



WNC **FireWood**

WNC **FireWood** is a ministry to provide free firewood heating assistance to our qualified neighbors in Transylvania County in western North Carolina.



Overview

This was our first year, and oh what a year! We are pleased with our first year's work, many things went far better than we anticipated, we learned a lot, and faced some daunting challenges. Still, we ended the year with firewood available for those who need it, and that was our goal!

Our Purpose:

Providing free firewood heating assistance to our qualified neighbors .

Our Organization:

WNC FireWood = Sum of Sponsors + Partners + Volunteers

We are a ministry of our sponsoring congregations. We derive our 501(c)3 status through our sponsors, as **WNC FireWood** is not a separate legal entity.

We are in partnership with additional local entities to provide key resources to enable our efforts. Without these partnerships we would be duplicating efforts.

We have a few key leaders, but our strategy is everyone doing what they can in areas of their skills in support of the ministry.

A Thought:

No one in Transylvania County should have to buy firewood for home heating.

One key reason people burn firewood for home heating is economics – to save money. Yet, if one has to purchase firewood there is little net cost savings over other heating sources.

We are a long way from making that happen. This first year we took some baby steps in that direction, including demonstrating that we can process a lot of firewood.

We need to take many additional steps, some much larger, to come close. We know that getting there can only be reached through the guidance of our Lord and the efforts of many of His people.

What do you think? Let us know by Email to INFO@WNCFIREWOOD.ORG



*A ministry to provide free firewood heating assistance to our qualified neighbors
in Transylvania County in western North Carolina.*

February 2024

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to provide this inaugural Annual Report of the WNC FireWood ministry.

As we reflect back upon our first season of creating a stock pile of quality, dry, ready-to-burn seasoned firewood, the picture on the first page of our report tells the whole story.

It's about **Accomplishing**. A core group of hardworking, dedicated volunteers came together to help us accomplish our first year goals and then some. A huge thank you to all of our diligent, sore-muscled team of volunteers!

It's about **Caring**. Great partners such as Stewards of Amazing Grace who donate the woodlot and Bartlett Tree Experts who freely provide all the hardwood trees we could ever need truly care about our mission!

It's about **Serving**. Another one of our great partners, Sharing House, helps us identify those folks who are in need of heating assistance. Sharing House is a source of compassion and assistance for under-resourced neighbors in Transylvania County. They have been serving our area for over 42 years!

It's about **Generosity**. We currently have 2 sponsoring churches - Brevard First United Methodist Church and Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. Finances play an essential role in causing the things in life to work as they should. We couldn't do our work without the financial support of these generous faith-based communities!

In the report you will find tons of numbers, lots of words, and our goals and dreams for 2024. Every piece of information contained in the following pages has importance and significance to us. We pray it has importance and significance to you, as well.

Please join us in 2024 in any way you feel called as we continue to assist our neighbors in warming their homes and warming their hearts. Contact us by Email at INFO@WNCFIREWOOD.ORG

Blessings,

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature reads "William L Ester" and the second reads "Jim Whitcomb".

Bill Ester and Jim Whitcomb

2023 Accomplishments



By the Numbers

0

No injuries, a safe year!

Visit us at WNCFIREWOOD.ORG

20

Cords stacked firewood by the end of July; that is up to 60 pickup truck loads ready for delivery for the 2023-24 heating season.

18

Additional cords stacked firewood by Thanksgiving; that is up to 54 pickup truck loads ready for delivery for the 2024-25 heating season.

3

Partnerships established that have been a real blessing to the ministry:

Stewards of Amazing Grace who donated our wonderful woodlot

Bartlett Tree Experts for donating an 'unlimited' supply of quality hardwood

Sharing House to qualify clients to receive firewood deliveries

2

Sponsoring Congregations that have launched this ministry:

First United Methodist Church who also handles our financial transactions

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

887

Volunteer Hours recorded at the woodlot

processing logs to rounds to wedges to firewood to stacks

This includes our dedicated and hardworking core volunteer crew
and many drop-in volunteers

> 500

Additional estimated Volunteer Hours on other activities for the ministry, including:

communications, accounting, web presence, making deliveries,

research and planning individually and in meetings,

purchasing and maintaining supplies and equipment, and driving time.

About half this time was for startup activities.

And more:

- ◆ Addition volunteer time making deliveries (which will be tallied next year)
- ◆ Unknown huge value of donated logs and use of the woodlot!
- ◆ Reliable equipment especially the critical chain saws and splitters.
- ◆ Established a driver and truck base for delivering firewood.
- ◆ Operating expenses largely provided by our Sponsors.

2023 Challenges

- ◆ Several vacant leadership positions. This has limited our ability to:
 - adequately communicate with our sponsors, partners, and community;
 - seek funding to address capital needs;
 - expand our congregational sponsorship.
- ◆ Limited by only one cutting team and one splitting team.
- ◆ Uncertain path forward for ownership of capital equipment, especially titled vehicles.



