

# ga-du-gi 2009

WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE OUR COMMUNITY

The mission of Cherokee Preservation Foundation is to improve the quality of life among the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and to strengthen our neighboring communities.

**What difference do we make? Each year, with this report, we highlight what's changing as a result of the work we are doing together.**

Cherokee Preservation Foundation (CPFdn) has been operating since 2002 and we are seeing results of our community investments as well as continuing to initiate new efforts. We have distributed more than \$43 million through 519 grants in the areas of economic development, cultural preservation, and environmental preservation. Part of our responsibility is to be a good steward of this resource by tracking how this money is used and determining what impact it has in the community.

Inside this publication, you will see descriptions of progress in our three focus areas. We show projects in various stages of work—using a basket making theme to help describe how change happens. You will see basket drawings throughout this report to indicate the various phases of development of the projects CPFdn is supporting.

**LAYING THE GROUNDWORK** — The Foundation supports planning processes that help chart a positive course for our community's future. In this report, we highlight new CPFdn initiatives in the areas of environmental improvement (energy audits and growth management).

**GRANTEE PROGRESS** — We provide the funding, but it is up to the recipient organizations to implement the projects. We report here on several grantees that are making significant progress:

- ◆ Revitalizing Cherokee language through growing community programs and an expanding partnership with other tribes.
- ◆ Creating project-based learning through teacher training and technology, all to be implemented at the new Cherokee Central Schools campus in fall 2009.
- ◆ Attracting tourists to learn about Cherokee history and heritage. We continually track Cherokee cultural attractions and how they are changing to better serve visitors and build their own organizational capacity (*Unto These Hills* outdoor drama, the Oconaluftee Indian Village, the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, and the Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual).



**INSTITUTIONALIZING CHANGE** — The Foundation wants the change that takes place during the grant period to be lasting. In this report, we show how several programs are creating a pathway to leadership—from pre-teen through adulthood—including growing youth councils around the region, international study and travel, and a new leadership award program.

**REALIZING BENEFITS** — Ultimately, it is CPFdn's goal that our funded projects directly benefit people. This year we look at the five-year-old Revitalization of Traditional Cherokee Artisan Resources (RTCAR) initiative—including an overview of grants accomplishments and a focus on river cane protection, planting and harvesting results.

All of this activity is possible due to a working partnership between CPFdn, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and our neighbors in surrounding counties. We will continue investing in change and tracking outcomes. Each year, we report to the Cherokee community and to the CPFdn Board on our progress and on the challenges we face together. That is our commitment – to help preserve and improve this treasured place that the Cherokee have called home for so many generations.

On behalf of Cherokee Preservation Foundation, Ethan Clapsaddle, Deborah Grant, Emily Kirby, Brooke Lossiah, Wanda McCoy, Deb Mintz, Bobby Raines, and Shannon Swimmer,

Susan Jenkins  
Executive Director



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*Pictured at left: Cherokee High School student Hannah Youngdeer  
Note: Investment figures listed inside report are total amounts since 2002*



# ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION



## FOCUS: SAVING AND RENEWING ENERGY

\$463,464 invested by Cherokee Preservation Foundation

Global warming, energy conservation and recycling are currently on the minds of many across America who are concerned about a sustainable future. Here in Cherokee, the land and natural resources have always held special meaning. A new initiative of Cherokee Preservation Foundation (CPFdn) joins with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) to transform that long-held value of stewardship into a range of “green” practices throughout the Qualla Boundary. These projects grew out of the Generations Qualla convening process that involved local residents in envisioning a sustainable future for the Cherokee community. A main focus is on energy conservation—to increase the energy efficiency for existing buildings and also create environmental impact standards for the way in which future construction is carried out, through new site and building requirements to be adopted by the EBCI.

**PROJECT STATUS:** Twenty buildings in Cherokee are being evaluated for their energy use and cost. The energy audit information is used to identify changes needed in heating and air conditioning equipment as well as building elements (lighting, windows, doors, and other places where efficiency is compromised). As part of these recommendations for improvements, a specific justification is provided that shows how the expense will pay for itself through energy savings.

