

Issue 1
January 2017



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A Message from Hope

Submitted by Hope Wittmer

As we settle down from the holidays and return to a normal routine, it's a great time to reflect on the last several months. The Fall Arts & Crafts Festival was a huge success. In the midst of preparing for Thanksgiving and Christmas meals and the Angel Tree Gift Program, the Party Rock Fire surprised us all. While some of our attention was diverted to supporting rescue workers where we could, volunteers who support the Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach (HNGO) did an amazing job to ensure we delivered on our commitment to our clients. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the generosity of our donors who enable us to provide to community members that need us the most.

On behalf of HNGO, *thank you* for the support you've provided, whether it has been through monetary or in-kind donations, or volunteering your time and talents. We look forward to your continued support as we head into 2017. Wishing you and your families a wonderful new year!

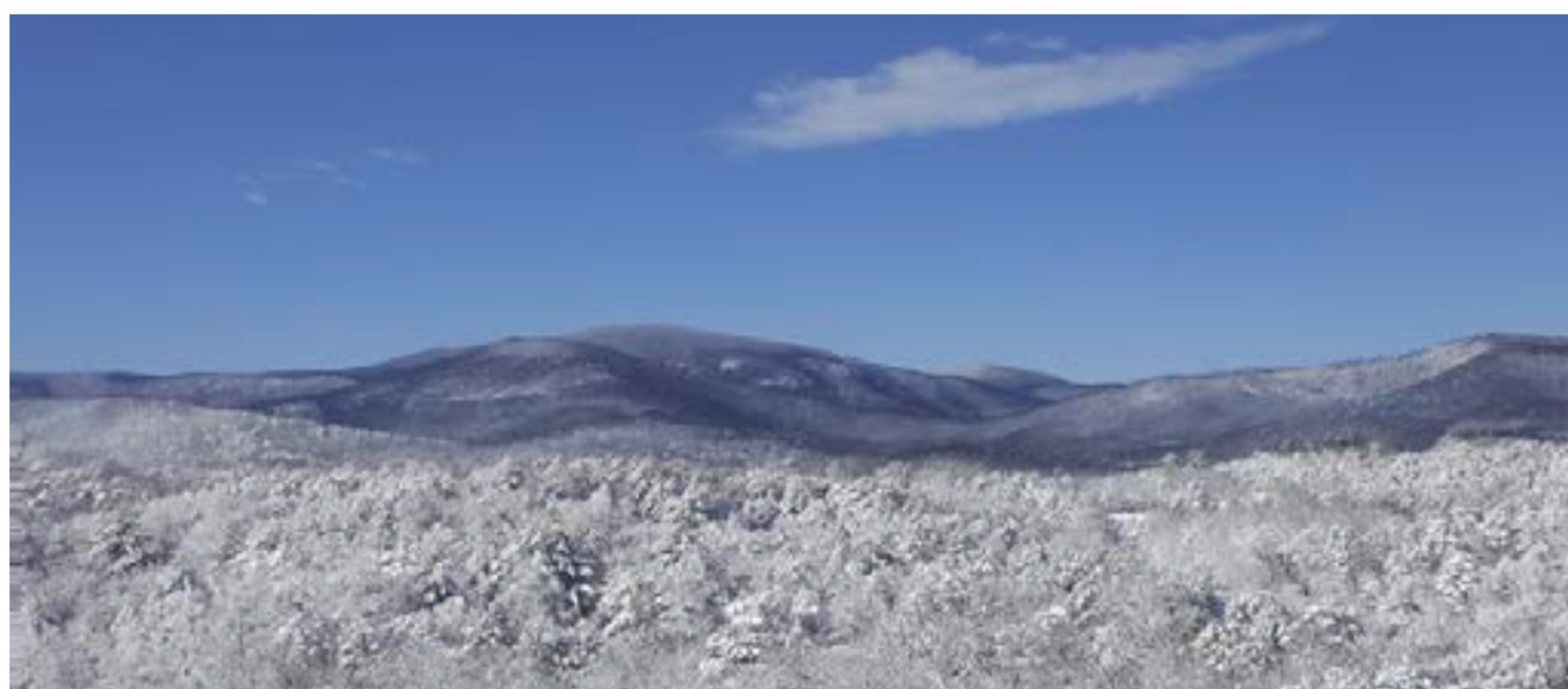
Contact Information

Address: 2594 Memorial Highway,
PO Box 634, Lake Lure NC 28746

Phone: (828) 625-4683

Email Address:
hngoutreach@gmail.com

Website Address:
www.hickorynutgorgeoutreach.org



You can't live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you.

- John Wooden

Making the Holidays Special: 2016 Holiday Support

Submitted by Bernadette Smith

The last three months of the year are always the busiest at HNGO as we prepare for the holidays, while still providing general Outreach services. This year was no exception! Despite the challenges the Party Rock fire brought, HNGO received exceptional support from local community members and churches. This support, which came through monetary and in-kind donations, enabled volunteers to organize and distribute Thanksgiving meals and Christmas gift cards and meals to our families.

