

# 75 BOONE

AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## 2023-24 Annual Report



# BOONE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## Staff



**DAVID JACKSON**

President/CEO

david@boonechamber.com



**PATRICK K. SETZER**

Director of Member  
Engagement

patrick@boonechamber.com



**CARRIE HENDERSON**

Director of Events

carrie@boonechamber.com



**MEGAN BIDDIX**

Director of Communications  
and Marketing

megan@boonechamber.com



**LINDSAY COOK**

Director of Operations

lindsay@boonechamber.com



**EMMA FAULKNER**

Content Manager

emma@boonechamber.com



**NATALIE HARKEY**

Finance Manager

natalie@boonechamber.com



**JOE FURMAN**

Director of Economic  
Development

joe@boonechamber.com



**ETHAN DODSON**

Foundation Development Officer

ethan@boonechamber.com



**REGGIE HUNT**

Executive Director of Boone  
Area Sports Commission

reggie@boonechamber.com



**JEANNINE**

**UNDERDOWN COLLINS**

Chamber Volunteer

info@boonechamber.com

# 2023- BY THE 2024 NUMBERS



**86%**

**MEMBER  
RETENTION RATE**



**100%+**

**ORGANIC REACH  
ON IG & FB**



**3,300+**

**EVENT ATTENDEES**



**74**

**NEW MEMBERS**



**165k**

**WEB PAGE VIEWS**



**4,315**

**E-BLAST CONTACTS**



**11**

**RIBBON CUTTINGS &  
GRAND OPENINGS**



**2,700+**

**UNIQUE CAREER  
CENTER USERS**

# EXECUTIVE BOARD

**CHAIR**

Mark Gould, Mast General Store

**CHAIR ELECT**

Tara Brossa, Hampton Inn & Suites by Hilton

**IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR**

Heidi Ragan, Blue Ridge Energy

**TREASURER**

Joe Nash, DMJPS PLLC

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Yolanda Adams, Watauga County Schools

Carrie Afanador, Immigrant Connection of the High Country

Shirley Alexander, Booneshine Brewing Company, Inc

Dr. Harry Davis, Appalachian State University

Christy Gottfried, Go Postal in Boone

Jim Hamilton, NC Cooperative Extension

Halee Hartley, Kid Cove

Angela Heavner, 180 Float Spa

Hal Hood, Lifestore Bank

Nathaniel Johnson, Granite Insurance

Brent Keith, SkyLine/SkyBest

Michael Maybee, Watauga Opportunities Inc.

Gary Moss, Walker & Associates-Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC

Danielle Neibaur, The Horton Hotel & Rooftop Lounge

Amy Odom, Walker College of Business, Appalachian State University

Dr. Mark Poarch, Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute

Kindsay Reeder, Appalachian Regional Healthcare System Foundation

Dr. Tierra Stark, Watauga County Schools

Seth Sullivan, The Cardinal Food & Spirits

Omer Tomlinson, Spectrum Reach

Amanda White, First Horizon Bank

## SUMMIT PARTNERS

Appalachian  
STATE UNIVERSITY



## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

### PLATINUM



### GOLD



# 2023-2024 APPROVED BUDGET PROPOSAL

## REVENUES

Special Projects Revenue	\$114,320.50
General Income	\$110,834.95
Membership Revenue + Tier Transition	\$487,872.00
Watauga Women In Leadership Revenue	\$18,200.00

**\$731,227.45**

## EXPENSES

Personnel Expenses	\$512,039.21
Professional Expenses	\$11,731.00
Operations Expenses	\$48,743.00
Special Projects Expenses	\$41,921.00
Building Expenses	\$94,618
Watauga Women in Leadership Expense	\$10,700.00