From the first 14 energy audits completed, some of the buildings in Cherokee have been found to have exceptionally low energy usage and cost while others are exceptionally high—a range which is typical for this type of analysis. At various buildings, some interesting and innovative recommendations are being considered to improve energy efficiency, including:

**COOL ROOF** — one building could get a state-of-the-art roof that reflects sunlight and creates radiant energy;

**SOLAR HEATED POOL** — a community swimming pool could benefit from a solar heating unit;

**UPGRADED OUTDOOR LIGHTING** — lights used for security, parking lots, and street lighting throughout Cherokee may be replaced with LED bulbs.

Bob Gilbreath (left) of Waste Reduction Partners shows Jon Waldroup a meter reading as he conducts an energy audit at the EMS Building



PHOTO BY BRENDA OOCUMMA

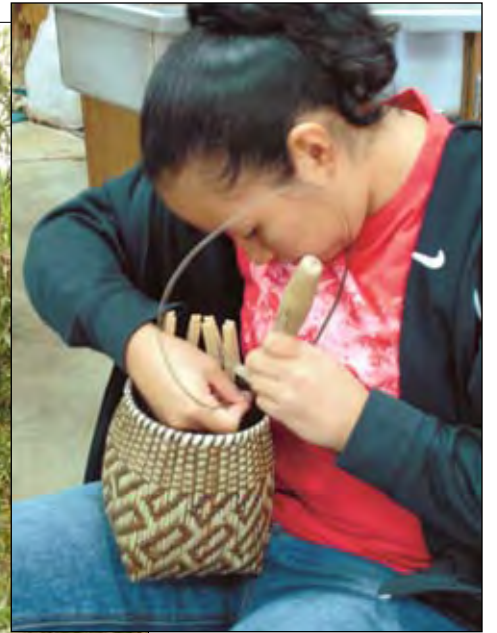


## FOCUS: REVITALIZATION OF TRADITIONAL CHEROKEE ARTISAN RESOURCES (RTCAR)

\$1,755,480 invested by Cherokee Preservation Foundation



PHOTOS BY BETH JOHNSON



RTCAR helps local artisans access river cane (Betty Maney, left, is pictured harvesting). High school student Hannah Youngdeer weaves cane into a traditional Cherokee basket

In an effort to address a double threat to Cherokee natural resources and culture, five years ago the Foundation developed the Revitalization of Traditional Cherokee Artisan Resources (RTCAR) initiative. RTCAR was launched in response to the scarcity of river cane and white oak needed for basket making, along with the bloodroot and butternut used for baskets’ vivid orange and brown dyes—all of which were in short supply due to modern land use changes and development pressures. In addition to resource shortages, the skills to create Cherokee arts were being lost as elders passed away. The RTCAR initiative is unique because it crosses boundaries of agriculture and art, and seeks to strengthen the traditional Cherokee balance between environment and culture. Now, we are beginning to see results from this program initiated by CPFdn, as outlined below.



**PROJECT STATUS:** Stemming from the 15th Century or earlier, the tradition of shaping river cane plant stalks into elaborate, functional and beautiful Cherokee baskets now has a brighter future. This is due to RTCAR’s focus on researching planting methods, mapping existing cane breaks, and arranging for access to harvest.

## PROTECTING AND HARVESTING RIVER CANE AND WHITE OAK

**NEAR-TERM BENEFITS OF RTCAR RIVER CANE WORK:** The first step in the RTCAR river cane work has been to identify locations of cane breaks—which vary in size from a small patch to a spread of three and a half acres; stalks average six to 20 feet tall; most although not all plots are near water. A combination of aerial photography and “ground-truthing” verification has resulted in the mapping of 70 sites. This information is being stored in a natural resource database to be maintained, expanded and shared through a collaboration of the EBCI, NatureServe, Western Carolina University, and University of Georgia.

After the sites have been located, RTCAR staff and partners work with landowners to secure agreements so that artisans can have access for harvesting cane. To date, 19 of the sites have formal or informal agreements on harvesting. Some of these are permanent conservation easements that guarantee preservation of the cane breaks in perpetuity while others are private landowner agreements. Since spring 2007, seven cane harvests have been done with artists on the lands identified through RTCAR-supported work.



