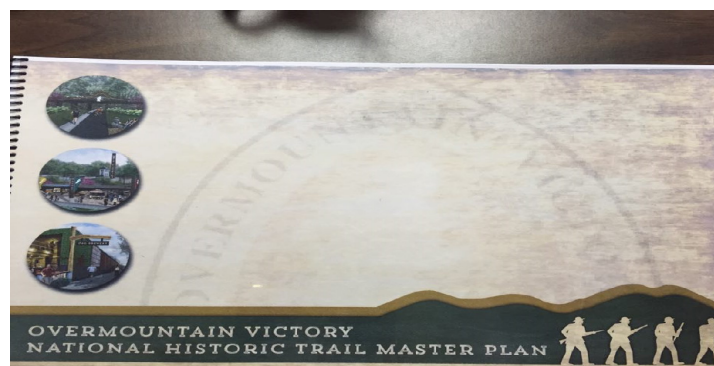
The town of Elkin has recently obtained 13 land easements which, when the trail segments within those easements have been constructed, will bring the on-the-ground Overmountain Victory Trail close to the Wilkes County line.

The Overmountain Victory Trail honors the 1780 historic Revolutionary War campaign of the Battle of Kings Mountain. The Battle of Kings Mountain resulted in a Patriot victory and is considered, among military historians, as the turning point in the American Revolutionary War. The battle gave the colonists momentum to persevere the British.

Following additional setbacks by the British at the Battle of Cowpens in January of 1781 and the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in March of 1781, The British were forced to surrender at the Battle of Yorktown in October of 1781, about one year after the Battle of Kings Mountain.

In 2015 similar master plans were completed from Lenoir to Morganton and from Morganton to Lake James State park. The Elkin to W. Kerr Scott Master Plan is scheduled to be completed in October

**Check out the link to the National Park Service  
Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Site at:  
<http://www.nps.gov/ovvi/index.htm>**



**Check out the link to the Landowners Awareness Video  
at: <http://ovtplan.com/>**

## CONSTRUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

In 2015, construction of additional greenway was restricted to the section along Moravian Creek from Hwy NC 268 to Wilkes Community College. The new Hwy 268 greenway underpass was started in late 2014 and substantially completed in early 2015. The underpass project has always been the focal point of challenge for the expansion of the greenway towards Wilkes Community College.

The Town of Wilkesboro has graded the greenway segment along the properties that border Moravian Creek and is now prepared to extend the greenway down into the Wilkes Community College property. Since the Town of Wilkesboro is the lead construction entity, we are expecting to extend this segment into the Wilkes Community College property sometime after MerleFest 2016. Finalization of the segment will be dependent upon the Yadkin River Greenway procuring the necessary funds to complete the construction.

Also during 2015, we finalized all the easements along this segment which allowed us to complete the section. The property owners that donated easements were: Burger King (Burger King Corporation), Wendy's Tarheel Capital Partnership), Windemere Apartments (Wilkes Limited Partnership), Dine-N-Dash (Kenneth L. Glass), Taracido/Brooks, (Frank and Christina Taracido and Ken and Judy Brooks) and Michele and Dale Isom.

The other concentration of work in 2015 was the preparation for a future greenway extension from the Smoot to Memorial Parks section to the Mulberry Fields greenway near the confluence of the Reddies and Yadkin Rivers. We have received easements for the Midtown Market property which was previously owned by the Phillips Family and the Cub Creek Countertop property was previously owned by John Myers. Work on obtaining the remaining easements is ongoing and we feel positive about securing those easements in the near future.

We also have all easements in hand that are required to complete a connector loop that will extend the greenway from an area near the North Wilkesboro ABC Store that will allow us to connect to our existing greenway segment that connects Memorial Park to Smoot Park. The loop connector consists two properties: The Memorial Park property owned by the Town of North Wilkesboro and a section along the Yadkin River (old "Gun Club") that belongs to the Phillips Family. We are in the process of securing funding for the construction of this segment which, hopefully, will commence sometime during the summer of 2016.

As always, we are grateful to the "Friends of the Greenway" for their continued financial support. We extend our gratitude to all the landowners that so generously donated easements in 2015 to enhance the expansion of the Yadkin River Greenway.

