



# Highland Happenings

## Winter 2025

www.thehighlandcenter.org

540-468-1922

61 Highland Center Drive, Monterey, VA 24465

## Welcome Jaden Cox, Executive Director



This November, The Highland Center was excited to welcome our new Executive Director, Jaden Cox.

Jaden is a native of Highland County who spent his childhood walking to the H & H cash store for glass bottle cokes and rummaging in the streams alongside Rich Hills Road. He is a gardener at heart and has spent much of his adult life in horticultural positions. As Executive Director, Jaden hopes to cultivate the Highland Center to become a place where all those who cherish Highland feel welcome.

We have seen Jaden embrace the tasks of running the center with enthusiasm as he works to strengthen the relationships that run this historical, communal space. He is focused on emphasizing youth programs and expanding upon what The Highland Center is doing well already.

## Tuesday Talk Highlights (Nov - Jan 2024)



*Trent Burkholder on Thru-hiking the Appalachian Trail*



*Elana Brody on Jewish Solstice*



*Ruth Ann Colby Martin on Midwifery*

## Welcome Mary Beth Gutshall, *Events Coordinator*



Mary Beth Gutshall has been on the Board of The Highland Center for over 5 years and was honored to be asked to serve as Interim Director from August to November 2024 when she accepted her new role managing Events at the Center.

She has already begun expanding on the events that we usually see here at the building: creating seasonal workshops on Fly Fishing; throwing Square-dances every few months; starting a monthly Bingo party; and so much more. She has already breathed fresh air into the holiday festivities and looks forward to making the center a place for good times with families and friends.

## Welcome Bob Ellis, *Financial Manager*

We are also happy to welcome Bob Ellis to The Highland Center team.

After working for 30 years as a public accountant Bob became Chief Financial Officer for a contracting company before retiring to Highland County in 2021.

We are grateful that in November 2024, Bob agreed to come out of retirement in order to serve The Highland Center as Financial Manager. Thank you for taking us under your wing, Bob!



### *This February at The Highland Center:*

**February 11th**  
2pm  
Tuesday Talk  
Highland County Humane Society  
with Corena Huffman

**February 22nd**  
9pm  
Maple Queen Pageant  
After-Party  
with The Judy Chops

# Maple Festival 2025 Food and Entertainment

The Highland Center is proud to support the Chamber of Commerce as a 2025 Maple Festival sponsor and to play host to a variety of events at this year's festival. Thanks to the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce and the Highland County Arts Council, The Highland Center will offer entertainment every day of the festival including bluegrass and folk music, a square dance, and clogging performances.



The Gallery of Highland will be open throughout the festival and the local vendor room will return again this year -- both offering shoppers the opportunity to buy a wide range of items made by Highland based artists and craftspeople. The lower level of The Highland Center will offer food including maple donuts made by Corey Lightner.



- Local Vendors:
- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Ash the Artist</i>        | <i>Homestead</i>            |
| <i>Cabin Critter Designs</i> | <i>The Griffon's Garden</i> |
| <i>David Dykes</i>           | <i>Wild Virginia Crafts</i> |
| <i>Fair Hill Farm</i>        |                             |



**MARCH 8**  
 10am & 2pm: Southern Rail Express  
*(bluegrass)*

5pm: Furnace Mountain Band  
*(acoustic)*

**MARCH 9**  
 10am & 2pm: Jack Dunlap  
*(bluegrass)*

**MARCH 15**  
 10am: Mill Creek Cronies

2pm: Square Dance with Ellen & Eugene Ratcliffe and Mill Creek Cronies

**MARCH 16**  
 10am: Hi-Horse Cloggers

2pm: Little Switzerland Cloggers

# Youth Philanthropy Council 2025



The Youth Philanthropy Council is an educational program of the Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge that is led and facilitated here in Highland County by The Highland Center.

The Youth Philanthropy Council is comprised of student volunteers from Highland County High School who learn about the importance of philanthropy and how to investigate causes and organizations that they may wish to support. This year, thirteen teens from all high school grade levels are participating in the program.



This month, students will agree on their funding priorities for 2025 and a grant application will be made available to nonprofits serving Highland County.

The council members will then take on the task of reading and evaluating each grant application as they decide how to allocate \$10,000 in grant money.



The Highland Center  
 61 Highland Center Drive  
 Monterey, VA 24465  
 Phone: 540-468-1922

Email: [director@thehighlandcenter.org](mailto:director@thehighlandcenter.org)

[www.thehighlandcenter.org](http://www.thehighlandcenter.org)  
 The Highland Center