Finally, the mapped sites and agreements for harvesting are collected in the RTCAR Clearinghouse, which any artist can contact to find out where and when to harvest cane. The expectation is that the RTCAR Clearinghouse will continue to grow with added sites and access agreements over time—for river cane and other valued artist resources.

**LONGER-TERM BENEFITS OF RTCAR RIVER CANE WORK:**

Additional research has focused on identifying soil types and propagation techniques that will aid in future river cane expansion. Knowledge gained from this research is helping scientists and agriculture experts develop the characteristics of basket-quality cane for future planting.

**UPDATE ON WHITE OAK:** The University of Tennessee’s experimental planting of over 400 seedlings of white oak trees is showing strong potential for this resource that is a central component of Cherokee basket making. Based on this planting supported by RTCAR, researchers are developing a protocol for how and where to most quickly grow the strongest trees for the best basket materials. It is a long-term process as the white oak trees take six to eight years before they are ready for harvest. The EBCI is considering establishing plantations for producing white oak in order to help ensure adequate availability of this treasured artisan resource.

**RTCAR GRANTS AND IMPACT**

Since Fall 2004, 47 grants have been made toward achieving the dual goals of RTCAR:

**Ample resources are available for Cherokee artisans**

**Traditional cultural knowledge is preserved and used**

Key results of the RTCAR program include:

- ◆ Preserving and gathering of artisan materials such as high quality river cane and white oak for baskets (described above), and bloodroot and butternut for dyes;
- ◆ Identification of local clays that can be used to create pottery in the thousands-year-old Cherokee method;
- ◆ Traditional craft classes on basketry, clay gathering, stone sculpture-making, and hammered copper, offered in partnership with the Qualla Arts and Crafts cooperative, Museum of the Cherokee Indian, and Cherokee High School arts department;
- ◆ A Cultural Summer School established for young children;
- ◆ Educational exhibits on Cherokee basket making and carving at the Asheville Art Museum, and toured other museums around North Carolina and east Tennessee.

PHOTOS BY BETH JOHNSON

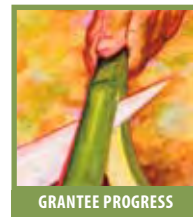


*Hammered copper is one of several time-honored crafts being brought back through the RTCAR initiative*

All of this work is done in collaboration with a growing number of Cherokee artists who are utilizing materials from sources identified by RTCAR and thereby carrying traditional Cherokee crafts into the 21st Century.

**KEY PARTNERS IN RTCAR’S WORK INCLUDE:** EBCI, Cherokee Central Schools, Land Trust of the Little Tennessee, NatureServe, Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual, University of Georgia, University of Tennessee, Western Carolina University Department of Geosciences, and the Cherokee artist community.

**CULTURAL PRESERVATION**



**FOCUS: CHEROKEE LANGUAGE UPDATE**

**\$1,338,357 invested by Cherokee Preservation Foundation**

The dedicated work of saving the Cherokee language involves a two-pronged approach—preserving words and phrases from elder native speakers while raising new speakers through immersion in the language from birth. A growing number of second language learners, ranging in age from primary-school children to adults, are referred to as “the generation in between” and are actively learning to speak, read and write in Cherokee.

**PROJECT STATUS:** Cherokee language revitalization work on the Qualla Boundary is a lengthy process due to the inherent complexity of the language combined with the need to create basic materials such as a dictionary, reading materials, and teaching curricula. Progress is evident, as a range of programs within the community, K-12 schools, and universities continue and advance with support from Cherokee Preservation Foundation. Here is an update from the past year:

**4TH ANNUAL LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION SYMPOSIUM—** The largest to-date of these annual summer events was co-hosted this year by the three sister tribes (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, United Keetoowah Band in Oklahoma, and Eastern Band) and attracted 175 speakers and learners.

**SPEAKERS CONSORTIUM—** Held each October during the week of the Cherokee Indian Fair, this gathering has been designated as an official translating group by the Cherokee Nation and EBCI. The language collected in this forum has resulted in the publishing of four new hard-cover books (*How the Possom Lost His Tail, Tortoise and the Hare, Big Bear, and Three Little Pigs*) to be used in Cherokee immersion language classes. This event also resulted in establishment of 200 Cherokee words (naming galaxies, oceans, and states, among others).