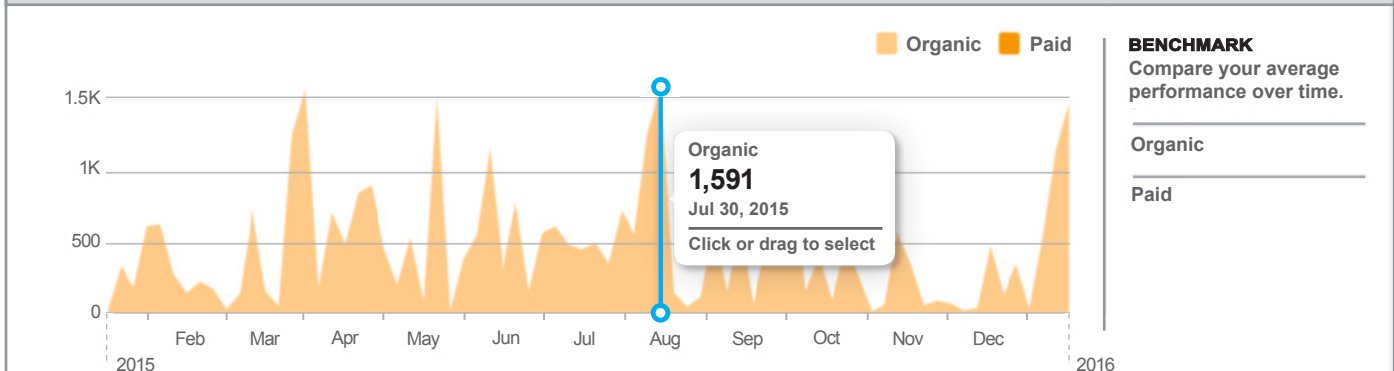
Frank Taracido, Construction Chairman

## Greenway Outreach on Facebook

This year the Yadkin River Greenway Facebook page was outstanding! The organic reach (unique people who were shown our posts through unpaid distribution) averages 3,000 per week. As illustrated in the graph below, the daily reach can be as high as 1,500 per day. The greenway has very loyal Facebook Friends checking in and sharing wonderful and unique photos.

### Total Reach

The number of people who were served any activity from your Page including your posts, posts to your Page by other people, Page like ads, mentions and checkins.



This year we also added virtual tours of the Yadkin River Greenway sections. In a joint effort with Chris Scott, iMedia NC and the Yadkin River Greenway there is a footage of five sections available to be viewed at [www.facebook.com/yadkinrivergreenway](http://www.facebook.com/yadkinrivergreenway) or [www.yadkinrivergreenway.com](http://www.yadkinrivergreenway.com).

**Be sure to like us on Facebook!!!**



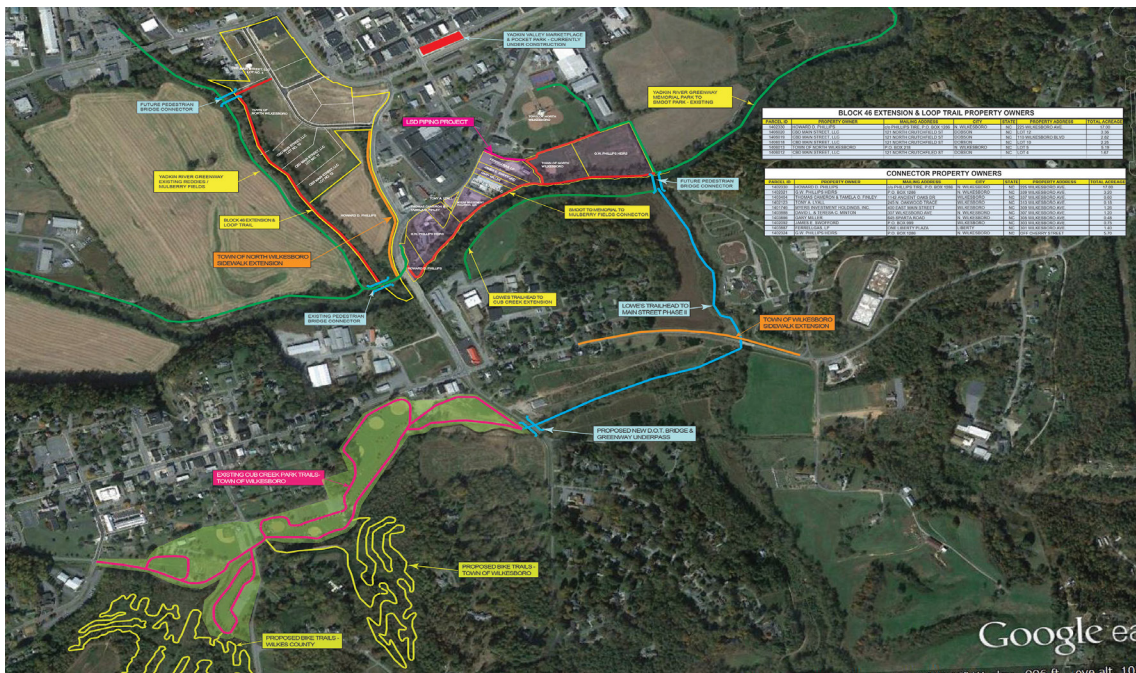
**Camera phone... perfect time of day... perfect lighting... no wind =  
Reflection of Care!!**



