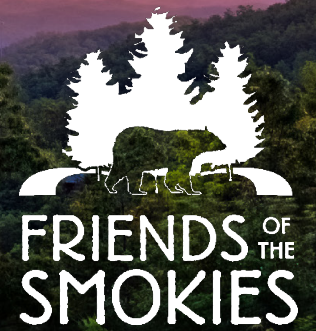


Friends of the Smokies

2023-24 Annual Report





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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

This year we celebrated the 90th anniversary of the creation of Great Smoky Mountains National Park!

My admiration continues to grow for those early park champions who had the foresight and tenacity to foster their great

vision into the reality of the park we still enjoy

nine decades later. They never lost hope that they could raise the required \$10 million, more than \$230 million in today's dollars, to purchase the lands our park now covers.

This milestone reminds us of the power of community and generosity. Now, with your help, we are building on that legacy of philanthropy, ensuring the park's continued growth and preservation for the next 100 years.

Thanks to you, we raised more than \$5 million last year to fund programs and projects in the park that are making it a more welcoming place for visitors, while also critically caring for the resources that make it so special. We are filled with immense gratitude for the steadfast support from generous donors like you. Your ongoing commitment is making a remarkable difference in enhancing the park experience for all visitors.

Thanks to your contributions, we have achieved significant milestones in several key areas including:

- **Rehabilitation of the Ramsey Cascades Trail:** This iconic trail, which travels to the park's tallest waterfall and winds past towering tulip-poplars, has undergone an essential transformation to ensure its sustainability for future generations as part of the Trails Forever program.
- **Adaptive Equipment and Programs:** Your support has enabled us to provide specialized equipment and program leaders for backpacking,

kayaking, hiking, and biking experiences for people with disabilities, offering them better access to enjoy the park's trails and natural wonders.

- **Research and Storytelling:** With your help, we are supporting research that uncovers and shares the comprehensive history of the people who lived and worked in the Great Smoky Mountains, enriching our collective understanding and appreciation of their lives.
- **Rehabilitation of the Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse, John Messer Barn, Woody Place, and historic structures in the Elkmont Historic District:** Notably, the recent rehabilitation of the David Chapman Cabin marks the first time in park history that all 19 of the remaining historic structures in the Elkmont Historic District have been open to the public, providing an incredible opportunity to tell the story of early tourism.

Every donation, whether it is \$5 or \$5,000, plays a crucial role in the long-term care and protection of America's most visited national park. We are deeply grateful for each donor, each Friend, who believes in our mission and joins us in this work.

Your support is not just a gift; it is an investment in the future of this cherished national treasure. Together we are leaving a lasting impact, ensuring that Great Smoky Mountains National Park remains a vibrant and welcoming mountain sanctuary for all.

Thank you for your dedication and generosity. We look forward to celebrating many more milestones with you as we continue this important work.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Dana Soehn

Dana Soehn
Friends of the Smokies President and CEO



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Friends,

In reflecting on the last year, I'm especially grateful for the contributions of Friends of the Smokies in support of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Through your donations, volunteering, and commitment to the Smokies, you've helped us accomplish so much. In just the last year, we've made significant improvements to park safety, offered many educational programs, restored several historic buildings, rehabilitated trails, made the Smokies more accessible, and much more. I'm so proud of our continued work together—you are helping make the park better for this and future generations.

I'd like to briefly highlight three of this year's projects that you supported. First, your generosity helped us provide learning opportunities for more than 18,000 students and 400 teachers in 2024. The Smokies Education Team connected K-12 students across the country and in neighboring communities to the incredible history and natural resources of the Smokies through distance learning, park-based field trips, classroom visits, and summer camp experiences. Through Friends of the Smokies funding, we also partnered with the Great Smokies Institute at Tremont to engage youth from Fulton

High School in Knoxville with opportunities in the

Smokies and hire a retired teacher to help our

two organizations connect more strongly with urban schools.

Secondly, thanks to your support, our Forever Places crew finished restoration work this year on Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse, the John Owenby Cabin, the Hikers Cabin at Greenbrier, the homes at Daisy Town in Elkmont, Will Messer Barn, Steve

Woody House, and more. We continue to develop this highly skilled historic preservation crew funded by the Forever Places Endowment to restore historic structures that are in critical need of repair. I hope you'll make the trip to see one of these rehabilitated structures in the new year!

Lastly, you helped us offer seven free, ranger-led programs that helped visitors of all abilities explore the Smokies with the help of adaptive equipment. Through this program, visitors with disabilities had the opportunity to bike at Deep Creek Trail, hike at Hazel Creek, kayak on Fontana Lake, and camp in the backcountry. This program and this new equipment, which is making the Smokies more accessible than ever before, earned the National Park Service's regional Excellence in Interpretation Award and is receiving national media attention. We can't wait to continue expanding these opportunities.

As we approach the centennial anniversary of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, I'm comforted in knowing that our partnership with Friends of the Smokies is stronger than ever. Thank you for your continued dedication towards protecting this special place and helping park visitors have a great experience. We couldn't do this work without our Friends.

