

— 2024 —
***IMPACT
REPORT***

RIDGECREST⁺
FOUNDATION



MINISTRIES

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Friends of The Ridgecrest Foundation,

In the early 1900s, B.W. Spilman followed God's direction to establish a place in the mountains where individuals, families, and churches could experience hospitality, discipleship, and adventure. One afternoon, he and some friends roamed the dense forest and steep hills in an undeveloped area known as Swannanoa Gap. Near the stream that now flows next to Spilman Auditorium, they sensed God telling them, "*This is the land,*" so they drove a stake into the ground where Pritchell Hall now stands.

In 2020, a small group of people followed God's direction to preserve and carry on this place in the mountains where individuals, families, and churches continue to experience hospitality, discipleship, and adventure. They sensed God telling them to take a big step of faith – including \$16M in debt – and trust He would provide. So, on December 30, 2020, The Ridgecrest Foundation figuratively drove a stake in the ground by accepting stewardship of Camp Crestridge, Camp Ridgecrest, and Ridgecrest Conference Center.

Like other Impact Reports, this one focuses on the previous year. However, I also want to provide a glimpse of what God has done during the past five years. He protected and increased the impact of our camps and conference center through a worldwide pandemic, transition in ownership, life as a 100-year-old startup, staffing shortages amid a quicker-than-expected return of campers and guests, a once in a thousand years flood, and – this past December – the elimination of the \$16M debt in only four years. Most importantly, He enabled us to impact over a quarter million lives onsite during this time.

Our team works hard, prays, and tries to make wise decisions while stewarding what ultimately belongs to God for His purposes and His glory. Thousands of you support us through prayer, encouragement, believing in what we do, entrusting us with your children, and generous financial support (donations covered \$9.5M of the debt). **THANK YOU, we could not have reached this point without you!** And God has done things that cannot be explained solely by our efforts and your support. God's fingerprints have been clearly seen over Ridgecrest's past five years.

As we steward this sacred, life-impacting place in the future, I pray people will continue to see God's fingerprints at Ridgecrest – and that you will walk this journey with us!

By God's grace and for His glory,



Art Snead
President/CEO of The Ridgecrest Foundation





"Thank you for being obedient to God's leadership and PRAISE HIM for using so many to achieve this goal!! Thankful we can REJOICE along with you becoming debt free!!"

- Kay (Ridgecrest Foundation Supporter)



*"We are raising up a generation who call upon the name of the Lord, and you have shared in that work – so you share in the **BLESSING!**"*

- Natasha (Event Planner)

Hurricane Helene



Friday, September 27, 2024 - a day unlike any other in our history. Hurricane Helene brought floodwaters and destruction we never anticipated. But God reminded us of His faithfulness and Ridgecrest's purpose like never before. While we experienced significant damage, it is being repaired. So many others experienced devastation requiring rebuilding or starting over.

For six weeks – including all of October, typically the second-busiest month at our conference center – we did not host a single event that was previously scheduled. Yet, while Helene led us to change our ministry *activities* for a time, it didn't change our *mission*. Despite the challenges we faced – actually, *because of them* – we had new, unexpected opportunities to Impact Lives for God's Glory through Purposeful Hospitality.

Here are some ways we showed Purposeful Hospitality:

- Feeding people stranded by I-40's closure.
- Walking every road in the Ridgecrest community, giving out food and water to our neighbors.
- Providing water for drinking and flushing toilets to a nursing home at our exit.
- The day after Helene hit, we began hosting emergency responders at our conference center, including law enforcement and fire departments from around our state and emergency teams from across the country – almost 1,700 individuals during October alone. Our Purposeful Hospitality extended far beyond providing a place to rest and meals to eat. Though they didn't come to Ridgecrest for spiritual and emotional nourishment, we found ways to further impact their lives for God's glory. We partnered with Christian counselors to provide counseling for these public servants who were facing horrible conditions, human suffering, and death during their work. We hosted campfires with worship, a spiritual message, s'mores, fellowship, and important follow up gospel conversations. We met physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual needs.

