

SEASONS@BRL



Special Holiday Edition

**Celebrate! BRL is a Nationally
Certified Wildlife Habitat
Architectural Guidelines &
Covenants Update**

Wit & Wisdom From The Woods





Director Joy Coelho, Madison County Commissioner Michael Garrison, President Dave Wellendorf, Vice President Jason Goldstein, Director Kent Brooks, Secretary Mike Foster

Bear River Lodge Achieves National Certified Wildlife Community Habitat Honor

The National Wildlife Federation along with the North Carolina Wildlife Federation have officially awarded our community with their national wildlife habitat Community Preserve status. BRL is only one of three communities to become certified in the entire state of North Carolina, the other two communities being in Raleigh and Charlotte. We are proud to be the 159th inducted community in the United States.

Commissioner Michael Garrison, Vice Chairman of the Madison County Commission, presented the official certification to our BRL Board of Directors at our NWF Celebration Sunday Brunch on October 1st at our beautiful Lodge.

This important National Certification not only allows us to pursue grants to help to preserve and maintain our natural common area habitats and riparian riverfront forest zone, but it also elevates our property values by becoming a true wildlife preserve. (Continued on Pages 2 & 3)

(Continued from Page 1)

National recognition for being good stewards of our precious wild and natural environment will hopefully inspire neighboring communities to do the same. Gardening, native tree and plant workshops with Reems Creek Nursery are scheduled for this Fall and Spring 2024. (See page 4 to meet our flora **SuperHeroes!**)

Everyone attending the certification brunch was gifted with a **Garden to Go**. Heirloom seed packets of pollinator flowers, Non-GMO heirloom Basil, Tomatoes and Butter Lettuce were given to each participant to plant in their gardens this Spring.

Our next **Rise & Shine River Clean Up** and other fun green community event dates will be announced in the next edition of Seasons@BRL, on our website and via email.

Our **BRL Madison County Pollinator Habitat Awareness Proclamation** was signed, sealed and became active June 13th, 2023 by the Madison County Commission. This was one of many requirements on our road to certification. The details of the NWF process will be featured in our next quarterly edition of Seasons@BRL. Enjoy the kaleidoscope of Fall colors Y'all!



BRL Proclamation displayed in our Lodge and at the Madison County Office. The Official National Wildlife Certificate and NWF Habitat Plaque are at our Lodge. Red-tailed hawk, raccoon and rainbow trout neighbors are grateful for our efforts.

Proclamation
 RESOLUTION DESIGNATING
 NATIVE POLLINATOR HABITAT AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, Madison County and the Bear River Lodge Community is home to many native wildlife and pollinator species such as birds, bees, and insects which keep our environment healthy and biodiverse; and

WHEREAS, Madison County and the Bear River Lodge Community recognizes that human health ultimately depends on well-functioning ecosystems, and that biodiverse regions can better support food production, healthy soil, air quality and can foster healthier connections between humans and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, The Bear River Lodge Community is working to maintain a healthy, sustainable and wildlife-friendly community that brings the many benefits of nature's pollinators to all corners of Madison County via providing natural riparian transitional forest range and 1.3 miles long wildlife stream habitat; and

WHEREAS, In all Madison County communities, pollinators play a crucial role in maintaining sustainable local agriculture and in our residential and community gardens, which depend on pollination from bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and other insects; and

WHEREAS, Native pollinator species are in decline due to habitat loss and unnatural ecological challenges, causing species like the butterfly and native bee populations to decline significantly in the past 25 years; and

WHEREAS, National Pollinator Habitat Protection efforts are a national initiative that offers education to individuals and communities to help restore native habitats and support local pollinator species; and

WHEREAS, Madison County and the Bear River Lodge Community will continue to support efforts that protect, restore, and conserve habitats for pollinators as well as foster a greater connection between our residents and our abundant western North Carolina wildlife; and


NOW, THEREFORE, the Madison County Board of Commissioners do hereby resolve the month of June 2023, as Native Pollinator Habitat Awareness Month in Madison County and the Bear River Lodge Community. Together they encourage all Madison County residents to participate in their own community awareness, education and neighborhood activities that support and celebrate pollinator protection.

Adopted this the 13th day of June 2023.

Matthew Wechtel
 Matthew Wechtel, Chairman



ATTEST:
[Signature]
 Clerk to the Board of Commissioners





 THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION CERTIFIES

Bear River Lodge, NC

as a Community Wildlife Habitat. This community has taken exceptional action to preserve, enhance, restore and connect wildlife habitat while also communicating the importance of habitat stewardship to the public. These efforts, made under the auspices of the National Wildlife Federation's Garden for Wildlife program, contribute to establishing a network of thriving communities where people, wildlife and plants can all flourish.