## Mulberry Fields to Memorial Park Connector Project

The greenway Council is constantly developing and refining plans for future greenway expansion and *connectivity!* Much emphasis was placed on the development of connectivity planning during 2015 with the assistance of the Town of Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro Town Planners, Andrew Carlton and Sam Hinnant.

We hope this map provides a glimpse into a portion of the ever evolving long range planning strategy. If you would like an e-copy of this file, please contact the greenway office at: [yrgreenway@pcshome.net](mailto:yrgreenway@pcshome.net) and we will email you one!



As always, the Council values your input and suggestions and we look forward to hearing from you if you have thoughts or questions regarding this process.

Charlie White

## Volunteers Who Go The Extra Mile

In every walk with nature, one receives more than he seeks" - John Muir. Thank you never seems enough to those volunteers who make such a big difference in keeping our Greenway areas up and going. We appreciate their support by keeping the Greenway trails and corridors well groomed through weed control, spreading mulch, trimming trees and bushes and cleaning up trash. Through these volunteers' efforts a more pleasant and safer environment is created for those citizens who exercise on our Greenway trails, which in turn creates a better and healthier community.

Many different groups and individuals have volunteers through our adopt-A-Trail" program to groom and maintain their adopted areas:

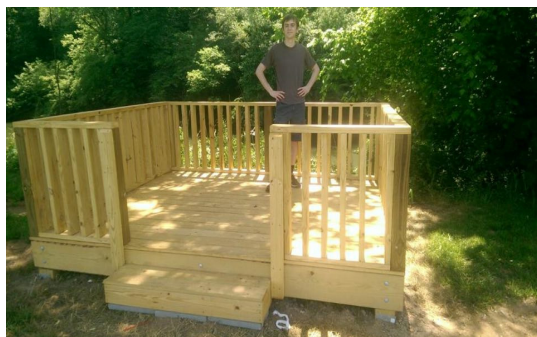
- Jim Brown, with Tyson Foods, Inc. leads a group of Tyson employees in maintaining and grooming the greenway section from Wilkesboro Tyson Trailhead along Ray's Way to Pardue Crossing and the landscaped area below the crossing. The American-Chinese Chestnut trees which are planted near Pardue Crossing are weeded and mulched by John Matthews.
- Dan Day continues to groom and maintain an area around a tree which has been planted in memory of his mother, Pat Day.
- Sonny Church dedicates his efforts to maintain an area along the greenway at the confluence of the Yadkin and Reddies Rivers that was created and dedicated in memory of his mother and father.
- Jule Hubbard maintains the canoe access facility on Mulberry Fields section near Pardue Crossing. The access steps were constructed by his son, Miles, as an Eagle Scout project.
- Keith Howell, father of Eagle Scout, William Howell, continues to groom a flower bed and landscaped area along the Jefferson Turnpike greenway section.
- Renee and Allen Winkler have agreed to preserve and groom areas around picnic tables and benches along the Smoot to Memorial Parks greenway section as well as the Jefferson Turnpike. The picnic tables and park benches were constructed and installed by their son, Corey, who successfully earned his Eagle Scout rank by completing this project.