Repair work on our campus continues, and many of our guests, camper families, event groups, and supporters are helping make this possible by donating over \$430,000 to our Hurricane Relief Fund – THANK YOU!

Fall 2024 – an autumn unlike any other in our history and a fruitful season for our ministry. Praise God!



"As a Fire and Emergency Services Chaplain, what you all are doing means the world to me. Thank you!"

"To your staff who helped the stranded travelers off I-40, thank you and may God bless you!"





Ron Springs

Celebrating 50 Years

"I came here for a one-time summer job and never left." - Ron Springs.

Like so many college kids looking for a meaningful way to spend their summer, Ron Springs was introduced to Ridgecrest Summer Camps while being recruited by the former Director, Rick Johnson. He must have made a strong first impression because Ron was placed in the challenging and coveted Cabin 1 counselor role, responsible for the youngest boys in camp. Only the best were given this opportunity.

Ron soon earned a leadership role, leading other counselors, and then was recruited once again by Rick to stay on in a full-time role, helping to ensure the future of the camps.

Ron became a household name, spending most of the winter months traveling the Southeast, visiting campers and introducing new families to a life-changing experience that would provide childhood memories and shape their children into godly men and women. From churches to living rooms, Ron would share the vision for a summer experience that would encourage growth, provide challenges, and inspire a deeper trust in God. Young boys and girls would see pictures and hear stories of adventures while dreaming of two weeks away from home in the mountains of North Carolina. There was something about Ron's calming presence that allowed parents to entrust their sons and daughters to this man and his team of college students. With his giant smile and jolly laugh, Ron has been winning the trust of others for 50 years.



Camp has changed and evolved under Ron's leadership, but the mission remains the same – Impacting Lives for God's Glory through Discipleship and Adventure. Generations of campers will tell similar versions of the same story – stories packed with adventures found in

the rolling mountains of Ridgecrest, North Carolina.

For many of these years, Ron was the lone full-time team member, holding the ship together throughout the winter months as camp's mission continued forward.

Ron's leadership grew our full-time team from one to eleven. More importantly, our camps' attendance has grown from less than 400 campers to almost 4,000.

Under Ron's guidance, Ridgecrest has developed Family Camp, including Mother-Daughter and Father-Son weekends. He has seen both properties completely remodeled and refreshed while the quality of our summer staff team and focus on our mission has thrived.



Fifty years is an almost unheard-of tenure at a single post. It requires commitment, dedication, loyalty, and tenacity. Few leaders have the patience and humility to remain consistent through so much change and growth. **Fifty years.** That's over 3,750 canteens, 200 sockwars, 320 Council Rings, 700 campfires, and 100,000 campers. The impact is significant and far-reaching. The ripple effect of these life changes is incalculable.

Ron's impact over the years has been immeasurable, shaping countless lives through his dedication and passion. There's nothing more special to Ron than seeing more campers come through our gates each summer. In honor of his impact on our camps, we are proud to officially name our scholarship fund the **Ron Springs Scholarship Fund.** This will not only honor Ron's legacy, but will also help provide for more campers and families in need for years to come!

To learn more about the Ron Springs Scholarship Fund, and how you can help kids and families experience camp, scan the QR code below, or visit:

RidgecrestFoundation.com/RonSpringsScholarship





"He came out of his shell! He loved his experience and made some great friendships! He grew his faith in our Lord and I couldn't be happier!"

- Steve (Camp Parent)



"Every year when I come to camp, something changes. I have this overwhelming sense of joy and excitement. Getting to spend time with God in the beautiful mountains gives me a sense of peace. The friends, counselors, and staff, make this place so special."