August 31, 2023


 COLLIN O'MARA
 PRESIDENT & CEO

Plant Smarter, Not Harder

Facilitating useful and expert environmental education for our BRL residents was an important criteria for achieving our NWF Community Wildlife Habitat achievement. On Saturday July 29th, Dave Penland conducted *The Wonder Of The Trees Workshop* which our whole community was invited to attend. The class helped navigate what trees can work best on our rocky properties and also how to save you money while giving you a beautiful result.

Dave Penland is the current Green Goods Manager at Reems Creek Nursery and the son of Bill & Wilma Penland, founders of Reems Creek Nursery, Inc. Dave is a graduate of NC State and Appalachian State Universities and has 20+ years experience working locally as a licensed landscape contractor. After his landscaping career, Dave taught 7 years of high school agriculture in Buncombe County before returning to Reems Creek Nursery this past year.

The workshops at Reem's Creek Nursery are fascinating, fun and free. We wish to thank all the green thumbed superheroes at this wonderful local nursery for the ongoing classes and the wisdom they will continue to share with all of us at Bear River Lodge.



Dave Penland & Ruth Gonzalas

The Wonder Of Trees Workshop



This is practical knowledge and hands on learning that will make your gardens and landscapes thrive. All of these events are being held in the classroom at Reems Creek Nursery.

Here are some upcoming workshops for you to enjoy-

****Preparing Your Garden For Winter***

Sat. Oct. 28, 2023 10-11:30 am with Dave Penland

****Native Plants in Home Landscape***

Sat. Nov. 4, 2023 at 10 am with Libby Oswalt

Reems Creek Nursery-(828) 645-3937

76 Monticello Road, Weaverville NC



Covenants, Regulations & Guidelines, Oh My!

The Board of Directors have been diligently honing our twenty year old community guidelines and regulations line by line. The timing of this tedious task has perfectly aligned with our Bear River Lodge community experiencing a recent spurt in possible pending building projects and real estate sales. The updating and community voting for our regulations are much needed and coincide with the end of the 20 year requirement to do so, or the old requirements stay in place automatically.

Regarding real estate, there were two established homes that have been sold recently and another new home has just begun construction. All of this activity is on the heels of the newest home on Bear River Lodge Trail that has just finished construction and has now received its certificate of occupancy, Congratulations!

Because so many innovations and exciting building materials have come to light in the last two decades, new sections are being added to facilitate these materials, as well as, solar and other alternative options for additional power to be addressed. Maintaining our natural beauty and our coveted peace and quiet underscores all of our collective decisions while supporting healthy property values.

There has been tons of homework and stacks of research for our five Directors to do. There is also out of date and ambiguous language that is being addressed and clarified so there is no question about the intent of any covenant or guideline, no matter who interprets the directive.