(Volunteers continued from page 4)

- The Master Gardeners, under the leadership of Bill Hanlin and Diane Stephens and in cooperation with the Town of North Wilkesboro's maintenance crew, worked together to keep some of the greenway sections beautifully landscaped and preserved. Also, the Master Gardeners recently agreed to maintain an area around the recognition wall as well as to continue to groom and plant new flowers and other greenery at the Reddies River Trailhead.
- Over the past years, the North Wilkesboro maintenance crew has delivered and assisted in spreading mulch once or twice a year along various sections of the greenway.
- A special thanks to William and Lynn Clark who routinely clean up trash along the greenway while exercising and walking their dog, Max!
- David Wiles and Graham Wyche, two new council members, have recently joined the "Adopt-A-Trail" program. They have volunteered to groom the blueberry bushes adjacent to the confluence of the rivers.
- Jenna Lankford recently joined our volunteers to keep check and oversee some of the areas along the Jefferson Turnpike Trail and corridors
- Ginger and Harvey Barlow have, for many years, pruned and planted new flowers in the landscaped area near the dental office parking lot.

We are grateful and appreciative to the Boy Scouts in our community for their continuing support and for the Eagle Scout projects that take place along the Greenway corridors. Peter Gray's family and Daniel Shinaman's family agreed to continue to oversee their sons Eagle Scout projects. Peter constructed a set of river access steps on the Reddies River Greenway section and on the Reddies River Greenway section and Daniel installed duck boxes on both the Smoot to Memorial Parks corridor and the Jefferson Turnpike section.



**BSA Eagle Scout, Ethan Swofford**



**BSA Eagle Scout, Bradley Vickers**



**Cody Russell with his dad Ronnie**

Ethan Swofford and Nathan Eggers recently completed their Eagle Scout Service project by constructing observation decks along two Greenway sections. Ethan built his project on the Greenway Trail from Smoot to Memorial Parks. Nathan chose to construct his deck along the Reddies near the confluence of the Yadkin and Reddies Rivers. Also, Bradley Vickers, with Boy Scout Troop 399, recently completed his Eagle Scout Service project by constructing and installing five picnic tables and one bench at the confluence of the rivers on the Reddies River Trail.

Thank you to John Yates for overseeing the removal of the old picnic tables and relocating them to River's Edge.

Cody Russell of Boomer, a senior at Wilkes Central High School, built and donated a bench to the Yadkin River Greenway for his senior project.

Maintenance crews from the towns and county have been exceptionally responsive in making sure that all Greenway sections are well maintained and safe for our Greenway users. The crews are frequently called upon to cut and remove fallen trees; and, from time to time to clear the Greenway of rocks and debris.

We applaud the people of our Wilkes County Community who dedicate their skills, time, money and energy to create a healthier and better community for their neighbors and for future generations. Thanks to our local law enforcement, Wilkes Crime Stoppers, the Yadkin River Greenway Council and our Parks and Recreation Departments, with all their combined efforts continue to lend their caring and support in keeping our trails safe and secured.

Those interested in the "Adopt-A-Trail" program or any project along the linear park corridors please contact Freida Matthews 336-838-4938 or R. G. Absher 336-651-8967. Frieda Matthews, YRGC Volunteer Coordination Committee Chairperson



**Greenway Hwy 268 Underpass Construction - View left to right / top to bottom**









## Your Contribution Helps The Greenway Expand

In just fourteen years, the Yadkin River Greenway has gone from *blueprints* of empty land to *footprints* on miles of greenway. 7.5 miles of Greenway give everyone easy access to the beauty of the land along the rivers that flow through the center of our community and the greenway helps connect our parks and neighborhoods. Today we have new sections in the construction and planning phases.

Our community is fortunate to have many local citizens whose generosity helped build the extensive Greenway system we have today. Local contributions not only pay for construction costs, they also help us win grants! Significant public support is a major requirement of the grant application process. Over half the money raised to build our current Greenway system has come from grant sources outside our community. Over half the money spent, to date, on Yadkin River Greenway construction has come from grants.

Our Council employs an Executive Director who actively seeks sizeable grants from many sources that provides the majority of funding for the construction of new Greenway sections. We're pleased to say that we have been very successful in qualifying for grants over the previous years. Your contributions to the Greenway organization helps pay for this function, which has enabled us to more than double the amount of new construction projects the Council has been able to fund and construct. Each dollar you give helps the Council receive many more from grant sources.