**\$730,642.46**



## 2023-2024 EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

### Spirit of Boone

September 21, 2023 | Grandview Ballroom, Appalachian State

### 31st Annual Last Chance Golf Tournament

October 6, 2023 | Beech Mountain Club

### Women of Action: Watauga Women in Leadership Gala

October 26, 2023 | Firerock Station

### State of the Community

November 15, 2023 | Chetola Resort

### Watauga Leadership Challenge

January 2023-April 2024

### 8th Annual High Country Economic Kickoff Breakfast

January 10, 2024 | Grandview Ballroom, Appalachian State

### Boone Area Chamber of Commerce Grand Opening Celebration

March 12, 2024 | Boone Area Chamber of Commerce

### 8th Annual 4 Under 40 Awards

April 24, 2024 | The Appalachian Theatre

### Fairway Fore Foundation Golf Classic

May 6, 2024 | Jefferson Landing

### Vision Northwest North Carolina

May 23, 2023 | Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute

### Engagement Programs:

- Hosted 4 events for Watauga Women in Leadership
- Boone Area Sports Commission assisted with events such as Tar Heel Baseball, SoCon Wrestling, Last Chance Golf Tournament, & partnered with the NC Sports Commission
- Helped coordinate numerous community conversations about housing and childcare, continued work with Stake Our Claim.
- Sponsor and hosted Boone Business Exchange (BBE), a business-to-business referral network
- High Country Young Professionals hosted 11 monthly networking events.
- Hosted 12 Business After Hours
- Hosted 11 Ribbon Cuttings & Grand Openings

# SPIRIT *of* BOONE

## COMMUNITY AWARD WINNERS



**Alfred Adams Award for Economic Development:**  
Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute

**Kathy Crutchfield Citizen of the Year:**  
Tina Houston

**Sue Wilmoth Award for the Advancement of Tourism:**  
Mystery Hill

**Ben Suttle Special Services Award:**  
Jesse Miller

**Baker/Jones Woman of the Year:**  
Talia Freeman

**Wade Brown Award for Community Involvement:**  
Come Back Shack

**Dan Meyer Partnership Award:**  
Charles Hardin

**everGREEN Award For Sustainability:**  
RiverGirl Fishing Company

**Elizabeth Young Award for Community Leadership:**  
Lindsey Sullivan

[MEET THE AWARD WINNERS + LEARN MORE!](#)





*Watauga County Courthouse, 1930's.*



*Aerial of Boone, 1950-60's.*



*Business leaders purchase land for the new golf course in the 1950's.*

## 1940's

**August 1944** – Chamber leaders decide to push for construction of an airport in Watauga County.

**September 1944** – Chamber plans postwar book detailing what Watauga County has to offer vacationers, farmers, businessmen, and other groups.

**November 1944** – Chamber makes a list of “must-do” postwar projects. First problem to work on is the shortage of adequate water supply for the Town of Boone.

**February 1946** – Chamber leaders agree to work for a highway that would link Linville and Boone. Currently the only road is through Blowing Rock.

**April 1947** – Chamber members vote to support the school lunch rooms for the rest of the school year after federal money is withdrawn.

**July 1948** – Chamber holds banquet- members are invited to bring *their ladies!*

**January 1949** – Chamber officials envision a new era of prosperity for region with construction of a highway down the river into Tennessee.

**January 1949** – Chamber discusses need to support the plan for a community chest organization.

**June 1949** – Chamber is involved in all facets of celebrations for Watauga County's 100th Birthday.

**October 3, 1949** – Wade Brown, Clyde Greene, and Stanley Harris sign incorporation paper for the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

## 1950's

**January 1950** – Chamber President Herman Wilcox announces that FCC permission has been received to build a 250-watt radio station, WATA in Boone.

**October 4, 1951** – Over 1000 people respond to Chamber labor survey indicating interest in working for two manufacturing plants looking at Watauga County.

**March 1952** – Chamber continues actively working for a dial phone system in Boone and for phone service to be expanded to area not currently being served.



*Herman W. Wilcox's Chamber Career spanned from 1938 to 1964.*

**June 27, 1952** – Opening night for Horn in the West.

**December 30, 1954** – Chamber receives word that a National Guard Armory has been approved for Boone. The Chamber played a major role in lobbying for the Armory.

**March 1955** – Chamber passes a resolution opposing a proposed toll on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

**February 7, 1957** – The Chamber orders 2000 trees and makes them available to anyone interest in growing Christmas trees as a business venture.

