

Foxfire program seeking applicants

By **Megan Horn**
The Clayton Tribune

Education and preservation of Appalachian Heritage are at the heart of the purpose of Foxfire and what better way to keep that tradition alive than encouraging young people to become part of living history.

This year, Foxfire is offering a program called “Project Foxfire” for high school students at the minimum age of 14.

“It’s going to be a new energized summer program for high school students,” said Museum Director Barry Stiles. The program is project-based and a continuation of the past “Foxfire Summer Leadership Program.”

Executive Director Todd Faircloth said Project Foxfire accepts 12 students and runs June-July. He said it is a paid program and participation makes students eligible for a college scholarship.

Faircloth described the program as “a balance of fun, learning and hands-on activities.”

The deadline for submissions to the program will be early May.

Faircloth said applications will be available at area high school counselor’s offices as well as the Foxfire Museum and Heritage Center located at 98 Foxfire Lane in Mountain City.

“We’re trying to highlight heritage skills,” Faircloth said of the purpose of the program. He said “preserving cultural elements” are important and the program teaches skills such as blacksmithing, wood-working, photography and graphic layout.

Walker Boswell, Foxfire’s curator and education coordinator, said there will be different instructors throughout the summer and students will learn a variety of skills including interviewing and creating content for two Foxfire magazines.

Boswell as well as Kaye Carver Collins will be two of the instructors.

“[We’re] really excited to have her on board,” Boswell said of Collins. He added that photography will be a significant focus this summer.

Boswell said that through the interviews students will be “building a legacy of relationships.”

Students in the program will also be hands-on helping build the last cabin for the Children’s Village, which consists of miniature replicas of existing buildings.

The last building is a Cherokee House from the period before European contact.

“Students will be helping construct it,” Stiles said. He said the plan is to be finished by early fall.

The replicas are scaled smaller so children can interact by playing, cooking,

and learning about what life was like in the 1800s.

Currently, the village consists of miniature replicas of the existing buildings including Warwoman Cabin, Chapel, Ingram Mule Barn, and Blacksmith Shop.

“I’m excited about having the kids involved in that,” Stiles said of them helping build the Cherokee cabin. He said they will get a hands-on opportunity to learn “old ways of construction” while also learning about Cherokee culture.

“Preserving a culture is still part of the program,” Stiles said.

Faircloth said Project Foxfire is a great opportunity for students to build on their resume by learning different skills. It is largely student-choice focused to keep with the foundation of Foxfire.

“The things we are working to preserve here are vital,” Boswell said. He said it’s important to hold onto that and get young people involved.

Visit www.foxfire.org/ online for more information on Foxfire or contact 706-746-5828.

The Foxfire Museum and Heritage Center is located at 98 Foxfire Lane in Mountain City. Students interested in applying for Project Foxfire can pick up applications at the location or at their school’s guidance counselor’s office.

TLLC launches initiative to connect seniors, students

The Literacy and Learning Center recently launched an initiative, connecting after-school students with residents of the Eckerd Living Center through a series of monthly intergenerational activity days. The program’s launch proved a resounding success, filled with laughter, shared stories, and creative collaboration.

Students from Highlands School were taken by bus to the Eckerd Living Center, where they engaged in a collaborative craft project, creating vibrant felt flowers. Alongside this, students and residents enjoyed card games and puzzles, fostering conversation and shared experiences. The room was filled with joy as the gen-

erations interacted, each sharing unique perspectives.

Students brought youthful energy, while residents shared valuable life experiences and wisdom. The felt flowers served as a tangible reminder of the connections formed during the afternoon.

This inaugural visit has established a valuable partnership between TLLC and the Eckerd Living Center, offering students a unique opportunity to learn about community engagement and develop empathy towards senior citizens. Residents, in turn, benefited from connecting with younger generations and sharing their stories.

TLLC recognizes the importance of

these intergenerational connections and is committed to continuing this program monthly. Each month, the first 15 students whose parents register them will be able to participate in these enriching activities. Parents are encouraged to register their children early, as space is limited. Pick-up will be at the Eckerd Living Center between 4:30-4:45 p.m. This program strengthens the bonds within the Highlands community and provides enriching experiences for both students and residents.

To learn more about TLLC’s programs, contact Caroline Cox, Programs Manager, at CCox@TheLiteracyandLearningCenter.org or 828-526-0863.

Relief

From page 1B

of Highlands and Cashiers, International Friendship Center, Macon County Care Net, Macon County Emergency Management, Vecinos and WNC Communities

Eastern Band of Cherokees/ Qualla Boundary

\$25,000 grant to the Jackson County Schools Smokey Mountain Elementary Backpack Program

\$30,000 grant to WNC Lighthouse

\$50,000 grant to the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation

\$75,000 grant to Qualla Fire Department

Haywood County

\$25,000 grants to six organizations: Clothes to Kids of Haywood County, Community Kitchen, Haywood Christian Ministries, Haywood Pathways Center, Longs Chapel Firewood Ministry and Mountain Area Pregnancy Services

\$30,000 to Mountain Projects

Including the grants made through its affiliates, NCCF has allocated a total of \$6.75 million from the Disaster Relief Fund to date.