**Your donation keeps our Greenway system growing. You can choose one of three ways to direct how your contribution is to be utilized:**

1. You can specify 100% of your contribution is to be spent on construction of new Greenway segments.
2. You can give an unrestricted contribution to the Greenway that enables us to plan new sections and to find and secure grants to pay for new construction. Become a member of the Friends of the Greenway with your annual gifts, or send us a contribution. Any funds received in excess of our operations expenses can be used for construction.
3. You can support Greenway fundraisers that help fund the administration and operations of the Greenway organization. Our fundraisers include:
  - The Turtle Regatta is held annually typically in May along the Reddies River section. Become a Turtle Regatta sponsor by "adopting" a turtle for \$5. The first turtles that reach the finish line are awarded various prizes.
  - The Greenway Benefit Golf Tournament is held annually typically in September at Oakwoods Country Club. Sign up for a fun round of golf or be an event sponsor.
  - All event sponsors are recognized at the event and in news releases in our community!
  - Thanks to all who donate, volunteer and work to help grow our Greenway system!!!

*The Yadkin River Greenway Council is a 501(c)3 charitable organization and donations are tax deductible*  
By Keith Johnston, Fundraising Chair and R. G. Absher, Executive Director



Keith Johnston Tees Off!!



"Charlie's Angels!"



Gearing up for the Turtle Regatta!!!

## The Greenway Council

2015 Greenway Council members were: Charles White, President & Chairman, Carolyn Frazier-Pardue, Vice President, Gary Cogdill, Treasurer, Susan Buchanan, Secretary. Other Council members are: Dr. Craig Bennett, Lee Bentley, Bill Clifton, Gary Johnson, Keith Johnston, Freida Matthews, Carl McCann, Steve Steele, Sam Stroud, Frank Taracido, David Wiles, Roy Williams and Graham Wyche. 2015 new members are: Blake Lovette and Tim Wilson. The Executive Director is RG Absher. We thank these individuals for their service and participation in the success of the Yadkin River Greenway.

***Schedule of 2016 Yadkin River Greenway Meetings:*** February 23, March 22, April 26, May 24, June 28, (June meeting is also our annual meeting), July 26, August 23, September 27, October 25, November 22, (No meetings are held in December due to Christmas holidays). Meeting times are typically at Noon at the Wilkes Chamber of Commerce Board Meeting Room. Check the website for any changes to the meeting dates, times and locations.



## Our Friends, Contributors and Sponsors

### Members of Friends of the Yadkin River Greenway

**(A-C)** Jim and Rose Andrews, Wayne and Zedena Barker, Harvey and Ginger Barlow, Leo and Ila Baugham, Wayne and Zedena Barker, Bill and Sharon Benson, Bob & Carol Black, Gary D. Blevins, Karen and Harold Bumgarner, Edwin Canter, Phil and Cecilia Carlson, Kin and Vicki Church, William and Lynn Clark, Bill and Karen Clifton, Anne Clifton, Kin and Vicki Church, Sonny and Piper Church, Ida B. Collins, Howard and Brenda Colvard, Rick and Trish Cook, Cubic Inc., Ed and Ramona Curtis.

**(D-K)** Lois Ann Doss, Allen and Audrey Dyer, Ginger Edmiston and Bobby Johnson, Camille Eller, Claudia Eller Tolbey, Mike Eller, Kim and Claude Faw, Buddy Forester, Chuck Forester, Russell and Loraine Golds, Ruth Graham, Fred and Jean Graf, Ted and Jacquelyn Hall, Bill and Ruth Harris, John and Peggy Harwell, Vaughn and Francis Hayes, Lee Herring, Leonard G. Herring Family Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. James R. Hicks III, Dr. Carol W. Hoffman, James M. Huffman, Rebecca Hubbard, Alison Huskey, Gary and Madelene Johnson, Keith and Amanda Johnston, Patsy Jones, Petro Kulynych Family Foundation I, Petro Kulynych Family Foundation II.

**(L-P)** Arnold and Becky Lakey, Gerald and Linda Lankford, Dean and Susan Ledbetter, Lue Ann and Zoe Love, Pete and Wilma Lovette, Carroll Lowe, Pete Mann, Richard and Dot Marlow, John and Freida Matthews, Pam and Drew Mayberry, Carl and Linda McCann, David and Connie McNeil, Mike and Donna McNeil, Brenda B. Moore, Phylliss and Dave Moulton, Tim Murphy, Sandra and John Oliver, Lisa Pardee, Carolyn Frazier-Pardue, Ned and Betty Pierce.