Cassius M. Cash

Cassius Cash
Superintendent of Great Smoky Mountains National Park



SAVING NATIVE SPECIES

Highlighting Hemlocks



Nicknamed the “redwood of the east,” the eastern hemlock can live hundreds of years, tower more than 150 feet tall, and grow trunks more than six feet thick. Yet, these giants of the Smokies have fallen prey to the tiniest of insects.

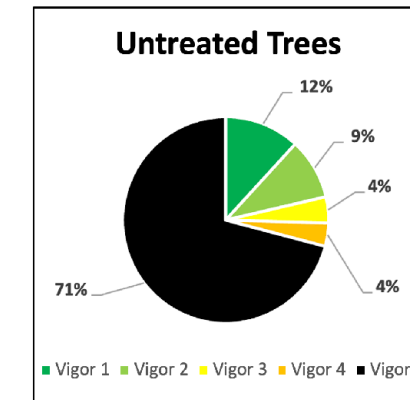
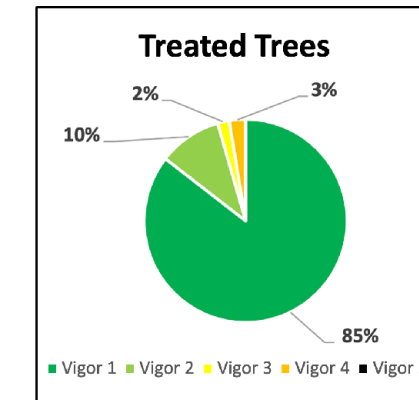
In 2002, the non-native hemlock woolly adelgid arrived in Great Smoky Mountains National Park and began infesting the park’s hemlock forests. Scan the branches of infested hemlock trees, and you’ll see what resembles tiny cotton balls at the base of the needles. These “woolly” coatings protect the adelgid as it cuts off nutrients and starves some of the park’s oldest and largest inhabitants.

The adelgid has affected hemlocks across the park. In areas of high mortality, the loss of canopy trees can lead to altered water temperatures in previously shaded areas, impacting sensitive aquatic life.

The situation would be far worse if not for your support of Friends of the Smokies. Since 2003, Friends has helped the park with the nation’s most ambitious and successful treatment program to fight the hemlock woolly adelgid. In 2004, Friends raised more than \$300,000 in emergency funds and continued to provide the park with the annual resources to fight for hemlocks, including \$60,000 in both 2023 and 2024.

The park protects more than 300,000 hemlock trees in designated conservation areas. A single treatment of insecticide can protect a tree for up to seven years. You may notice some hemlocks with blue dots on their trunks, marked by scientists to note the tree has already been treated. In addition to insecticides, biologists have released hundreds of thousands of predatory beetles and silver flies to feed on the adelgids.

Your support of Friends of the Smokies continues to save the giants of the forest. The funding has played a crucial role in maintaining the health of hemlocks across the landscape, with dedicated park staff, interns, and volunteers working tirelessly to save this iconic tree species.



Above: National Park Service data from the 2023 Hemlock Conservation Resource Brief compares hemlock health in stands treated and not treated with insecticides. 'Vigor 1' indicates a healthy tree, while 'Vigor 5' indicates a dead tree. Far right: Hemlock forests are an important biome in the Smokies, harboring unique plant and animal life. Right: A blue mark on a hemlock designates that the tree has been treated for adelgids.



Friends Funding Keeps Workers Afloat at FONTANA LAKE



At the southwestern corner of the Great Smoky Mountains, a shiny silver watercraft ferries workers and equipment across Fontana Lake to the shoreline where Great Smoky Mountains National Park begins.

For Brad Swartz, a National Park Service boat operator and assistant trail crew leader, the sleek aluminum craft is a considerable upgrade from the old boat the park service had used for the four previous decades.

“It was an older boat at the end of its useful life,” he said. “It had a cumbersome design where it wasn’t easy to get on and off the boat. It was getting hard to find parts to repair it when something broke.”

With more than \$157,000 in funding from Friends of the Smokies, the national park purchased the new metal work boat that arrived and entered service in spring 2024.

“The new boat makes a world of difference,” said Swartz. “It makes everything we do more efficient. We carry a lot of tools, equipment, and UTVs from place to place. We have a ramp we can lower [on the new boat]. It is easier to get into shallow areas. It is more fuel-efficient. We can get where we need to on the lake faster and more dependably than on the old boat.”

The work boat helps haul equipment for trail crews to portions of the park without direct access from roads.

The best way to access some of the park's remote southwestern areas is by crossing Fontana Lake.

“It allows us to do our job a lot more efficiently and safely,” Swartz said. “It means we can keep the trails open for everybody. It helps us do the work for cemetery visits on decoration days. It just makes it so visitors can have the experience in the Smokies they want.”

Support from Friends of the Smokies will provide a similar upgrade for the park's law enforcement rangers on the eastern end of Fontana Lake.

Rangers there will replace their aging fiberglass McKee Craft boat, which has been struggling with considerable wear and tear. Funding from Friends will provide \$55,600 for a new metal boat designed for rough docking environments, allowing rangers to increase their patrol presence and ferry wildland firefighters to incidents in difficult-to-reach areas of the park.