**June 1957** – The Sylvania Corporation comes to Boone to take shots of the Horn and its audience. The photos are to be used in their national advertising.

**May 31, 1959** – North Carolina Governor W. Kerr Scott speaks to the Chamber stressing the importance of good roads in developing rural areas of the state.

**June 15, 1959** – Boone Development Inc. Officials open the Boone Golf Club.

## 1960's

**January 1, 1960** – Chamber decides to use its influence to press for construction Highway 321 from Vilas to Zionville.

**May 17, 1962** – Chamber works on plans to have county promoted at the World's Fair in Seattle, Washington.

**June 28, 1963** – Chamber sponsors local celebration as part of North Carolina's tercentenary celebration of the Carolina charter. Guests included a representative of the British government and Dr. Frank Porter Graham representing the United Nations.



*Welcome to Boone sign, 1960's.*

**February 23, 1967** – Chamber spends wagon and Daniel Boone to the Florida State Fair.

**September 1968** – Chamber hears a report on the proposed bypass of Highway 421 through Boone.

**November 7, 1968** – Chamber holds meeting to discuss site suggestions for a proposed airport.

**November 7, 1968** – Chamber Board votes to support the town in establishing a zoning board.

**November 10, 1968** – ASTC President Plemmons invited the Chamber to make their December meeting an annual luncheon hosted by the college. There was an unanimous vote to accept.



*Winter storm brings 100 inches of snow, 1960.*

**January 1969** – Governor Dan Moore congratulates the Chamber and the area on establishing the Snow Carnival of the South.



## 1970's

**September 17, 1970** – Fred McNeil, Chamber Manager, issues an appeal for new rental listings as the number of visitors increases.

**December 17, 1970** – Chamber and civic leaders journey to Raleigh to see Boone honored with the Governor's Award in Recognition of Industrial Development.

**January 1973** – Chamber sponsors a float in the inauguration parade for Governor Holshouser. Float proclaims Watauga County as the home of Governor Holshouser.

**June 1973** – Dr. W.H. Plemmons heads a committee looking for a permanent home for the Chamber.

**July 1973** – Chamber members push for the formation of a tourism development organization for Watauga and Avery counties.

**October 1974** – Chamber joins in a big celebration opening ski season and welcoming Olympic Gold Medalists Jean-Claude Killey.

**March 23, 1975** – Chamber continues to play an active role in the 11 county North Western North Carolina Development Association founded in 1954. Th Association's new President is announced as the second youngest person ever to serve-Wade Wilmoth.

**June 1975** – Chamber joins with Grandfather Mountain, Tweetsie, and Land of Oz to sponsor a media weekend. Approximately 50 news, magazine and TV personnel attended.

**January 1978** – Newspaper article and editorial praise the Chamber's revitalization under Sue Wilmoth. In just a few years the organization has come from near bankruptcy to position as a strong and growing organization.

*NC Governor, Jim Martin and Sue Wilmoth, Director of the Boone Chamber and NC High Country Host cur ribbon for New Visitor Information Center of August 22, 1986.*

## 1980's

**March 1980** – Chamber Board passes resolution supporting National Park Service funding to complete the Grandfather Mountain link of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

**April 1982** – Chamber-sponsored Industrial Fair declared a success. More than 3500 people attended the two-day fair.

**August 1982** – Chamber receives almost \$4,000.00 in a grant from Appalachian Regional Commission for development of promotional materials for industrial development.

**August 1983** – Chamber Community Development Committee begins a Tree Preservation and Replacement Project in the town of Boone. To finance the project, signed and numbered limited edition prints by Richard Tumbleston are sold.

**August 1984** – Chamber holds a design contest for a new logo. The winner is Watauga High School student Jim Fleri.

**June 1985** – Chamber Board passes resolution supporting the efforts of Caldwell Community College to acquire property for a permanent facility for the Watauga Division.

**May 26, 1986** – Chamber and North Carolina High Country Host move into the Visitors Information Center on Blowing Rock Road.