**KITUWAH ACADEMY—** The Academy will house the K-5th grade Cherokee language immersion program and is on schedule to open in a new building (provided by the EBCI) on the Boundary Tree tract in fall 2009. The initial classroom will be comprised of the inaugural immersion group which began learning the Cherokee language as babies.



PHOTO BY BRENDA OOCUMMA

*Gilliam Jackson of the Kituwah Academy shows students a rendering of the new K-5 Cherokee language immersion school they will enter in Fall 2009*

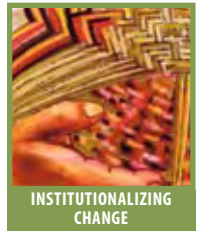


**SPEAKERS GATHERINGS**— Each month the Speakers Gathering is held at either Birdtown Recreation Center or in Snowbird and an average of 60 to 70 speakers attend. Of those attendees, half are native speakers and the other half second language learners. Over time, the elders have enjoyed the language sharing process more and more.

**WRITERS WORKSHOP**— Held for the first time in summer 2008. Over 40 documented stories were developed by fluent Cherokee speakers.

**OKLAHOMA PARTNERSHIP**— The Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians have joined forces, with frequent gatherings and a 2008 official Memorandum of Agreement to work together on history, culture and language. Collegiate partners include Northeastern State University and Western Carolina University.

**SNOWBIRD SUMMER LANGUAGE CAMP**— This has been expanded from six weeks last summer to 10 weeks for 2009 at the request of students (ages nine to 16). Youth spend all day, five days a week, learning Cherokee language through lessons and traditional games, cooking and fishing.



## FOCUS: DEVELOPING A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS

\$718,645 invested by Cherokee Preservation Foundation

Cherokee Preservation Foundation is providing support for an array of culturally-based leadership programs to help develop young people into confident, skilled leaders who appreciate their special heritage and give back to their communities.

**PROJECT STATUS:** Several programs are forming a path for youth to learn and grow into leaders, including:

**CHEROKEE YOUTH COUNCIL (CYC)**— The CYC is currently focusing on implementing environmental education and sustainability projects within the Cherokee community, which were identified as priorities by its Go Green Team. The Go Green Team is conducting community litter pick-up efforts and working on a stream restoration project. The youth are also promoting Cherokee's new recycling program by distributing reusable bags and desk-side bins and information packets. Taking care of the earth and teaching this value to others can be a powerful way to build self-confidence and responsibility. Youth councils have been started in Graham and Swain counties based on the successful Cherokee model.



Cherokee Youth Council students and leader Hwineko Walkingstick (right) pick up litter as part of their Go Green Team environmental outreach

**COSTA RICA ECO-STUDY TOUR**— Now entering its fifth year, this educational travel experience has provided an opportunity for 56 Cherokee high school students and 24 chaperones to learn life skills and develop an appreciation for different cultures. Their experiences range from the thrill of a zip-line ride through rain forest treetops to meeting local people and learning first-hand about their environmental challenges. These same students contributed 400 hours of service to the Cherokee community in 2008, as part of their follow-up commitment to give back.

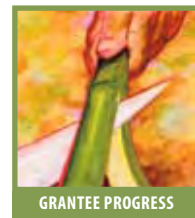
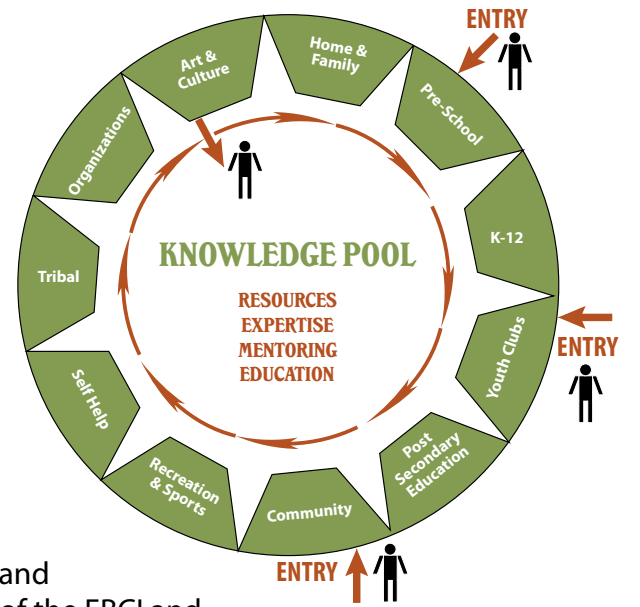