BEYOND THE PAVEMENT

Making History with All-Terrain Wheelchair Hikes



Park Ranger Katie Corrigan has answered countless questions from park visitors during her 20-year career with the National Park Service. But five years ago, a disabled veteran asked her something she struggled to answer.

“The veteran came to me and asked, ‘What do you have for me to do in the park?’” Corrigan recalled. “We did not have very much. We had a half-mile paved trail that was ADA-accessible. We had sidewalks and overlooks that were paved. But there was not a lot beyond that if you were a wheelchair user.”

That conversation started Corrigan down a path that would eventually take wheelchair users on a historic trip through the rugged backcountry of the Smokies.

“We’re moving beyond the pavement. We’ve assessed trails throughout the park, measured them, tested out equipment, and brought in Catalyst Sports of Knox County to help train volunteers,” Corrigan said. “It makes it so people can go on hikes using off-road wheelchairs.”

The adaptive programs require time and considerable money. Wheelchairs that can handle the rough terrain of the Smokies are not cheap.

“The chair is a big part of what makes this possible. It is called the Freedom Chair, and it’s made by a company called GRIT,” said Carly Pearson, a wheelchair

user who is the ADA coordinator for Knox County and an ambassador for Catalyst Sports. “Each one of these chairs is around \$4,500.”

With support from generous donations to Friends of the Smokies, the park received funding to purchase several off-road wheelchairs that are available for visitors to reserve and check out for free.

“You can go over rocks and roots, and it’s a lot easier to maneuver than an everyday wheelchair,” said Pearson. “This means when a family visits the park, a disabled family member is not stuck in the car while the rest of the family goes on a hike. They get to have the same experience of enjoying nature. It is amazing to see how freeing it is for people to get out in the woods under the tree canopy, not just on the pavement.”

June 8, 2024, marked a historic moment for inclusiveness in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Rangers, volunteers, and wheelchair hikers took the first fully accessible backcountry hike and overnight camping trip in the national park. The 1.5-mile trek on Cooper Road Trail to Backcountry Campsite 1 involved multiple stream crossings and steep terrain.

“It is difficult, but in a good way,” said Kaitlyn Lengel of South Carolina, who became paralyzed a couple of years ago due to complications from lupus. “The bumps in this chair are easier to tackle. It feels amazing. It feels like we accomplished something.”

“It had been a long time since I’d seen that happiness and joy on her face,” said April Lengel, Kaitlyn’s mother who accompanied her on the backcountry hike and overnight camping trip. “She had gotten down with the whole situation and thought she lost so much of what she loved. Now, with this program, her spirits are up, she’s developing friendships, and she’s seeing things that she didn’t think were possible anymore.”

After the overnight camping trip, April Lengel subsequently brought Kaitlyn back to other adaptive events in the Smokies. The family was able to participate in an adaptive kayaking session as well as a Fontana Lake boat tour and hike at Hazel Creek.



Ranger Katie Corrigan (upper left) and the group from the overnight backpacking trip on June 8.

