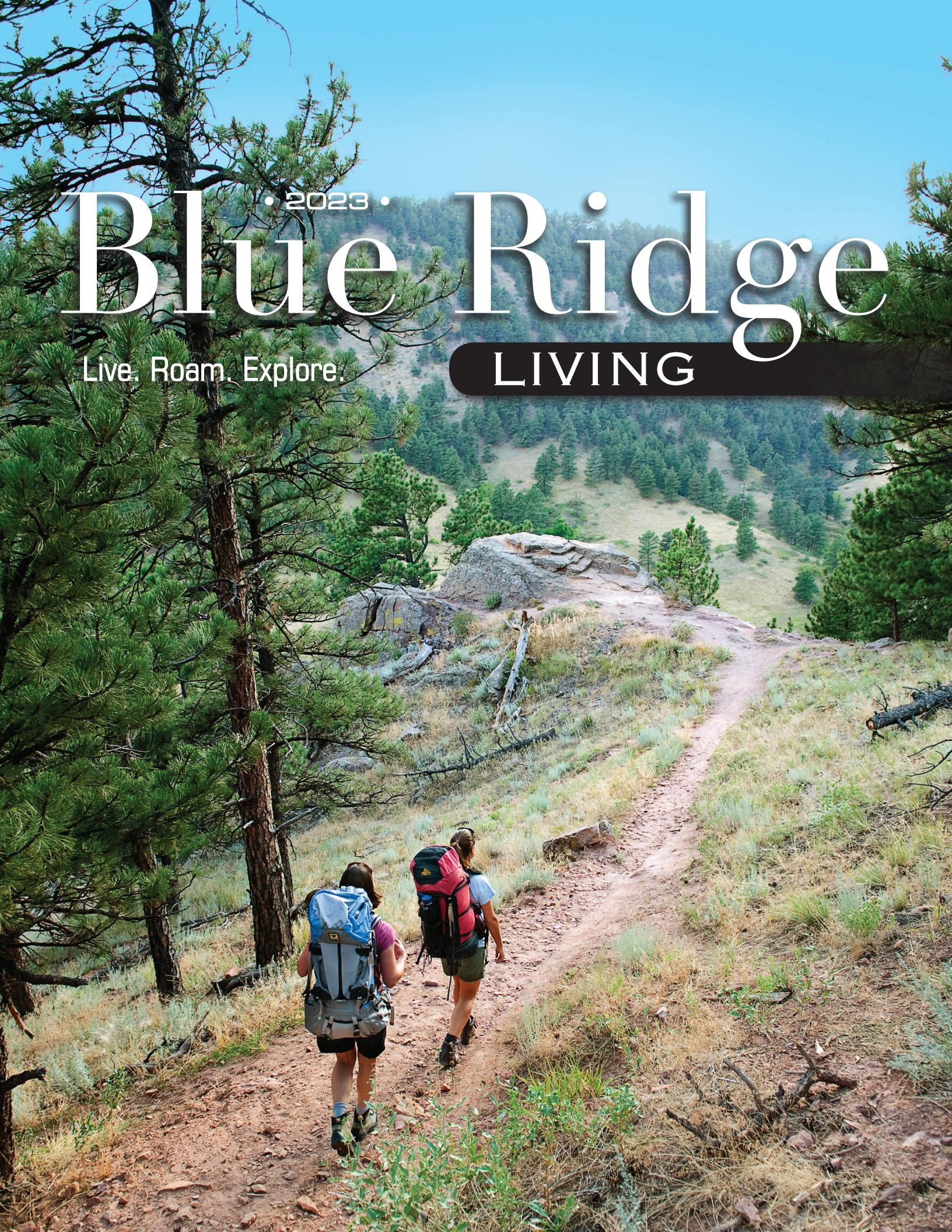


• 2023 •

Blue Ridge

LIVING

A scenic mountain landscape featuring a dirt trail winding through a forest of tall evergreen trees. Two hikers are walking away from the camera on the trail. The background shows rolling hills covered in green vegetation under a clear blue sky.

Live. Roam. Explore.