Jones-Bowman Fellows (pictured left to right) – Damian Solis, Lucretia Hicks, Gerard Bell, Rachel Hicks, and Kevin Jackson

**JONES-BOWMAN LEADERSHIP AWARD**— The second round of undergraduate college students

was selected for this award in spring 2009. Jones-Bowman Fellows receive funding for activities that will develop their leadership capabilities. As part of the program, the Fellows all participate in a leadership retreat, work under a mentor, maintain strong grades, participate in volunteer community service, and pursue individualized leadership training. This program honors the memory of Principal Chief Leon Jones and James Bowman, members of the EBCI and founding members of the board of Cherokee Preservation Foundation.

## LEADERSHIP LEARNING CONTINUUM



## FOCUS: NEW CURRICULUM AND NEW CAMPUS

\$1,735,000 invested by Cherokee Preservation Foundation

When the doors open at the new Cherokee Central Schools campus in August 2009, students will enter a new building as well as a new way of learning. Cherokee Preservation Foundation has provided funding for improvements in basic academic skills, development of a "project-based learning" curriculum, and state-of-the-art technology tools. (Construction of the new campus was funded by EBCI.)



Aerial shot of the new Cherokee Central Schools Campus which will open in Fall 2009

**PROJECT STATUS:** Since 2004, planning and training has been underway to improve the curriculum and teaching methods in the Cherokee Central Schools. High school teachers have been trained in how to integrate course work in math, science and the humanities via a hands-on, project approach. By fall 2009, all four high school grades will have adopted this new curriculum approach.



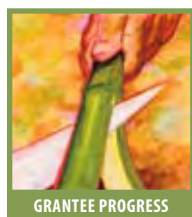
Project-based learning and technology will be a focus at the new school

Technology will be a core learning and teaching tool at the new school. High school students each have their own computer work station (400 were purchased with Foundation funds). Teachers will utilize "Smart boards" which allow them to display information from the computer on a white board, utilizing interactive exercises with their students. Thirty-four Smart boards were purchased with Foundation funds.

Expected benefits of these programs include stronger reading and writing skills, improved critical thinking abilities, and technological skills—all of which are needed for 21st Century learning and success. The expanded, high quality programming and computer access will open up new worlds and possibilities to students.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## FOCUS: CHEROKEE CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

\$13,867,586 invested by Cherokee Preservation Foundation

Attendance held steady at Cherokee's cultural attractions last year despite gas shortages and economic troubles. And significant improvements at all four sites are likely to attract expanded audiences in the future. This section highlights what is changing at the four cultural entities with support from Cherokee Preservation Foundation.

### CHEROKEE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION (CHA)—

This organization that operates the Oconaluftee Indian Village and *Unto These Hills* outdoor drama has seen positive visitor growth and made major facility improvements during the past year. Staff has developed new marketing and revenue-building methods as well as enhancements to the visitor experience (some learned through a recent trip to Colonial Williamsburg). Highlights of changes include:

#### ◆ New ticketing approaches—

- ❖ Tour packages for multiple Cherokee attractions began during the 2008 season and accounted for one-third of all ticket sales. This new collaboration among the cultural attractions has promise for growth in the future.

- ❖ "Premium experiences"—Visitors purchase a base-price ticket and then have the option of adding on extras such as rentals of village attire for children, a hands-on craft class, or VIP seating at the theatre.

- ❖ Season tickets—This encourages families to return multiple times from spring through fall.

- ◆ At the Indian village—Visits will be self-guided, with trained interpreters to provide historically accurate and entertaining presentation of information. The popular "Time of War" reenactment and "Cherokee Dancing on the Square" were piloted last summer and will be continued.

- ◆ At the theatre—Guests will enjoy new seating, steps, concession stand, and bathrooms.

The facilities and organizational changes at CHA will allow for year-round events at the village and theatre, thereby boosting revenue.