NCCF has also committed \$250,000 from the fund to support the Disaster Re-

lief and Resilience Scholarship for students facing financial burdens due to Helene.

Over \$29 million has been contributed to the fund to support Helene recovery and will continue to be distributed to charitable organizations in the coming months and years.

“We are moved by the incredible generosity that has allowed us to support the vital work of each of these organizations in partnership with our affiliate foundations in western NC,” said NCCF President & CEO Jennifer Tolle Whiteside.

Additional information about grant-making will be shared as it becomes available. For more information about NCCF’s response to Hurricane Helene, visit nc-communityfoundation.org/Helene.

Extension

From page 1B

ing about how many people I’ve heard that are tossing around the idea of getting chicks from the farm stores, and many who have already done so in fear that supply will be short or will be cut short due to Avian Influenza. I wanted to just share some reminders for those folks specifically, but really for anyone interested. Number one, if the driving factor for you as a producer in getting chicks this year is because of high

egg prices please remember that it will take somewhere between 16 and 24 weeks for pullets to begin producing eggs. So be prepared for the long-term requirements for care and housing that owning chickens require and always make sure that you begin with birds that have been vaccinated.

Double check space requirements for the breed that you are buying to make sure you don’t buy too many birds. On average the coop requirement is 2.5-3.5 square feet per bird and for the run an additional minimum of 4-5 square feet per bird. North Carolina State University has excellent resources compiled on their Poultry Extension Website for backyard producers, just go to: poultry.ces.ncsu.edu

Producers can find out more information about weed control, discuss a specific weed management plan based on the needs of their farming operation, or learn more about backyard poultry by utilizing the resources mentioned above or by contacting Kendra Fortner at the Jackson County Cooperative Extension Office at 828-586-4009 or the Swain County Cooperative Extension Office at 828-488-3848 or by email at kendra_norton@ncsu.edu

Kendra Fortner is the Livestock Agent Jackson and Swain County.

Brandon

From page 1B

that take place in Camp Merrie-Woode. The mission of Camp Merrie-Woode (a traditional wilderness summer camp near Sapphire) is to use the natural setting to nurture the physical, intellectual and spiritual growth of girls and young women through traditional camp activities and outdoor adventures.

For some words of advice to aspiring writers, Brandon suggested choosing to develop stories within genres that they feel most comfortable with.

“You have to follow your passion and write what interests you,” she said. “I would encourage any new aspiring author to write what drives you, write what you’re passionate about and don’t give up. You have to learn to edit and to make your writing be the best.”

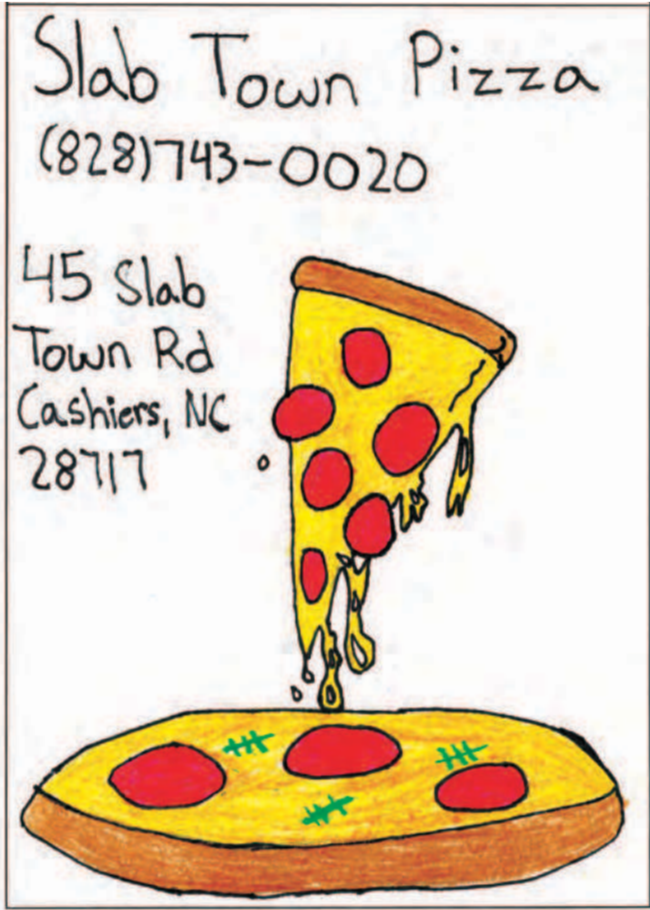
For more information about Brandon, or her books, visit her website at www.particiabrandon.com.

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