**December 1987** – Chamber joins with ASU College of Business, Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation and the Watauga County Economic Development Commission to sponsor Forum II on the future of Watauga County.

**April 14, 1988** – Contract is signed between the Town of Boone Tourism Development Authority and the Chamber to operate the Boone Convention and Visitors Bureau.

**October 24, 1989** – Chamber Celebrated it's 40th anniversary.

## 1990's

**July 27, 1990** – Chamber purchases its first building, located on Howard Street in Downtown Boone. Downtown Munciple Tax District commits \$10,000 to assist in renovation. A capital campaign is started.

**April 4, 1992** – Opening retreat for the Blue Ridge Leadership Challenge, a joint project of this Chamber and the Chambers in Ashe and Alleghany counties. Brian Crutchfield is Challenge Director.

**October 25-26, 1992** – Community Development Committee holds the First Annual Last Chance Golf Tournament as a fund raiser for their committee and the Chamber's Capital Campaign.

**April 15, 1994** – Chamber sponsors luncheon at ASU during installation of new Chancellor, Dr. Frank Borkowski.

**November 1994** – Chamber establishes the Alfred Adams Award for Economic Development in honor of the longtime Chamber and community promoter.

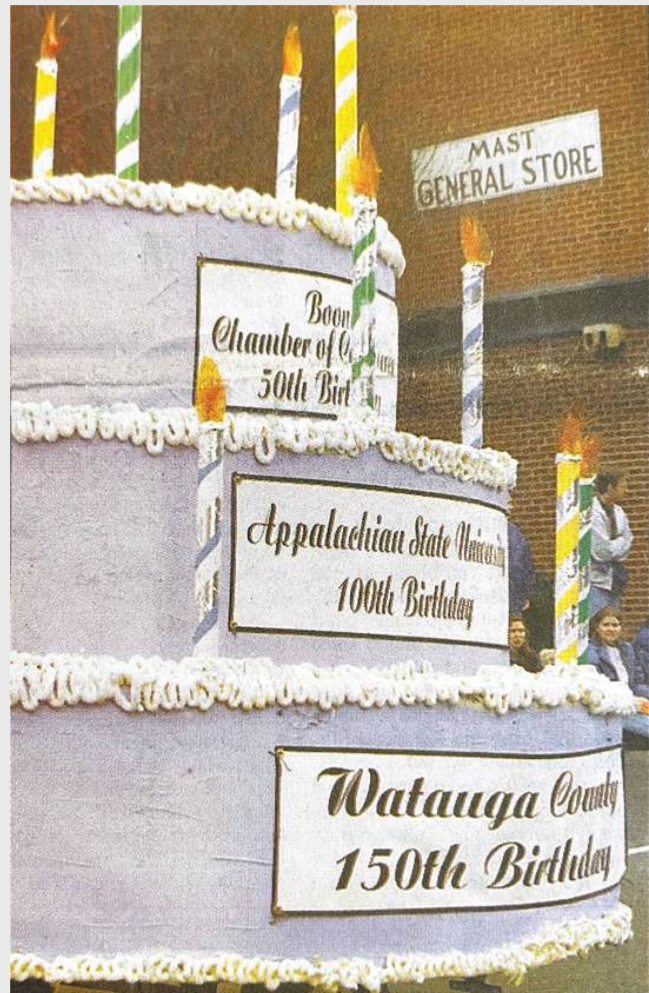
**May 19, 1995** – Chamber endorses proposal for establishment of Watauga County School-to-Work Partnership. (Later named JobReady Partnership.)

**January 1997** - Community Web Page begun by the Chamber. Log on at [www.boonechamber.com](http://www.boonechamber.com).

**September 1997** – Chamber signed contract with Watauga County Economic Development Commission to carry out its strategic plan. Chamber will employ Economic Development Director.

**August 20, 1998** – Chamber hosts NC DOT Secretary Norris Tolson, Secretary Wayne McDevitt of North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources and other dignitaries at a luncheon following ground breaking ceremonies for the new highway 421 in Watauga County.