**(R-Z)** Lynne Rhodes, Chuck and Belinda Smithey, Gordon Smoak, Jim and Luci Smoak, Mary Spears, Larry and Diane Stone, Stone Foundation, Steve and Kay Steele, Dr. Walt Stinson, Sam Stroud, Alvin Sturdivant, Jerry and Diane Swaim, Frank Taracido, FW and Martha Townes, Jim Sturdivant, Glinda and Franklin Triplett, William and Karen Watts, David Wiles, Charlie and Mary White, Lane Wood, Graham Wyche, Fran and Tim York, Randall Zirkle.

**Walker Level Members (\$100 to \$499)** Harvey and Ginger Barlow, Kin and Vicki Church, Mrs. George B. Collins, Rick and Trish Cook, Cubic Incorporated, Allen and Audrey Dyer, Ginger Edmiston and Bobby Johnson, Camille Eller, Caroline Frazier-Pardue, Chuck Forester, Russell and Lorraine Golds, Kim, Kathy, and Trevor Hamby, Jacquelyn and Ted Hall, John and Peggy Harwell, Vaughn and Frances Hayes, Mr. and Mrs. James R. Hix the III., Rebecca Hubbard, James Huffman, Gary and Madeline Johnson, Arnold and Becky Lakey, Pam and Drew Mayberry, David and Connie McNeil, Lisa Pardee, Ned and Betty Pierce, Rusty and Lynne Rhodes, Chuck and Belinda Smithey, Jim and Luci Smoak, Stone Foundation, Sam Stroud, Alvin and Shirley Sturdivant, Jim Sturdivant, Jerry and Diane Swaim, William Watts, Charlie and Mary White.

**Hiker Level Members (\$500 to \$1499)** Phil and Cecilia Carlson, Claude and Kim Faw, Lee Herring, Leonard G. Herring Family Foundation, Mike and Donna McNeil, Bill and Ruth Harris, Betty & Clarence Benton, Wilkes Journal-Patriot, and Vicki & Bob Taylor.

### Recognition Wall Donors Jogger (\$1,500 to \$2,999) total contributions:

John & Fran Bond, Margaret & Thomas McMahan, Brenda & Carl Page, Jack Anderson, Kimberly & Brian Peace, Mary Iva & Jim Gray, Wilkesboro Down Town Merchants, Dariel Rathmell, Mary & Bill Marlow, Betty Reinhardt, Stephen J. Wessels, Dot & Richard Marlow, The North Wilkesboro Rotary Club, Lue Anne and Joe Love, Wilma and Pete Lovette, Beverly & Gaither Keener, Martha, Charlotte, William & "B" Towns, Northwestern Bank, Kiwanis Club of North Wilkesboro, Frances & Bill Casey, Blue Ridge Engineering, Mary Lee Culler & Mark and Patricia Pegram, Ed & Patricia Sturdivant, Dr. & Mrs. John Bennett, Dr. & Mrs. Brad Shinaman, Autumn Nichols, Vicki & John Barker, Michelle & John Pontzer, Dr. David Sargent & Dr. Barry Ellis, Charlie & Mary White, Paul & Joyce Anderson, Meadows Mills, Inc., June & Bob Hege, David & Lisa Factor, Dr. Joseph H. Johnson, Patricia W. Johnson, Wanda & David Henson, Steve & Ann Palmer, Steve and Kay Steele, Carol Stone, ECMD, Inc., Women's Service League of Wilkes, Wilkes Community Foundation, Kodak, Mildred R. Turner, Vicki & Jeff Gray, Dr. Joseph H. Johnson & Patricia Johnson, Charlie and Mary White and Graham Wyche.

**Pathfinder (\$3,000 to \$4,999) total contributions:** Hall Petroleum Co., Inc., Heather & Tim Murphy, Lisa & Perry Jennings, Karolen & Tom Bowman, Camille Lovette Eller, First Union Bank, John E. Gygas, Ken and Laura Welborn, Cooks Inc., Pat McNeill Day, Pete Mann, Connie & David McNeill, Kay & Steve Steele, Nancy & Bob Ricketts, Mr. & Mrs. C.O. Lovette, Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Wooten, Ray Stroud, RMC Metromont Materials, Kim & Jug Shumate, Ina Parker, Kathy & Craig Bennett, Duncan Electric Corporation, Dr. & Mrs. Kenneth Curl, William M. Duncan, Sr., Abby, Andrew, Jan & Dennis Huggins, Mary & Ed Spears, Advantage West-North Carolina, Gardner Glass Products, Greg Stikeleather.