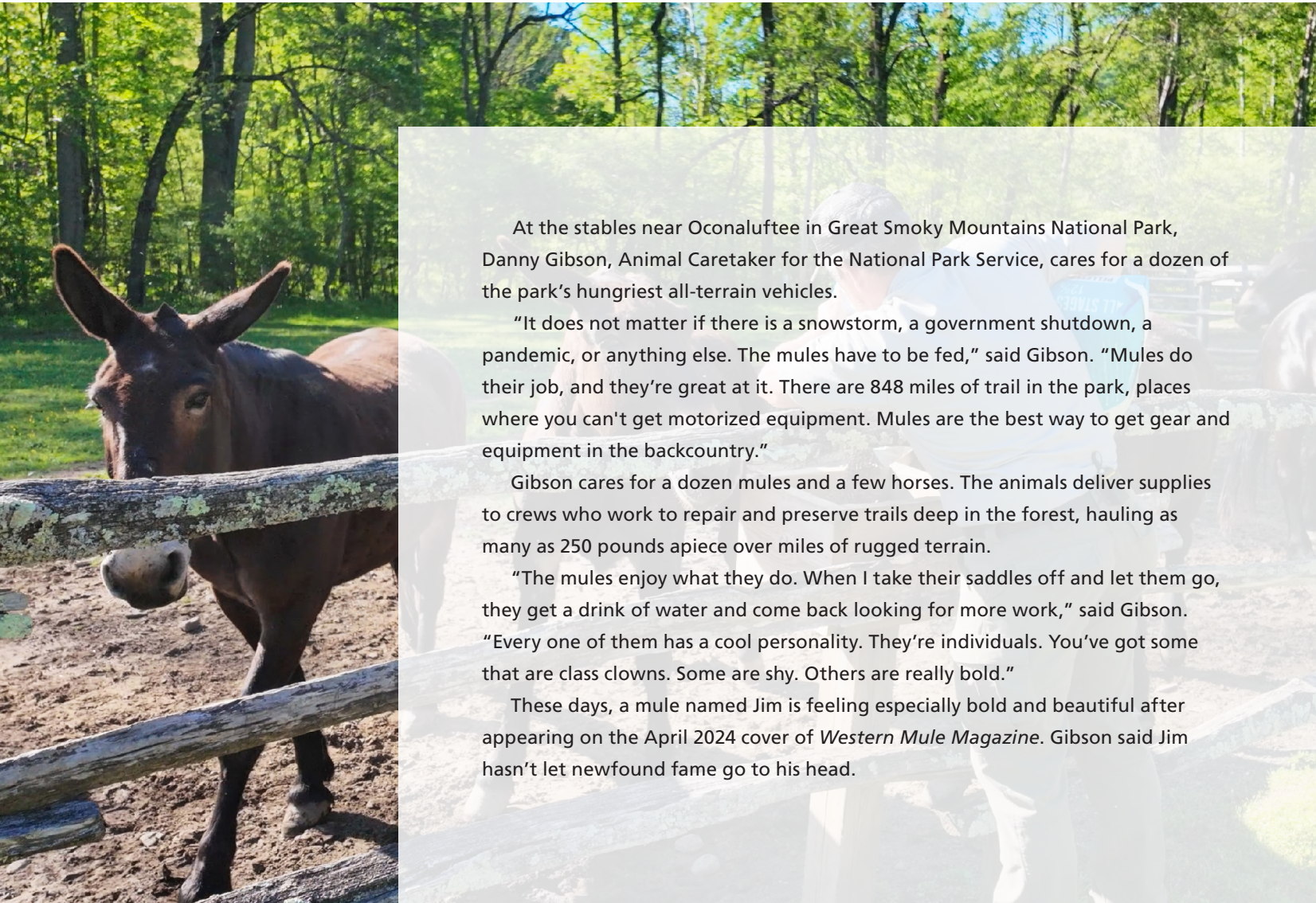
“The chair has been a game changer,” said April Lengel. “It’s not something we could afford. If you are donating to Friends of the Smokies, you’re allowing something you may take for granted to be accessible to everybody. You’ve made it accessible to people like my daughter to be able to get outside and enjoy the outdoors again.”

Ranger Corrigan says this is just the beginning of making the park a more welcoming place for everyone. While there is still a lot of work to do, she feels much better about the current answer if someone with mobility issues asks what they can do in the Smokies.

“I think this is the most fulfilling part of my career in the National Park Service,” said Corrigan. “It’s been an honor to be able to provide this opportunity for people to enjoy their national park. Our national parks belong to everyone.”

TRAILS FOREVER

Helped by Cover-Model Mule



At the stables near Oconaluftee in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Danny Gibson, Animal Caretaker for the National Park Service, cares for a dozen of the park's hungriest all-terrain vehicles.

"It does not matter if there is a snowstorm, a government shutdown, a pandemic, or anything else. The mules have to be fed," said Gibson. "Mules do their job, and they're great at it. There are 848 miles of trail in the park, places where you can't get motorized equipment. Mules are the best way to get gear and equipment in the backcountry."

Gibson cares for a dozen mules and a few horses. The animals deliver supplies to crews who work to repair and preserve trails deep in the forest, hauling as many as 250 pounds apiece over miles of rugged terrain.

"The mules enjoy what they do. When I take their saddles off and let them go, they get a drink of water and come back looking for more work," said Gibson. "Every one of them has a cool personality. They're individuals. You've got some that are class clowns. Some are shy. Others are really bold."

These days, a mule named Jim is feeling especially bold and beautiful after appearing on the April 2024 cover of *Western Mule Magazine*. Gibson said Jim hasn't let newfound fame go to his head.



"He hasn't signed autographs or anything. I don't think the other mules would let him live it down if he thought he was better than the rest," joked Gibson. "Jim is a strong go-getter. He's leggy and agile. He's just a great all-around standard mule."

Jim the mule arrived a couple of years ago with a sidekick named Trinity after generous donations to Friends of the Smokies funded their purchase. A large portion of the funding came from Friends auctions where donors bid on the chance to name the new mules.

Jim's namesake is Jim Ogle. Ogle's sister made the winning bid to name the cover-model mule after her brother.

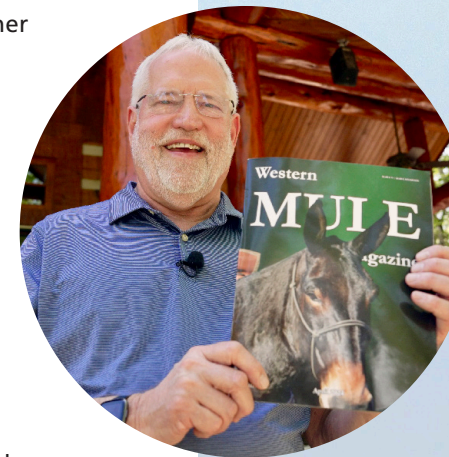
"I think he is a good-looking mule. Finding out he is such a hard worker, it reminds me a lot of myself," laughed Jim Ogle as looked at a photo of the mule named in his honor. "I think we need to raise as much money as we can for the park. Having those mules work that hard is very important."