**January 1999** – Chamber begins year-long celebration of its 50th anniversary. Also joins with Watauga County celebrating its 150th and Appalachian State University celebrating its 100th anniversary.



*Parade float celebrating the anniversary of the Boone Chamber, Appalachian State University, and Watauga County in 1999.*

# SPIRIT of BOONE | 75 KEY EVENTS



*Former Boone Chamber President, Dan Meyer (left) on panel at community's Sun Belt Day in 2014.*



*Dave Matthews & Tim Reynolds in the Holmes Center, March 2003*

## 2000's

**March 2003** – Dave Matthews & Tim Reynolds hold a concert inside the Holmes Convocation Center.

**May 2005** – Work intensifies on the widening of US 321 between Lenoir and Blowing Rock, including weekly lane closures. The first section opened in 2008 and was completed to Blackberry Rd. In 2011.

**September 1, 2007** – Appalachian State University football victory over University of Michigan, one of the biggest upsets of all time. This event increases university enrollment significantly.

## 2010's

**August 2010** – After several years of community advocacy and planning, Watauga High School opens its new campus off Old E. King Street in Boone.

**June 1, 2011** – Chamber Joined Facebook!

**July 2011** – Ribbon Cutting for new Chamber office at 870 W. King Street.

**July 1, 2014** – Chamber joins Town of Boone in hosting Sun Belt Day, commemorating Appalachian State's move to the Sun Belt Conference and NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision.

**January 2017** – Chamber hosts inaugural High Country Economic Kickoff event forecasting economic conditions for the upcoming year and presenting the Watauga County Business of the Year awards.

**May 17, 2017** – Chamber hosts inaugural 4 Under 40 Awards highlighting the area's emerging leaders.

**October 16, 2018** – Chamber joins representatives from Watauga County, Town of Boone, Appalachian State, and Watauga County Schools for the groundbreaking of the long-planned Watauga County Community Recreation Center.

**November 2018** – NC DOT announces plans for the widening of NC HWY 105 in Boone, incorporating a superstreet road design. The measure fails to gain community support and was rejected by the Town of Boone in the Spring of 2019.

**January 2019** – Boone Area Sports Commission forms as a 501(c)3 non-profit under the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce to enhance the High Country as a sports tourism destination.

**May 2019** – Chamber hosts inaugural Vison Northwest North Carolina Summit, bringing together business leaders from 12 surrounding counties to spark conversation around economic, workforce, and talent development.

**October 14, 2019** – Appalachian Theatre of the High Country reopens its doors to the community after a long fundraising and renovation project.



*Appalachian Theatre's renovated marquee announcing reopening in October 2019.*

## 2020's

**March 2020** – Chamber launches the #KeepBooneHealthy campaign in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, becoming a news source and voice for the business community.

**June 2020** – Chamber issues a letter of support for the Great American Outdoors Act of 2020, a federal bill aimed at addressing the maintenance backlog and future infrastructure needs of the National Parks Service.

**March 2021** – Appalachian Regional Healthcare System begins construction on 48-bed patient care tower.

**August 16, 2022** - Chamber enters agreement with Watauga County to Coordinate Economic Development Program beginning January 2023.

**September 17, 2022** – ESPN's College GameDay visits Boone and the Appalachian State campus for the first time.

**January 2023** - Chamber moves into new headquarters at 579 Greenway Road, Suite 101. New space offers enhanced space for members, open office concept for collaboration, and modern touches with homages to the local areas history and feel.

**January 18, 2024** – STABLE workplaces is launched to provide staff training and business leadership to evolving workplaces.

**April 13, 2024** – Watauga County Childcare Study is released, informing advocacy and action plans for community partners including the Chamber, Watauga EDC, and the Children's Council of Watauga County.



*#KeepBooneHealthy T-shirt with proceeds supporting local businesses during the pandemic, March 2020.*



*ESPN's College GameDay in Boone for the first time, September 17, 2022.*



*Boone Chamber Ribbon cutting for new office space on Greenway Road, opened January 2023.*