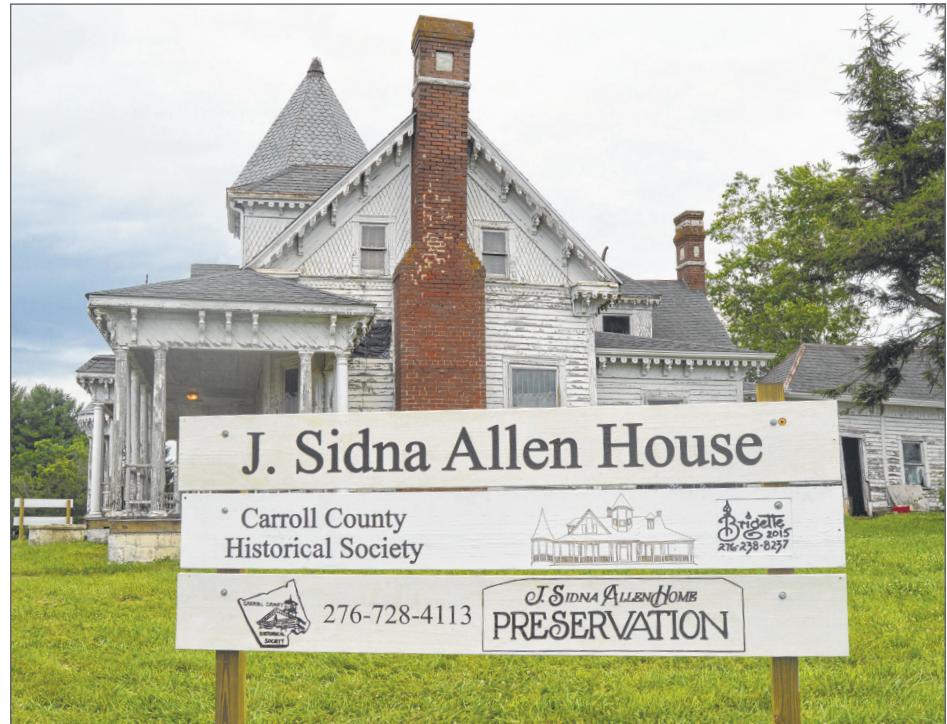
TOURS AVAILABLE AT HISTORIC J. Sidna Allen **HOUSE**

Steeped in history, the J. Sidna Allen House is a historic house located in Fancy Gap, in Carroll County. The house was built in 1911 for Sidna Allen, brother of Floyd Allen; however, he was arrested soon thereafter for complicity in the courthouse shooting of which his brother was accused, and never again lived there.

The Carroll County Courthouse Tragedy occurred on March 14, 1912, and left five people dead. Allen built the house, considered to be the most beautiful home in Southwest Virginia upon its construction, for he and his wife Bettie Mitchell. The whole house was made from the best wood around - the floors made of oak, except the floor of the living room, which was white maple. The roof of the house was made of slate and other materials that were very expensive at the time.

But a year later, the Hillsdale Courthouse Tragedy occurred and Sidna and his wife had only lived there a year. The house was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, and has been undergoing renovations for the past several years after ownership was passed on to the Carroll County Historical Society.

The Historic J. Sidna Allen House will be open for tours Aug. 5-6, Sept. 1-4, and Oct. 7-8. The historic home will be open from 1-4 p.m. each day and there is no admission charge, although donations are expected since this is a source of funding for the completion of the house restoration project.



The J. Sidna Allen House in Fancy Gap was considered one of the finest homes in Southwest Virginia when it was built early into the 20th century.



Beautiful stained glass is part of the charm and uniqueness of the J. Sidna Allen House in Fancy Gap.



The Historic J. Sidna Allen House decorated for Christmas in previous years.

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THE CARROLL NEWS

APG
ADAMS PUBLISHING GROUP



The main entrance to the J. Sidna Allen House in Fancy Gap.

• 2023 • **Blue Ridge**
Live. Roam. Explore. **LIVING**

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THE CARROLL NEWS

804 North Main St., Hillsboro, VA 24343

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Beaver Dam **TRAIL**

Man-made bridges are located in several areas of Beaver Dam Trail in Hillsdale as they cross over Beaver Dam.

dwr.virginia.gov

At an elevation of 2,288 feet, the Beaver Dam Trail is located in the Town of Hillsdale, and it follows Beaver Dam Creek for approximately three-quarters of a mile.

Although the trail is close to the hustle and bustle of town, one can feel completely surrounded by nature and find peace and serenity while strolling through Hillsdale's Beaver Dam Trail.

Situated along a shrubby creek embankment with views of open fields opposite the creek, the trail meanders through some riparian hardwood habitat. The open fields lend themselves to northern bobwhite, eastern meadowlark, red-winged blackbird, American



The leaves starting to change colors as Autumn approaches always provides nice views on the Beaver Dam Trail in Hillsdale.

goldfinch, indigo bunting, and field and song sparrows.