**Explorer (\$5,000 to \$9,999) total contributions:** Randell K. Hayes, Shirley and Alvin Sturdivant, Reins-Sturdivant Funeral Home, First Citizens Bank, Freida and John Matthews, Mark and Teresa Church, Frances and Vaughn Hayes, Vulcan Materials, BB and T, Luci and Jim Smoak, In Honor of Rose S. Andrews, Yadkin Valley Bank, Burce and Vicki Church, Lena R. Lovette, Duke Energy Company, Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, National Park Service, Wilkes Community Foundation, American Drew and La-Z-Boy Co. Wachovia Foundation, Caroloyne and Billy Bare, Kin and Vicki Church, Carolina Realty, Inc. Joyce and Nick Cirillo, and Chuck Forrester.

**Trailblazers \$10,000 and up total contributions:** Jane & David Kim, Rusty & Duane Smith, Becky & Arnold Lakey, Pam & Lee Herring, Judy & JC Faw, Children of Rachel N. & Vernon S. Church, Larry & Diane Stone, Wilkesboro TDA, Lanny & Diane Stephens, The Jim Shumate Family, Rose & Leonard Herring, Tyson Foods, Thomas Frazier, MD., Keith & Amanda Johnston, Lorene & Robert Joines, Sandy, Matthew & Jim Faw, Petro Kulynych Family Foundation, I and II, Cubic Inc., Willis Hoyl Bryant, Debbie & "Mule" Ferguson, NC DENR, Tammy & Cam Finley, Friends of Bran Goad, NC Department of Transportation, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, Lowes's Charitable and Educational Foundation, Dwight & Anne Pardue, Brushy Mountain Water Co., and Gwyn F. "Duck" Vannoy.

### How to Attain Recognition Wall Status

Once you become a Friend of the Greenway, your contributions are continually tabulated. As you make additional contributions, you will progress through the donation membership levels. Once your combined contributions reach \$1,500, your contributions will be recognized as a "Jogger" and your name will be engraved on a bronze plate and placed on the recognition wall!

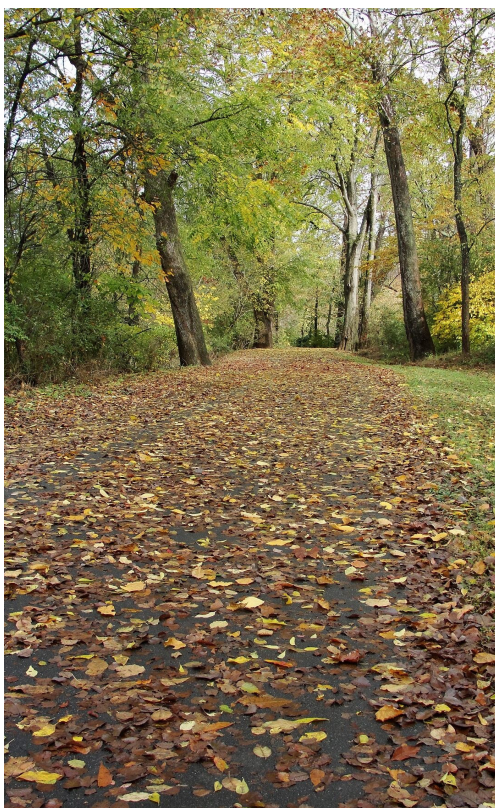
**If you have questions about becoming a Friend of the Greenway, call our office at: 336-651-8967 or visit our web page at:**

**[www.yadkinrivergreenway.com](http://www.yadkinrivergreenway.com)**

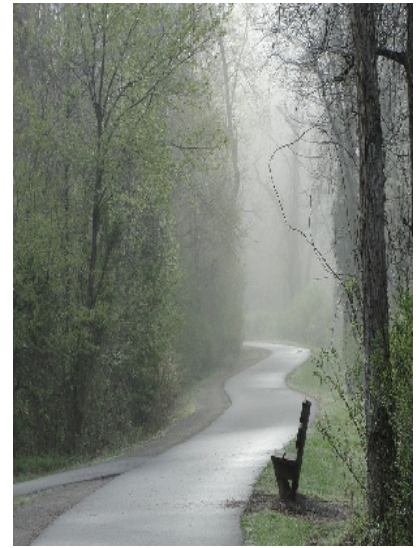


# THE BEAUTY OF THE GREENWAY

## BY LYNN CLARK







## Why It's Been A Great Year For the Greenway

Having trouble coming up with an original topic, I asked RG Absher for ideas. Ever the positive, enthusiastic cheerleader, RG suggested that I write about WHY things are going well now for the Greenway.