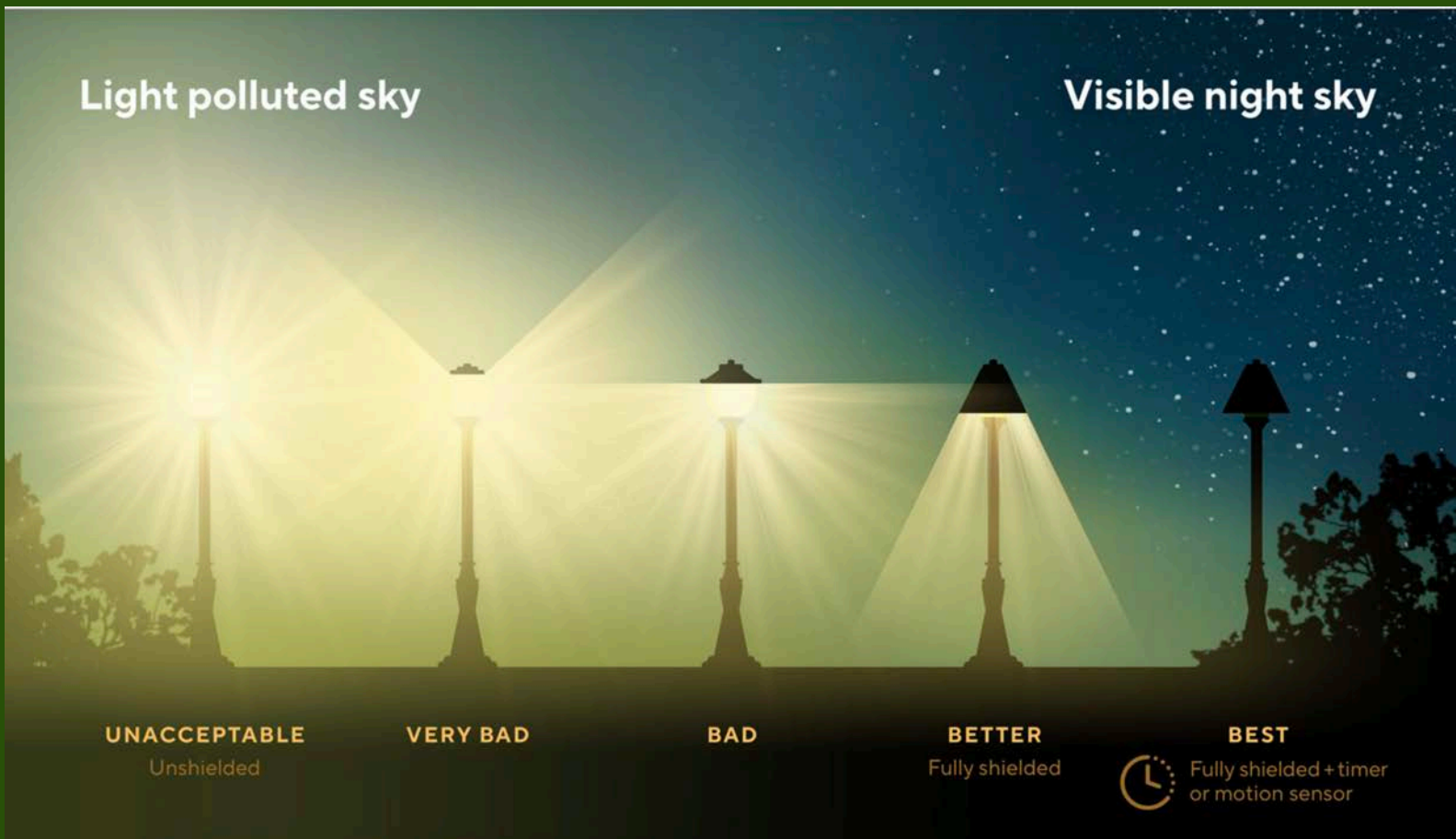
There are a few hot topics in the hopper. One is the C & R section that allows your home to be a short term vacation rental. There will be options for how this regulation will be handled going forward and it will be up for your vote. ***Let us know what you think.*** Do you like that you can currently use your home as a vacation rental? Would you want only a percentage of homes in our community to be able to be used in a rental status? Would you prefer for the rental option to be eliminated if the home was built after a certain date and/or to only allow, or grandfather in, current BRL rental homes? Let us know.

Tell us how you feel by emailing your thoughts to SeasonsEditorBRL@gmail.com

Some community associations do not allow Air B&Bs or short term vacation rentals at all, whereas this option is already allowed in our current BRL documents. An interesting fact... a number of our landowners and home owners initially discovered BRL while staying at one of the vacation homes.

Another consideration while shaping our regulations is a keener focus of our impact on our natural forest, sparkling river and the animals living in this wild environment.

The Dark Skies Initiative outdoor lighting recommendations have appropriately found a place in our guidelines, especially now that we are a nationally recognized wildlife habitat. These outdoor light recommendations allow us to see our incredible star filled skies as we have very little light pollution. Light pollution steals our unobstructed view of the gorgeous galaxy above us and affects all of our migrating and night oriented fauna in a number of different negative ways. See the graphic below for a better point of view. We wish to be “better/best” as our clear night sky is one of our most valuable assets.



Fences, architecture, landscaping, safety ideas and so much more are being triaged in our BRL regulations. Soon we will have the Architectural Guidelines polished and ready to share with you AND the options that require your vote for our C & R’s amendments and updates. Keep an eye out for the voting materials and it will be officially announced when they are ready to go.

***The Board of Directors THANK YOU for your patience and support
in this important part of our BRL legacy.***

*Cookie Exchange, Fancy Coffee and Latte Tricks, Fave Holiday CupCakery & Tree Decorating... **Come get Your Inner Elf On!***

Saturday December 2 @ 10am

Bring your favorite cookies to share and the recipe to the Lodge for some delicious holiday Joy. Not a Martha Stewart in the kitchen, no worries... hit up your favorite bakery & tell us all about it. Special coffee & teas will fuel our tree decorating skills with a bit of music to raise our spirits!