- Ashley (Crestridge Camper)

The Numbers

59,613

Lives Impacted
Onsite



6,012

Trained for Missions



26,538

Heard the Gospel



3,109

Minister Getaways



3,759

Campers



462

Summer Staff



951

Family Weekend Attendees



191

Volunteers



Summer Staff

Conference Center



Ridgecrest Summer Staff is an incredible opportunity for young adults to have an amazing summer experience! We invite around 80 college-aged students to join our team as they serve in areas like Housekeeping, Food Service, Clouds/Nibble Nook, Adventure Recreation, A/V and Conference Services, and more. While we love having the additional hands to help us accomplish our mission, we are passionate about creating intentional discipleship environments and community-building events for our summer team. Our summer staff are housed on our campus, and they receive free meals during their time here. Ridgecrest Summer Staff is more than just a summer job – it's a life-changing experience!



**APPLY FOR RIDGECREST CONFERENCE CENTER'S
SUMMER STAFF PROGRAM!!**



Camps



Without a doubt, the most important thing we do as a Camp team each year is putting together a summer staff. Our summer staff comprises college-aged guys and girls whose lives have been changed by Christ and who want to invite boys and girls alongside them in their journey of following Him. Summer staff are not simply a means to an end or a group of chaperones who take campers from one event to the next. They are role models who live and serve alongside the campers.

When former campers look back over their time at Crestridge or Ridgecrest, it's not the program and games they'll remember. They'll forget who won Sock War or what they did at Carnival. They won't remember the words to all the songs they sang, and they'll have a hard time remembering whether they slept on a top or bottom bunk. But what they will remember are the counselors who had an impact on them. Counselors who showed up in their lives and pointed them to Jesus. Counselors who sat and listened and patiently did their best to answer questions. Counselors who chose to spend free time doing the zipline or throwing a round of frisbee golf together. As fun and exciting as the games, skills, and adventures in the mountains are, it's the summer staff who make Camp what it is.



Do you know someone who would fit this role well? We spend countless hours traveling, meeting, interviewing, and getting to know potential summer staff each year. By far, the majority of our summer staff are referred by a family or friend already connected to Ridgecrest – like YOU! If you know someone who would be great at making kids feel seen, known, and loved, we'd love to meet them. We know there are so many different things vying for the attention of college-aged guys and girls, but we're confident that few things will shape them and leave an impact quite like spending a summer at Crestridge or Ridgecrest.



**APPLY TO WORK
AT BOYS CAMP!**



**APPLY TO WORK
AT GIRLS CAMP!**



Volunteer at Ridgecrest



Volunteers are welcome year-round, and Ridgecrest provides housing and meals while you are here.

Volunteer opportunities include:

- **Food Service:** The Dining Room at Ridgecrest is one of the central hubs of our campus. Volunteers serve by punching meal tickets, helping with food prep in the kitchen, and assisting with cleaning before and after meals. It's always great to have a smiling face to greet guests while they eat.
- **Clouds Coffee Shop/Nibble Nook:** Ridgecrest's coffee shop and grill/ice cream shop are popular places for guests to hang out and fellowship! We can always use help making coffee drinks, scooping ice cream, running a cash register, and keeping these areas tidy.
- **Housekeeping/Laundry:** Ridgecrest has the capacity to host over 2,000 guests on campus at a time, so our housekeeping and custodial teams are busy prepping spaces for everyone coming in. Volunteers assist by folding, vacuuming, and removing trash.
- **Grounds/Landscaping:** The Conference Center Grounds Team works hard to make campus a beautiful place. Volunteers help with maintaining our flower beds and other natural areas.



APPLY TO VOLUNTEER AT RIDGECREST!



Leaving a Legacy of Impact

By supporting The Ridgecrest Foundation through planned giving, you will leave a multi-generational legacy of Impacting Lives for God's Glory – through Discipleship and Adventure at our camps, and through Purposeful Hospitality at our conference center. Your generosity will also help ensure our ministry remains strong, resilient, and well-positioned to follow God's lead for generations to come.