The Angel Tree Program, which provides holiday gifts for children aged 0 – 16, was another resounding success this year. Community members and churches “adopted” our angels and purchased clothing and toys for them. What a great way to ensure our children felt special on Christmas! The looks on our families’ faces as they picked up their gifts was just priceless. Lots of tears came with those smiles!

A very special thank you goes to **Fairfield Mountains Chapel** for adopting 100 children in the Angel Tree Program!

Holiday Distribution

Thanksgiving Meals: 166 families served

Christmas Gift Cards/Meals: 159 families served

Angel Tree Gifts: 181 children served

Giving Thanks to our Donors

A number of individuals and organizations went above and beyond and made substantial in-kind donations, providing much needed items for the food pantry and holidays.

- Lake Lure Classical Academy – Food Drive, over 4200 items
- Rutherford Quilt Guild – 54 Handmade pillowcases
- Transfiguration Church – Handmade reusable diaper kits
- Transfiguration Firewood Ministry – Firewood
- MANNA Foodbank – 35 Manna Packs each week

- Local Fire Departments – Excess donations from Party Rock Fire
- Charlene and Chuck Leneschmidt – Winter coats and ongoing bread donations
- Bickel/Nosalek/McAteer/White Families – Family Food Drive, 276 pounds

Thank you to all those individuals and organizations that provided financial and in-kind donations to improve the lives of those less fortunate in our community this year!



Chapel friends deliver angel tree gifts.



Hope Wittmer, Jenny & Everette Chapman, Mike & Doris Clardy



Lynn Harris, Martha McGinnis
Rutherford Quilt Guild

Who We Served in 2016

Submitted by Jennifer Spence

Food Pantry: January – December

The Food Pantry provides a selection of healthy food options, toiletries and paper products. Clients shop once a month for a 3 – 5 day supply of the food items that best suits their families.



Lake Lure Classical Academy held a food drive and collected over 4200 items.

How You Can Help

Your donations are what make HNGO successful. We appreciate any and all of your support. Below are ways you can help!

- Make a tax-free monetary donation in any amount at any time. See the insert in this newsletter. (PayPal payment option is coming soon!)
- Adopt a Food for Kids recipient for \$35 per month during the school year. Contact the HNGO office for additional information.
- Donate food to the Food Pantry or Food for Kids Program. Items needed include low sugar cereal, single serve oatmeal, individual raisins, soup, crackers, tuna fish, peanut butter, jelly, pasta, rice, toiletries and paper products. Drop off at the HNGO office during business hours.

87%	White / Caucasian
12%	Black / African American
1%	Latino
55%	Male
45%	Female
59%	Children (0-17)
36%	Adults (18-64)
5%	Seniors (65+)
93	Average number of families served each month
350	Average number of individuals served each month

Food for Kids: January – December 2016

The Food for Kids Program provides school-age children with well-balanced, healthy food for breakfast, lunch and snacks each weekend during the school year.

6	Average number of children receiving weekday school lunches
35	Average number of children receiving weekend backpacks

Volunteering at HNGO

Submitted by Ursula Harris

Volunteers continue to be a critical component to effectively provide Outreach services. In 2016, volunteers spent 4200+ hours operating the Food Pantry, Food for Kids Program, supporting the Lake Lure Arts and Crafts Festival and other fundraisers, and providing others services to clients. Volunteering at HNGO is a wonderful opportunity to give back to others. We are always in need of volunteers; at the current time our need is great. Our most pressing need is for coverage in the Food Pantry on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. If you are interested in volunteering, please call or stop into the HNGO office during business hours. We'd love to have you join us!

2017 Calendar of Events

February 5: Souper Bowl Sunday

April 7: Shrimp and Grits Fundraiser at the Lake Lure Beach (rain date April 8)

May 27 – 29: Lake Lure Spring Arts and Crafts Festival

October 21 – 22: Lake Lure Fall Arts and Crafts Festival

November 6 - Angel Tree Start Date

December 1 – Last day to return Angel Tree Gifts

November 20: Distribution of Thanksgiving Meals

December 11 – 21: Distribution of Christmas Gift Cards and Meals and Angel Tree Gifts



Bickel Families (Benson NC & Virginia Beach VA), Nosalek Family (Concord NC), McAteer Family (Concord NC), White

Family (Jacksonville NC) donated 276 pounds of food.

About Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach: Our Mission

Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach is a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization serving families in the Hickory Nut Gorge community, which extends into four counties. Our mission is to help eliminate hunger and provide emergency services with love and compassion to those in need that live in our community. HNG Outreach is solely funded through donations from generous members of our community, fundraisers, and local food drives. HNG Outreach does not receive any federal funds. Food and other products are purchased at a minimal cost from the MANNA Food Bank (a Feeding America partner), as well as at local stores. All Outreach programs and activities are fully supported by 50+ volunteers.



Kay Dittmer & Joann Ellingson present a check to Hope Wittmer on behalf of Lake Lure Olympiad

Visit us at www.hickorynutgorgeoutreach.org