Contact Joy with any questions at SeasonsEditorBRL@Gmail.com

Abundance Found... *Outside the Box*

This fall marks the final season that BRL will market and host weddings at our Lodge. Dave and Callie Wellendorf, who created our Wedding Business Plan and facilitated our wedding program since 2016, will retire from the project after the last wedding on November 5th.

They spent the last two years diligently vetting local event companies and interested individuals followed by then crafting appropriate contracts and requirements to stand in the gap but to no avail. The wedding program brought about \$130,000 dollars to the BRL budget during its eight year run. We are grateful for all the time and mindfulness Callie and Dave gave to the wedding program and all the benefits it brought to our community.

Speaking about dollars and good sense... over the last two quarters our Maintenance Committee deserves a standing ovation for their innovative actions. They demonstrated *outside the box thinking* and generated some funds for our BRL operating budget by cleaning and organizing the stables. Old equipment, specifically a log splitter and a tractor sickle bar, were sold for **\$500** dollars. A donated (but broken) dump trailer was sold for **\$2,000** dollars. And in July, a decade or two of dust was blown off of 40 foam insulation panels and then they were happily sold for **\$1,500** dollars. Not bad for things that were no longer used or in disrepair!

The whole committee- Dave Bell, Mike Foster, Kent Brooks, Tim Cone and Jay Denman were instrumental in negotiating this found money. But the deal that would make any frugal person proud was the selling of the rubble rocks and boulders that littered the paddocks by the stables. This eyesore is now being removed by the purchaser who traded \$8,000 dollars for the rocks. This amount helped to underwrite the restoration of our construction road. These large rocks were discarded next to the stables after a property had to be blasted clear years ago. Kudos to Dave Bell for making the rocks disappear and the abundance appear!



Panels stored in the stables for over a decade were happily upcycled

ENJOY OUR SNOW COVERED NEIGHBORHOOD BY
CLICKING ON THIS LINK -

<https://bit.ly/47z5PLK>

THIS GORGEOUS VIDEO WAS CREATED BY FORMER
BRL RESIDENTS JOHN AND JEN FRY,
WHO WE ALL MISS VERY MUCH!
THIS WILL DEFINITELY PUT THE HAPPY IN YOUR
HAPPY HOLIDAYS! A BEAUTIFUL GIFT INDEED...
THANK YOU FRY FAMILY!

Holiday Lights at the Arboretum

https://www.romanticasheville.com/arboretum_lights.htm

Christmas at Biltmore

<https://www.romanticasheville.com/biltmorechristmas.htm>

Fun Things to Do, Happy Places to Go

Capitola Mill Spa (Marshall)

<https://www.spacapitolamill.com/>

River Arts District Annual Studio
Stroll November 11 - 12

River Arts District The Annual Studio Stroll in Asheville's River Arts District is a two-day extravaganza not to be missed. Two FREE trollies will be available on both days to transport guests. Meet Asheville's leading artists in their studios, seek out gallery receptions, enjoy food and drink options, and more!

Our Paving Project Complete!

Our Main Gated Entrance is paved, polished and ready for the Holidays.

A smooth finish all the way to your mailbox. Enjoy!



Vacation Destination BRL

The locations listed are featured on Airb&b & VRBO and are individually owned and operated Vacation Homes in BRL

***SkyView Mountain Retreat & River Haven at RiverDance-
www.RiverDanceNC.com or (847) 809 3098**

***Water's Edge Cabin-
<https://www.vrbo.com/410179>**

***Wildcat Cove Mountain Home-
<https://www.vrbo.com/2655327>**

***Mountain OverLook BlueRidge Retreat
<https://www.vrbo.com/1175018>**

Helpful Links

Bear River Lodge Website- <https://www.brlca.com>

**BRL Architectural Guidelines and Covenants & Restrictions:
<https://www.brlca.com/documents/>**

**Madison County Environmental Services Department (Septic & Well)
<https://www.madisoncountyhealth.org/environmental-health.html>**

The next Seasons@BRL e-magazine will be delivered January 2024
Issue Number 3 - "Winter 2024 Edition"

Please send ALL submissions and inquiries to- SeasonsEditorBRL@Gmail.com
Editor Joy Coelho, BRLCA Board of Directors

Deadline for Winter 2024 Edition - December 1, 2023 5pm EST