Your support of Friends of the Smokies provided \$20,000 funding in 2024 for a new mule and horse to join the team of four-legged trail workers. The newest mule was named "Jake" by bidders at the 2024 Greenbrier Barn Party auction. The name honors Jake Ogle, vice chair of the Friends of the Smokies board of directors and nephew of Jim Ogle.

Friends of the Smokies preserves and protects the park's most beloved trails far beyond providing money for mules. In 2024, Friends allotted \$325,000 for Trails Forever projects, including the rehabilitation of Ramsey Cascades Trail; \$150,000 for the rehabilitation of Little Cataloochee Trail; and \$65,797 to fund a position that coordinates Trails Forever volunteers.

Gibson says mules deliver a return on investment unlike any ATV.

"I can't say enough about a mule," he said. "They do their job, no matter what."



Above: Jim Ogle holds the issue of *Western Mule* featuring Jim the mule.
Right: Jake, the mule crew's newest member.



FOREVER PLACES

Stepping Back in Time in Elkmont



Your support of Friends of the Smokies added another significant moment to the timeline of the Elkmont Historic District. With the completed restoration of the Chapman-Byers Cabin along Jakes Creek Trail in August 2024, this marks the first time all 19 structures designated for preservation are open to the public.

This restoration work ensures the story of Elkmont's role in the creation of the national park lives on. It also closes the chapter on a longtime historic preservation project that began in 2009 after decades of contentious debate.

In many ways, the story of Elkmont mimics the story of the park's creation. The logging town that harvested a treasure of tall timber was transformed into a tourist destination by some of the earliest advocates for the national park. Elkmont's natural beauty as a source of recreation, relaxation, and restoration inspired them to preserve and protect the land, but their success in advocating for the park's creation also led to their eventual removal.

In 2009, Great Smoky Mountains National Park announced its plan to preserve 19 of the more than 70 buildings still standing at Elkmont. Completing the project required time, money, and the skill of NPS restoration experts like DeLayne Hodges.

"Getting the [Chapman-Byers] cabin to where it was structurally sound was a challenge because there was so much water damage," said Hodges. "Once we got

everything stabilized, we could start focusing on things like the trim work and flooring. I think people will be happy with it."

Friends of the Smokies helped fund many important aspects of the project through the years. That included funding for the park to develop several Historic Structures Reports, replace windows, hire skilled carpenters, and provide supplies to preservation crews.

The project proceeded in phases, starting with the preservation of the Appalachian Clubhouse in 2011 and Spence Cabin in 2012. These two are the only structures that retained electricity and plumbing, and they are available to rent for events during the day. The remaining 17 cabins are vacant exhibits for self-guided walking tours.

Hodges began restoring Daisy Town's cottages in late 2016 as a one-person-crew.

"The first six months, I was by myself. I was all by my lonesome," he laughed. "Then we added a couple of people and just kept working for six years to finish all the cabins in Daisy Town. We had to rebuild many of these cabins from the ground up but make the new construction appear old and true to history."

Elkmont became a passion project for Hodges and his family. His wife shared her talents as a professional painter to breathe life back into the ornate elements of the community. Hodges and his historic preservation crewmates paid painstaking attention to detail, enabling visitors to step into the past.

"I found an old newspaper from the 1920s under the linoleum flooring in one of the cabins," said Hodges. "I thought people today should be able to see what the people who had these cabins saw. I made a display for it, and it's in the back room of the cabin."

The final cabin in the 15-year restoration project was the Chapman-Byers Cabin on Jakes Creek Trail. The most famous name associated with the cabin is Col. David C. Chapman, known as the "Father" of the national park. In the early 1930s, the Tennessee Park Commission acquired the property and granted

Opposite page: Colonel David C. Chapman in 1932. *Courtesy of the McClung Historical Collection.* Below: The Chapman-Byers Cabin before and after restoration.



a lease to Col. Chapman to host visiting dignitaries at the cottage. Chapman soon transferred the lease to the family of Rufus Byers and Margaret Chapman Byers, Col. Chapman's brother-in-law and sister. The cabin remained with the Byers family from the 1930s until the lease expired at the end of 1992.

The Chapman-Byers Cabin was built around 1912 with features that reflect the Craftsman style popular in the early 20th century. The cabin presented unique challenges to restoration crews as the only two-story structure of the 19 preserved.

"There were some areas where you had rotting from the upstairs bathroom area through the floor, down to the first floor beneath it, and down to the ground," said Hodges. "It really has come a long way from when we started."



For Hodges, the completion of the Elkmont restoration project is a joyful and historic moment.

"When I first started on this, it was honestly overwhelming," he said. "I said, 'Wow. This is a lot.' You see all these cabins, and every one of them is unique. But when you do get to the end of the project, it's so cool. It's been a joy working up here."