2023 Financial Report

Income		
From Sponsors	\$	940.13
In-kind Donation		660.83
Total Income		\$ 1,600.96
Expenses		
Operating Expenses		
Fuel, lubricants	\$	333.52
Supplies		327.65
Repairs		218.70
Total Operating		\$ 879.87
Office Expenses		
Supplies	\$	7.96
Total Office		\$ 7.96
Capital Expenses		
Used Log Splitter	\$	400.00
Tools, small equipment		313.13
Total Capital		\$ 713.13
Total Expenses		\$ 1,600.96
Net Income	\$	0.00

Building on Strengths – Goals for 2024

Wood Processing Goals

- ◆ **25 cords** (stretch goal of **30 cords**) by end of June for 2024-25 heating season
- ◆ **20 cords** (stretch goal of **30 cords**) by Thanksgiving for 2025-26 heating season

Financial Goals

- ◆ Obtain **operational funding** through our Sponsors
- ◆ Obtain **capital funding** largely through Grants

Operational Goals

- ◆ Add at least **2 volunteers** qualified as **Cutters** (operate a chain saw)
- ◆ Add at least **2 volunteers** qualified as **Splitters** (operate a log splitter)
- ◆ Add at least an additional **4 regular volunteers**, plus drop-in volunteers

Administrative Goals

- ◆ Add 2 additional **Sponsors**
- ◆ Staff 2 or more additional **coordinator** and **administrative leadership** positions
- ◆ Plan a transition to a public resource ministry from a client qualification ministry
- ◆ Add a **Partner** to provide a Delivery Woodlot

Where We Need Help

Our greatest need is for **volunteers** who share our vision of providing home heating firewood to our neighbors in Transylvania County. In particular, the following skills are needed:

- ◆ **Chain saw operators** (training available, experience desirable)
- ◆ **Log Splitter operators** (training available)
- ◆ **Communications volunteer** individuals for internal and public channels
- ◆ **Administrator** to keep ministry records
- ◆ **Activity coordinator** to keep all our teams working smoothly
- ◆ **Drivers** (to deliver firewood, with or without truck)
- ◆ **Laborers**, what we call Mover's, moving things from place to place
- ◆ **Legal Assistance** for equipment ownership, liability, etc.
- ◆ **Grant Writer** to help us obtain capital equipment funding to grow the ministry.



Every non-profit organization needs **money**. We are no different. For our operating expenses, we rely almost exclusively on funding from our Sponsors.

To this point we have not needed to make major capital purchases. Later this year we will begin funding for several such purchases. We anticipate most capital funding will be through grants supplemented by individual donation. See the capital needs list on the next page.

2024 Budget

Operating Budget

Income

From Sponsors	\$	700.00
Individual Donations		300.00
In-kind Donation		100.00
Balance carried forward		0.00

Total Income **\$ 1,100.00**

Expenses

Operating Expenses		
Fuel, lubricants	\$	400.00
Supplies		200.00
Repairs		250.00
Total Operating		\$ 850.00
Office Expenses		
Supplies	\$	\$ 25.00
Capital Expenses		
Tools, small equipment		\$ 100.00

Total Expenses **\$ 975.00**

Balance carried forward **\$ 125.00**

Capital Needs

All capital purchases are off-budget. Funding will be solicited for each specific capital item and purchased only when we have full funding for the purchase. We will not incur debt for any purchases. Funding will typically be from a mix of sources including grants, institutional donations, and individual donations.

The following are items that are desirable for the ministry. Not all items will be purchased in the coming year.

- ◆ Chain Saw: Stihl 500i chainsaw; \$1,200
- ◆ Shelter: Roof to keep firewood dry and for rain and sun free work area; \$20,000
- ◆ Delivery Truck: Used for moving firewood to recipients or pick-up locations; \$30,000
- ◆ Pick-up Woodlot: startup costs; \$2,000
- ◆ Conveyor: FC24 24' Firewood conveyor - 12 ft loading height; \$10,000
- ◆ Tractor: for lifting and holding logs with bucket for moving firewood; \$20,000
- ◆ Splitter: Automated, multi-blades, to improve productivity; \$16,000

Feel led to donate one of the above items? Contact us by Email at INFO@WNCFIREWOOD.ORG

Ministry Resources

A comprehensive list of ministry physical assets as of January 1, 2024.

Item	Acquired	Model / SN
Equipment		
Countyline 30 Ton Log Splitter	From STEP WNC 2023	YTL-016-926
Kohler 277cc Command Pro Engine Part of Countyline Splitter; 277cc		4824111658 / CH395-3149
Troy-Bilt 27 Ton Log Splitter	Purchased 2023	24CF572B711 / 1J032H40110
Honda GCV160 Engine	Part of Troy-Bilt Splitter	
Stihl Chainsaw	From STEP WNC 2023	MS170 / 511681659
Stihl Chainsaw	From STEP WNC 2023	MS271 / 521385619
Jonsered Chainsaw	From STEP WNC 2023	2165 Turbo
Stihl chain part #: 3623 005 0072 33 RS 72; 20" bar, 3/8 pitch, .050 gauge, 72 links		
Poulan Chainsaw (46cc)	Donated 2023	Pro 295 / 010650300489-21
Max Haul Trailer Dolly	Purchased 2023	70225
Item	Item	Item
Safety Supplies		
Tools		
Office Supplies		
Helmets (6 each)	Splitting Maul	Stapler
Chaps	Hatchet	Scissors
First Aid Kit	Tape Measure	
Fire Extinguisher	Garden Cart	
	Wheelbarrow	
	Fuel Container (5 Gal)	

Garden cart was donated 2023. Wheelbarrow from STEP WNC 2023. Other tools and all safety and office supplies purchased 2023.



INFO@WNCFIREWOOD.ORG † WNCFIREWOOD.ORG
% FUMC, 325 North Broad Street, Brevard, NC 28712