A key strategy that has worked well for the YRGC is focusing on the possible, while postponing the impossible. The huge gap between Brown's Ford Road and the Wilkes YMCA, and the even longer gap between Moravian Creek and the Wellness Center, continue to be untapped opportunities because a handful of property owners are not interested in cooperating. So the YRGC has focused instead on friendlier locations, and the Greenway has grown steadily.

The fuel that keeps the YGR expanding is in three forms: operating funds, easements, and construction funding. In 2015 significant progress was made in all these areas.

The Turtle Regatta and the YRG Golf Tournament were both very successful. Candidly, we would like to have sold more turtles and had more golfers on board, but the strong level of paid sponsorships more than made up for that. It has also been a banner year for Friends of the Greenway, which has grown dramatically in its financial support. Continuing budgetary contributions to the Greenway from the three local governments have also been important. The YRGC is extremely grateful to all who provided financial support in 2015.

This may have been the best year ever for YRG easement acquisition, notably including Burger King, Windemere Apartments, and several others along Moravian Creek. Moreover, in 2015 all property owners in the area between the confluence of the Yadkin and Reddies Rivers and Memorial Park have now agreed to give easements. YRGC Chairman Charlie White and board member Attorney Lee Bentley have been very instrumental in these successes, which were literally years in the making.

Grant funding was not as major a factor in 2015 as in some prior years. The Town of Wilkesboro provided significant in-kind labor and equipment resources to build the underpass at River Street (Rte. 268) and the trail southward toward Wilkes Community College, while YRGC paid for materials with a combination of smaller grants and other sources.

From my perspective one of the most important success factors for the YRG is our Executive Director RG Absher. Despite serious medical challenges this year, now overcome, he continues to be one of the most resourceful, enthusiastic, energetic, positive people I have ever worked with.

As we begin the New Year, there are no guarantees but there are great possibilities. The YRGC will continue our efforts, and with the cooperation and support of all stakeholders, hopefully grow and improve this unique asset for our community.

Sam Stroud, Council Member

**The Yadkin River Greenway  
Council Newsletter**

Yadkin River Greenway Council  
P. O. Box 191  
North Wilkesboro, NC 28659

Phone: 336-651-8967  
Email: [yrgreenway@pcshome.net](mailto:yrgreenway@pcshome.net)



## BECOME A FRIEND OF THE GREENWAY!!

The **Friends of the Greenway** campaign has completed another year as a “grass roots” support organization. Friends of the Greenway added 12 new members during 2015 for a grand total of 261 members! Of these, a high percentage renewed their membership during the past year. We hope all will renew during 2016!

Friends of the Greenway contributions, over the last 12 years, now total \$130,748.83! These donations go a long way towards covering the administrative costs of the Yadkin River Greenway Council. This enables the Council to fulfill its mission of developing a greenway system in our community. Annual membership is open to all. And, since the Council is a 501(C)3 non-profit organization, membership dues are usually tax deductible.

We offer opportunities to our members to volunteer time on specific greenway events and projects, helping in the greenway office, and contacting prospective new members. This newsletter and other communications will, hopefully, keep our members informed of Greenway activities.

Each January, or based on membership anniversary date, we will begin contacting each Friend of the Greenway to consider the renewal of their membership and to continue their support of the greenway. Regular memberships are: \$20 for individuals, \$40 for families, \$12 for youth, \$100 for businesses, and \$50 for civic organizations.

Also, if you would like to be recognized as a **Friend of the Greenway**, the donation categories are:

Walker: \$100 to \$499  
Hiker: \$500 to \$1,499  
Jogger: \$1,500 to \$2,999  
Pathfinder: \$3,000.00 to \$4,999  
Explorer: \$5,000 to \$9,000  
Trailblazer: \$10,000 and up

Once you become a Friend of the Greenway, your contributions are constantly tabulated. As you make additional contributions, you will progress through the donation ranks of membership levels mentioned above. Once you ultimately reach the combined contribution level of \$1,500, your contributions will be recognized as a **Jogger** and a bronze recognition name plate will be installed on the Greenways Recognition Wall for all to see!

Thanks again for your continuing support! If you have any questions, please call the Greenway office at: 336-651-8967.

RG Absher, Executive Director