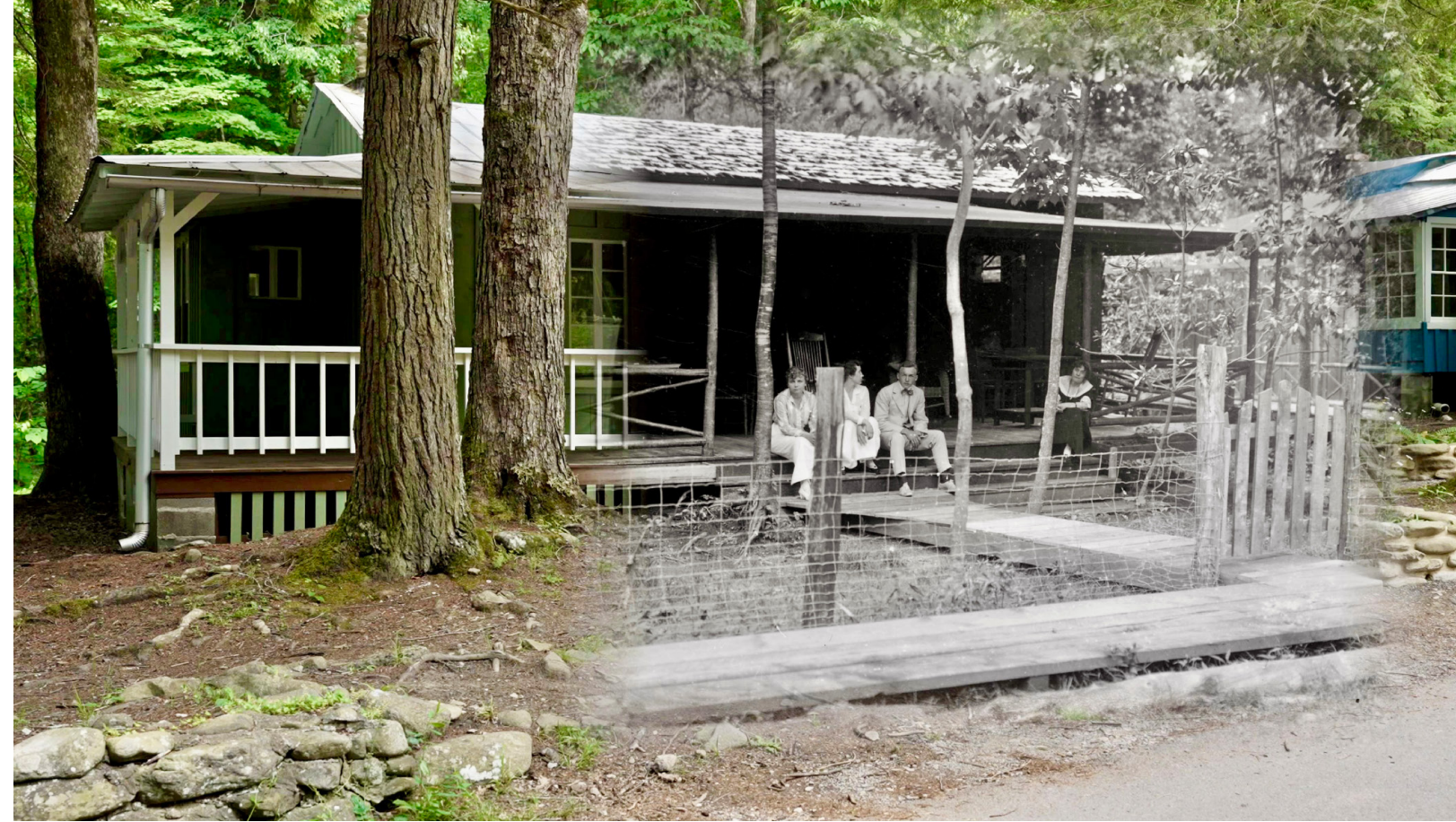
Recognizing the value that skilled workers like Hodges bring to the park led Friends of the Smokies to create the Forever Places endowment in 2020. The endowment aims to raise \$9 million, which would support the hiring of additional historic preservation crew members to maintain the wide range of cabins, churches, barns, and mills in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

"That's what our job is — to put new components on old structures and fool the eye to think it's all the same age," Hodges said. "And we rebuild it in a way that is durable and will last for years. It's kind of like bringing life back to it. That's pretty cool."

As with Elkmont, Forever Places aims to add to the timelines of other structures throughout the park to ensure their rich histories are shared with future generations of visitors to the Smokies.

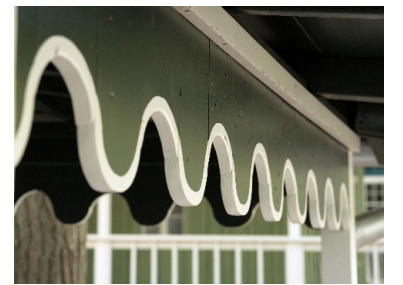
To learn more about Forever Places and how to help Friends of the Smokies reach our \$9 million endowment goal, visit SmokiesForeverPlaces.org.

Left: The Chapman-Byers Cabin restoration features a covered back porch overlooking Jakes Creek. Above: DeLayne Hodges, maintenance mechanic work leader.