**MUSEUM OF THE CHEROKEE INDIAN**—The big news here is that the Museum is expanding by 38 percent in size beginning in August, with the completion of an 8,500-square-foot Education and Research Wing. The facility will open to the public in 2010, allowing room for hands-on traditional craft workshops and Cherokee dance presentations to give visitors an authentic cultural experience. The new wing will include a lobby with exhibit space, classroom and performance space, an art studio, and a reading room and archives. Cherokee Preservation Foundation provided \$300,000 for the new building and a \$200,000 challenge grant to conduct an individual donor-based fundraising campaign.

Other progress at the Museum supported by Foundation funding during the past year includes:

- ◆ Southeastern Tribes Cultural Arts Celebration—September 2008 marked the third annual event which brought together artists and craftspeople representing the Cherokee, Creek, Chickasaw, Seminole, and Choctaw tribes to present tribal dance, storytelling, performances,

PHOTO BY BRENDA OOCUMMA



The Mountainside Theatre—home of the outdoor drama *Unto These Hills*—is getting a major facelift prior to the summer season, with new seating, steps, concession stand, and bathrooms

PHOTO BY BRENDA OOCUMMA



Construction is under way on the Education and Research Wing at the Museum of the Cherokee Indian. Pictured here are Ken Blankenship (left) of the Museum and Steve Ahn, construction project manager

craft demonstrations, primitive skills encampment, contests, games, and traditional foods. The festival attracted fewer visitors than in the past due to gas shortages, but because the event was moved from mid-summer to September, 600 school children were able to participate.

- ◆ **Emissaries of Peace**—This exhibit telling the story of the 1762 Cherokee and British Delegations continues through June 2009. In addition to being a draw for visitors, the exhibit is a venue for staff development training of local public school teachers.
- ◆ **Workshops for staff of the Oconaluftee Village and Unto These Hills**—This training in Cherokee history and heritage helps staff at local tourist sites make the visitor experience more culturally authentic and meaningful.
- ◆ **Increased memberships**—Annual renewing Museum memberships have grown to more than 700 (up from 147 in 2005).

### TRENDS AT CHEROKEE CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

#### Annual Visitation

	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Cherokee Historical Association</b>				
<i>Unto These Hills</i> outdoor drama	54,344	65,196	55,500	56,428
Oconaluftee Indian Village	72,799	74,752	69,204	69,029
<b>Museum of the Cherokee Indian</b>	79,223	95,127	91,383	82,179

**QUALLA ARTS AND CRAFTS**—This artists' cooperative has made great strides in the past year by improving display of Cherokee-made crafts for sale and in a high-quality gallery space. Other recent accomplishments with Cherokee Preservation Foundation support include:

- ◆ **Development of an on-line catalogue**—Scores of photographs of unique Cherokee craft objects will be available for viewing on the new Qualla web site. This new marketing endeavor will link Qualla artisans to new customers and markets.
- ◆ **Craft classes**—Qualla has continued offering classes to expand skills in making Cherokee crafts. During the past year, local artisans taught 29 participants how to make pucker toe moccasins and honeysuckle baskets, and use the advanced finger weave method.
- ◆ **Point of Sale system**—This new technology produces vendor reports, reduces time for inventory, and allows for analysis of stock and sales so that Qualla operates more efficiently and effectively.
- ◆ **Cherokee Friends**—During the summer tourist season, these specially trained and costumed hosts inform visitors about local history and culture. In summer 2008, five Friends provided information about Cherokee culture by walking downtown streets, riding Cherokee Transit, and accompanying bus tours from Gatlinburg.
- ◆ **Stronger organization**—Signs of health for Qualla Arts and Crafts include an active board, exploration of new revenue sources such as membership fees and earned income from space rental, and greater involvement by the co-op artists.



## DRESSING UP DOWNTOWN

**\$3.06 million invested by Cherokee Preservation Foundation**

The Riverbend project and Riverwalk along the Oconoluftee (pictured at right) are open and ready for visitors in downtown Cherokee— part of the extensive façade, exterior and greenway improvements

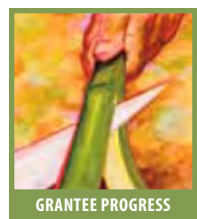


CPFdn has supported. Planning is now underway for decorative streetlamps as well as energy efficient fixtures and transit for tourists. One measure of success of this investment in downtown Cherokee is the change in tribal levy income (sales tax). The levy income for recent years has been: \$7.1 million in 2006, \$7.5 million in 2007, and \$7.2 million in 2008.

