



Post Office Box 634
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Reaching Out

Winter 2025
Issue # 4

Like snowflakes, my Christmas memories gather and dance—each beautiful, unique, and gone too soon. - Deborah Whipp

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2025 Calendar of Events

December 22-26	Closed for Christmas
January 1	Closed
February 8	Souper Bowl Sunday

Contact Us

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Donate to Outreach



A Message from Karen

As 2025 comes to a close, we at Outreach are looking back on a year of helping our neighbors in the Hickory Nut Gorge community.

We had 203 families sign up for Thanksgiving hams and turkeys—an all-time high! I would like to thank everyone for donating to this event, both financially and with food donations.

We have started giving out Christmas gifts for our Angel Tree kids, with over 225 children needing presents. Thank you to the folks at Fairfield Mountains Chapel, Church of the Transfiguration, Middlefork Baptist Church, and everyone else that made this a happier holiday for these families.

With the colder weather setting in, we face a continuing need for pantry donations, as well as funds to help with power and heating bills for local families. We also are accepting donations of new coats, blankets, and space heaters.

Thank you to the community for all you do to support HNGO. Wishing you and your families a very happy holiday season.

Karen King
Outreach Manager
Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach

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. Outreach is solely funded through donations from generous members of our community, fundraisers, and local food drives. 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 40+ volunteers.

2025 Fall Lake Lure Arts & Crafts Festival

The Fall Festival was held October 18 and 19 in the public area next to the Lake Lure Inn. We are delighted that we could resume this community fund-raising event after Hurricane Helene forced the cancelation of the last two festivals. The longer interval between events and a new person on the coordinating committee required a relearning curve. Plus 60% of our vendors were new to our festival. But we got through a hurricane, and so, we got through the challenges.

Welcome to the Festival



Americana



Toys from Steve Smart



Knickknacks



A Doggy Visitor (and Friends)



Hot Dogs



Lake Lure Artists

The *Lake Lure Artists*, a collection of local artists with a passion for art, held a showing of art, on the first day of the Festival (across the street), with a bake sale and raffle. The group and the individual artists generously donated money to Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach. Thank you so much for the art and for the donation.

Service Starts Young



Thank you to everyone at Lake Lure Classical Academy for the generous donations from their food drive! We received over 1400 cans of much needed food for the pantry. Thanks to the NHS/ NJHS for organizing and delivering the food.

Community Support for Outreach

We are grateful for the support that we receive from our community. One example of this is Jim Barton presenting a check from the Hickory Nut Gorge Foundation to Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach. The funds will go toward making the holidays a little more enjoyable for our clients.



Our Generous Community

Thank you to Ingles for offering the \$5.00 bags of food to be donated to Outreach and thank you to the folks who have purchased them! We have received over 150 bags so far...

Organizations that Help

Outreach is part of a community that helps those in need. Special thanks to the following for their support:

Keys Open Doors Foundation, Chimney Rock State Park, Riverbend Community, Upper Hickory Nut Gorge Community Center, Lake Lure Lions Club, Lil's Thrift Shop, Bill's Creek Community Center, 1927 Lake Lure Inn, Grey Hawk Bar and Gardens, Food Lion, Highlands Lake Lure, and Lake Lure Artists.

We love our Volunteers

Outreach volunteers are the backbone of our organization. They help unload Manna food deliveries, stock the food pantries, prepare weekend boxes for Food for Kids, assist clients as they shop, and perform many other tasks to help our community. We are always looking for new volunteers interested in supporting the mission at Outreach. For information on volunteering please contact our office.

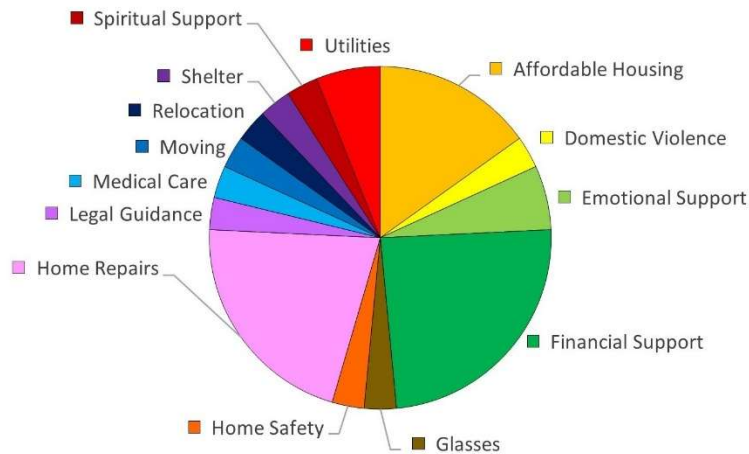
We would like to welcome new volunteers

Dawn Regan, Melissa Blair, and Irene Cannoot.

Social Work Summary - Expanding Support Beyond Food Assistance
October 2025 through December 2025
 Laura Krejci, Volunteer Social Worker

Between October and December 2025, Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach continued its commitment to serving individuals and families whose needs extend well beyond food insecurities. During this three-month period, the organization’s Social Work program supported an average of **13 clients per month**, offering personalized guidance and targeted assistance to help stabilize households facing complex challenges.

While food insecurity remains a central concern among those seeking help, many clients needed coordinated social services intervention. Over the quarter, clients sought help with a wide range of essential needs as shown by the chart to the right:



These requests highlight the diverse challenges faced by individuals and families in the Hickory Nut Gorge region—from housing insecurity and unexpected financial strain to health-related concerns and emotional or spiritual support needs. Many clients required not just one service, but a combination of interventions to help them regain stability.

Community Partnerships: A Foundation of Support

Meeting these needs requires strong collaboration across local and regional agencies, nonprofits, health systems, and businesses. Hickory Nut Gorge Social Work Outreach worked closely with partner organizations to connect clients with the appropriate services, resources, and expertise required to address their situations effectively.

We are deeply grateful for the continued support and partnership of the following organizations who played an important role in meeting the needs of Outreach clients:

Biltmore Baptist Church, Department of Veterans Affairs, Fairfield Mountains Chapel, Facebook, FEMA, Free Clinic in Hendersonville, Highlands Apartments, Home Depot, Lake Lure Fire Department, Lake Lure Lions Club, Mission Health, Out of Ashes, Path Shelter, Pine Gables, Polk Referral Center, Rutherford Housing Partnership, Rutherford County Department of Social Services, Shane Coore Handyman Services, Spartanburg Regional Hospital, Steve Deckert Handyman Services, Sunny View Fire Department, and Well Water Trust.

These partnerships enable Outreach to offer comprehensive support that goes beyond the capacity of a single organization. Together, this network strengthens the overall wellbeing of the community and ensures that residents in crisis receive timely, compassionate, and effective assistance.

Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach remains committed to deepening these collaborations and continuing to address the evolving needs of the community. By integrating food assistance with social work support, the organization provides a vital lifeline to individuals and families seeking safety, stability, and hope.