Left: A composite image of the restored Cook Cabin featuring a 1910s photo superimposed on a picture taken from the same angle in 2023. Photo from 1910s courtesy of McClung Historical Collection.

Below: The Scruggs-Brisco Cabin in Daisy Town is shown before and after restoration. The cabin now features a wooden awning, providing durability while still preserving the cabin's original style.



2017



2024

GATHERING with Friends



Gathering on the boundary with Friends along the Cataloochee Divide



Gathering on the Corn Farm with Friends in Nashville



Gathering with Friends in Knoxville



Gathering with Friends in the park



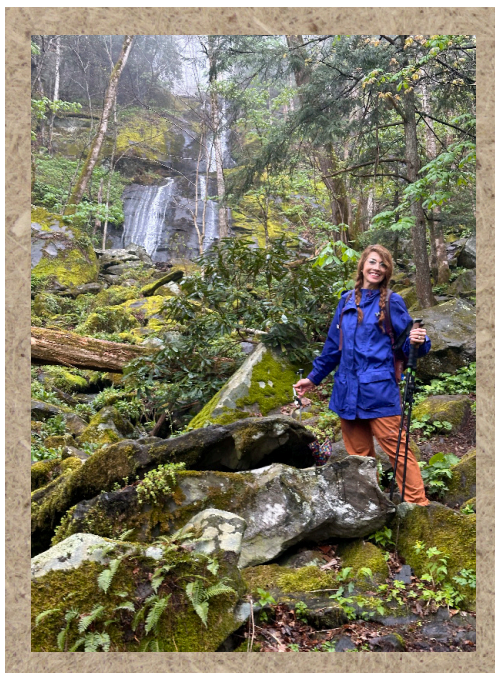
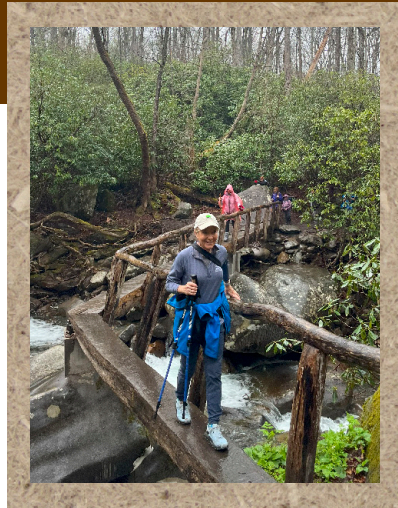
Gathering on the quiet side with Friends in Townsend



Gathering with the 1934 Society in Elkmont

THE
1934
SOCIETY

HIKING with Friends



LEADERSHIP

Board Members

Sharon Miller Pryse (Chair)
 Jake Ogle (Vice Chair)
 Nancy Daves (Secretary)
 Laura Webb (Treasurer)
 The Honorable Gary Wade
 (Founding Chair Emeritus)
 Rev. Dr. Dan Matthews (Chair Emeritus)
 Mark Williams (Chair Emeritus)
 Jim Hart (President Emeritus)
 David Colquitt
 Cindi DeBusk
 Steve Gigliotti
 Brad Herman
 Himanshu Karvir
 Dr. Rob Powell
 Health Shuler
 Ken Stamps
 Melissa White
 Marilyn Wright

Honorary Board Members

Kay Clayton
 Victoria (Vicky) Fulmer
 James Haslam, II
 Luke Hyde
 Bruce Hartmann
 Dale Keasling
 John Mason
 Diane (Deener) Matthews
 Jim Ogle
 Linda Ogle
 Chase Pickering
 Meredith Elliott Powell
 Robert Tino
 Jack Williams
 Kristin Williams
 *Deceased: Mimi Cecil, Wilma Maples

Emeritus Board Members

John Dickson
 Natalie Haslam
 Mary Johnson
 David White
 Stephen W. Woody
 *Deceased: Dr. Myron "Barney" Coulter,
 Leon Jones, Kathryn McNeil, Julie Anne
 (Judy) Morton, Wilma Dykeman Stokely,
 John B. Waters Jr., Lindsay Young



Our Staff

Dana Soehn, *President and CEO*
 Nan Jones, *CFO Director of Finance*
 David Aranda, *Accounting Manager*
 Debbie Speelman, *Database and Accounting Associate*

Marielle DeJong, *Chief Development Officer (23-24)*
 Kathryn Hemphill, *Chief Development Officer (24)*
 Lauren Gass, *Philanthropy Director*
 Krista Heilmeier, *Development Manager*
 Olivia Wright, *Outreach Coordinator*

Lindsay Howell, *Special Events Director*
 Jim Matheny, *Communications Director*
 Hannah Kinkade, *Development Associate*

2023 FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash/Cash equivalents	\$9,330,264
Certificates of deposit	\$1,993,439
Accounts receivable	\$448,738
Prepaid expenses	\$38,715

LONGTERM ASSETS

Investments (endowments)	\$16,162,031
Property and equipment (net of accumulated depreciation)	\$137,933
Other assets (right of use, beneficial assets, life insurance)	\$598,235