PHOTO BY BRENDA OOCUMMA



## ORGANIZATION BUILDING BLOCKS



### FOCUS: NONPROFIT PATHWAYS

**\$150,000 invested by Cherokee Preservation Foundation**

“What do you need to succeed?” is the question Western North Carolina Nonprofit Pathways asks community organizations. The answer and assistance for each group is different, based on what their unique challenges are.

Cherokee Preservation Foundation helped start the Nonprofit Pathways program as a way of providing education and training for leaders of area community organizations. These offerings include Fundamentals courses on planning, board leadership, finance/legal, communications, fund development, and evaluation. Other services are on-site tailored consultancies to help organizations address specific needs from financial management to strategic planning. This support is offered at no or

low-cost thanks to a funding partnership of Cherokee Preservation Foundation and other local philanthropies in the region.

Vocational Opportunities of Cherokee is one of dozens of groups in the area that are getting assistance through Nonprofit Pathways. (Pictured above are VOC Executive Director Kimlyn Lambert, left, with client Carolyn Pilkington and VOC Board Member Delores French.) VOC is expanding its board to include more active members, training volunteer leaders in their roles and responsibilities, and doing an organization assessment to determine key areas for improvement in the future. Vocational Opportunities wants to build its leadership and have a solid plan in order to grow.

### FOCUS: SKILL BUILDERS PROGRAM

During more than five years of providing grants, Cherokee Preservation Foundation has seen projects confront many logistical problems. These have ranged from delays in construction to different understandings between group members involved, along with an array of other challenges.

The Foundation wants the projects we fund to be as successful as possible. With the help of EBCI staff and other grantees, we created a Skill Builders program. This program includes three main elements: Grantee Orientation, Skill Builders Courses (on Project Planning, Financial Management, and Project Management), and Follow-up Support. For details and schedule go to the Foundation’s web site: [www.cpfdn.org](http://www.cpfdn.org)

**For more information about Cherokee Preservation Foundation, visit us on the Web at [www.cpfdn.org](http://www.cpfdn.org), or call (828) 497-5550. The Foundation is located at 71 John Crowe Hill Road, P.O. Box 504, Cherokee, NC 28719.**

## BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR IN THE SEVEN-COUNTY REGION



### FOCUS: PROTECTING MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPES

**\$125,000 invested by Cherokee Preservation Foundation**

The face of southwestern North Carolina has changed in recent decades due to a development boom from Murphy to Waynesville and on many mountainsides and valleys in between. Cherokee Preservation Foundation joined in a regional initiative called Mountain Landscapes to first listen to local people about their vision for the region, then develop tools to help guide growth. Several new, specific outcomes show the promise of this process:

- ◆ Cherokee youth identified places that are special to them through a picture-taking project.
- ◆ Based on input from hundreds of citizens around the region, a toolbox was created for the Southwestern Commission that sets out high-quality standards and proven growth management techniques.



Cherokee residents participated in a variety of events to give and gather information on land use in the area. Here, student photographers Gabriel Reed (left) and Hunter Lambert take photos of favorite places they want preserved



**SOUTHWESTERN COMMISSION'S REGION A TOOLBOX**  
A Pilot of the Mountain Landscapes Initiative

- ◆ A Next Steps Fund is giving money to local communities to implement projects including:
  - ❖ Planning along the Little Tennessee River for clustered affordable home sites and redevelopment of the West’s Mills Historic District;
  - ❖ Increased production and marketing of locally grown food;
  - ❖ A comprehensive update of local ordinances to incorporate the Smart Growth toolbox principles in Waynesville;
  - ❖ Materials and training for citizen advocates and county-by-county strategies to advance quality growth practices.

Youth involvement is an integral part of all the implementation processes so that the next generation can learn how the way we care for the land has a lasting impact on our communities and quality of life.

Being part of the Mountain Landscapes Initiative is just one of many ways that

Cherokee Preservation Foundation is investing resources to help make our region better for the future.