There are many ways you can benefit from planned giving to Ridgecrest, including:

- **Family Legacy:** Planned giving is one way to involve your family in philanthropy and cultivate generosity in their lives. It enables you all to be part of something together and encourages them to be part of building God's Kingdom – leading to their own stories of impact and God's work in their lives.
- **Tax Benefits:** Earn potential tax deductions now, avoid capital gains and estate taxes, and leave more to loved ones, all while investing in the future of Camp Ridgecrest, Camp Crestridge, and Ridgecrest Conference Center.
- **Financial Planning:** Achieve your financial goals while responsibly stewarding the resources God has entrusted to you.
- **Financial Flexibility:** Planned giving allows you to support causes you care about without affecting your current financial situation. You can structure your gifts to meet your financial needs and goals.
- **Donor Input:** Ridgecrest Foundation will work with you to ensure your gift is used to effectively Impact Lives for God's Glory in ways that are meaningful to you.

For more information on planned giving to The Ridgecrest Foundation, please reach out to Adam Tomberlin at: Adam.Tomberlin@RidgecrestNC.com or 828-669-3763.

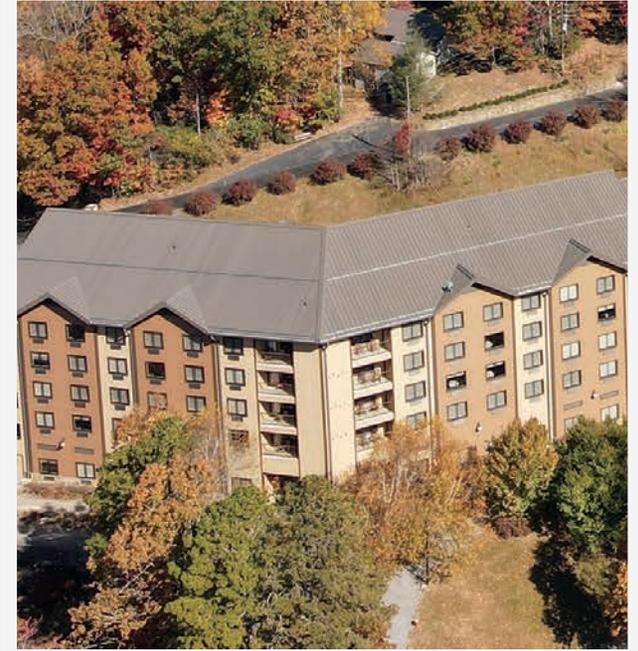
LEARN MORE



2024-2025 Projects



RCC Serving Line Renovation



RCC New Mountain Laurel West Roof



RCC New Johnson Spring Carpet



CR New Highland Bathhouse



CR New Highland Cabin



CC Updated Courts



CC Gym Renovation

Pray with Us

We believe in the power of prayer. Many of you pray for our ministry and team throughout the year, and we are so grateful! Some of the things we are specifically praying for in 2025 are below. *As the Lord brings us to your mind and heart, will you join us?*

With hope God will use Ridgecrest to impact your life in 2025,

- The Ridgecrest Team

- Mission accomplishment – Impacting Lives for God's Glory!
- Protection of our people, property, and purpose
- Team members - the right quality, the right quantity, and that Ridgecrest would be a blessing to them!
- Wisdom and clarity for Ridgecrest's leaders
- Donor support for the Ron Springs Camp Scholarship Fund and interest in planned giving opportunities
- That God will show us His plans for Ridgecrest's future





Ridgecrest Foundation Development Policy

It is the policy of The Ridgecrest Foundation to honestly and accurately share with interested friends the challenges and opportunities we face in our ministry. We share our needs and potential solutions so stakeholders can consider partnering with us through prayer and/or financial support as the Lord leads and enables. We believe motivation for joyful giving comes as God moves the hearts of people. Our role is to inform and provide opportunities without imposing undue obligation or pressure.

RIDGECREST
FOUNDATION



MINISTRIES