Total Assets **\$28,709,355**

LIABILITIES

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$26,950
Current portion of long-term lease	\$26,370
Deferred revenue	\$393,634

LONGTERM LIABILITIES

Longterm lease liability	\$272,535
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NET ASSETS

Net Assets without donor restrictions	\$4,465,479
Net Assets with board designation	\$841,390
Net Assets with donor restrictions	\$22,682,997

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$28,709,355**

2023

2023

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY

TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE

Donations	\$1,618,110
Tennessee license plate revenue	\$1,152,175
North Carolina license plate revenue	\$590,953
Special events (net of direct expenses)	\$1,187,537
Donation box revenue	\$363,552
Grants	\$242,300
In-kind contributions	\$95,666
Investment income net of expense	\$609,199

Total Support, Revenue, and Other **\$5,859,492**

EXPENSES

Park projects	\$2,854,161
Park project program services	\$418,300
Management and general	\$610,814
Fundraising	\$379,795

Total Expenses **\$4,263,070**

OTHER CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

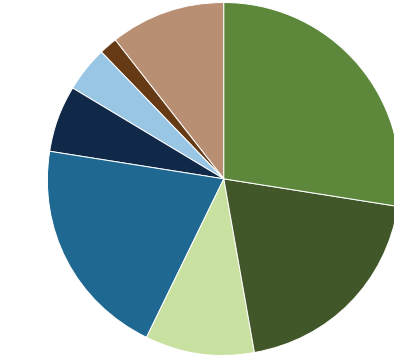
Unrealized (loss) on investments	(\$1,691,686)
Net assets at beginning of year	\$24,701,758
Change in net assets	\$3,288,108

Net Assets at End of Year **\$27,989,866**

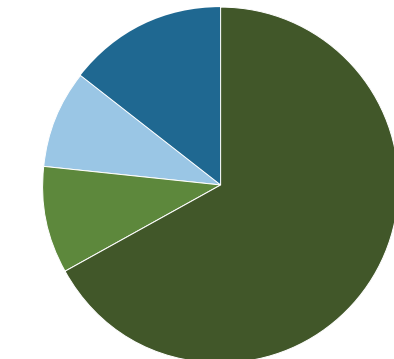
2023

2023

2023



Total Support, Revenue, and Other
\$5,859,492.00



Total Expenses
\$4,263,070.00

The amounts presented here are derived from audited financial statements of Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park for the year ending December 31, 2023. There are slight variances in figures due to rounding. Copies of the complete audited financial statements of Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park are available upon request and on our website.

WE SALUTE YOU



THANK YOU

In 2023, Friends of the Smokies received gifts of \$1,000 or more from the following individuals, foundations, businesses, and partners:

Individuals

An Anonymous Benefactor
Cathy Ackermann
Larry Ammons
Merrill Ammons
Matt and Andi Anderson
Kevin and Irene Anton
Daniel Areyzaga
Robbie Arrington and Travis Vickery
Catherine and Chuck Atchley Jr.
Mike and Susan Bacon
Jason Baldwin
John and Melissa Ballinger
Scott Bane and Brad Hunt
Mark and Lori Barrett
Kreis Beall and Michael White
Heather Beck
Bill and Hester Beecher
T. C. Beeler
Megan and Frank Beidler
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"The mountains of East Tennessee and Western North Carolina are central to my history and my heritage. Friends of the Smokies works tirelessly alongside the National Park Service to preserve and protect Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Volunteering with Friends to fulfill its mission provides an opportunity for me to both pay tribute to my pioneer ancestors and to ensure a legacy for the future generations."

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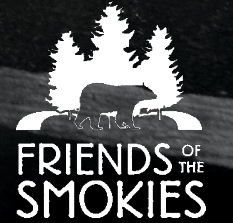
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Joshua Bemis: 22 (bear)

Matt Brass: 31

Deb Campbell: 32-inside back cover

Paul Driessche: 22 (cabin)

Joye Ardyn Durham: 6 (Fontana Lake)

Jon Erickson: Inside front cover

Friends photos: 4 (hemlock branch), 5 (all), 6 (Brad Swartz), 7-9 (all), 10 (mules), 11 (Jim Ogle), 12 (Chapman cabin closeup), 13 (2024 Chapman cabin), 14 (Chapman cabin), 15 (all Scruggs-Brisco cabin), 16-17 (all), 18 (top left, bottom middle), 27-29 (all), 30 (all except larger Loop Lope)

Ray Johnson: Cover

David Luttrell: 3

Jim Matheny: 13 (2017 Chapman cabin), 14 (DeLayne Hodges), 15 (present day Cook cabin)

Bruce McCamish: 30 (larger Loop Lope)

NPS Photo: 10 (steps), 11 (Jake the mule)

Emma Oxford: 20

Smokies Life archives: 4 (hemlock spraying)

Linda Spangler: 18 (bottom left, top right, bottom right)

Michele Sons: 19, back cover

Thompson Photograph Collection, Calvin M.

McClung Historical Collection: 12 (Col. Chapman), 15 (1910s Cook cabin)





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