Also, look for the swooping flight of a hungry Cooper's hawk among these fields. The brushier scrub areas along the creek may produce views of flitting brown thrasher, calling eastern towhee and meowing gray catbird. White-tailed deer are abundant throughout this community. In the summertime, look for families of wild turkey

foraging along woodland edges. Black rat snakes can be found basking in sunny grassy patches throughout this trail. Green frog is also common in and around the creek. Butterflies can be abundant along creek edges lined with dancing wildflowers. Look for a variety of sulphurs, skippers, and hairstreaks.

HISTORIC CARROLL COUNTY COURTHOUSE

The Carroll County Courthouse is a historic county courthouse located in Hillsboro, Virginia. It was built in 1873 and is a two-story brick building with a gable roof. It features a two-story, pedimented portico in the Doric order, and the building is topped by an octagonal cupola. The courthouse was the scene of the famous Hillsboro massacre of March 14, 1912, in which five persons, including the presiding judge, were killed in a courtroom battle. Visitors are still able to see bullet holes from the shootout from more than 100 years ago.

The courthouse was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

Carroll County Historical Society Museum

Learn about the rich history of Carroll County in the museum located within the Historic District of Hillsboro in the Historic Carroll County Courthouse.

The facility presents the history of Carroll County and its various communities in a variety of ways. Exhibits and artifacts reflect the heritage of Carroll County, which was formed in 1842. Early Native American artifacts recovered from nearby archaeological are also on display. A large Civil War collection including a drum used by local unit is also featured. The museum has extensive archive and reference materials in its resource section. Guided tours are available of the Historic 1873 Courthouse, which is an architectural gem and site of the tragic courtroom shooting incident in March 1912 (advance reservations requested). Publication and gift sales are available.

The Carroll County Historical Society Museum is located at 515 North Main Street in Hillsboro, Va.

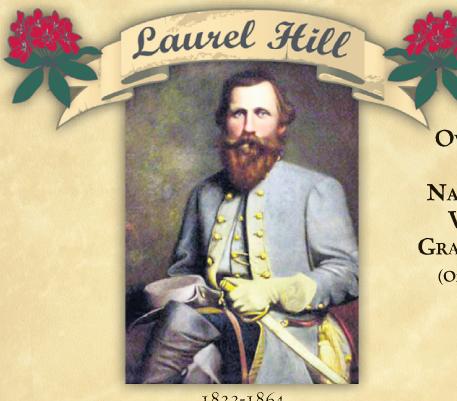
The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The museum operates the same as the Carroll County School System for inclement weather. The museum is also closed Dec. 23-26 for Christmas, and from Dec. 31-Jan. 2 for New Year's. Admission is free, but donations are welcomed to help keep the doors open.



The Carroll County Courthouse is a historic county courthouse located in Hillsboro, Virginia. It was built in 1873 and is a two-story brick building with a gable roof. It features a two-story, pedimented portico in the Doric order, and the building is topped by an octagonal cupola.

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276-251-1833 laurelhill@jebstuart.org

TNNC187909-1

HILLSVILLE'S **UNIQUE** Bottle House

Hillsville's unique Bottle House was built in the early 1940s by John Hope, a pharmacist with the nickname of "Doc," as a playhouse for his daughter. The wide variety of bottles used to make the house came from various different places, including medicine bottles from Hope's store and wine bottles from an area restaurant.

Green bottles form an H pattern for Hope on one of the side walls and there is also a blue bottle chandelier inside. Local citizens often called it "The House of a Thousand Headaches" because of the large number of wine bottles from which it was largely formed.

It took about two years to collect the bottles, many from the pharmacy and others reputedly from a restaurant. To clean all the bottles (about 10,000 reputedly) and remove labels, Dr. Hope used enough water to fill his swimming pool three times — about 105,000 gallons. It took most of one summer to do the cleaning job. He bought 80 bags of cement, 40 bags of lime, and four truckloads of sand. One contractor quit mid-way through the job because the bottles kept breaking.

On August 3, 1940 the Bottle House made its debut. That date fell on a day of celebration by the town of a newly constructed highway nearby. The then-Governor of Virginia, James H. Price, led his entourage to the house and his signature was the first on the registry of visitors, which includes many names from near and far. Dr. Hope has a mute memorial to himself and his dream of realizing a hobby that still attracts the curious traveler.



Hillsville's unique Bottle House was built in the early 1940s by John Hope, a pharmacist with the nickname of "Doc," as a playhouse for his daughter.



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Green bottles form an H pattern for Hope on one of the side walls and there is also a blue bottle chandelier inside.

HALE-WILKINSON-CARTER HOME

What is today "The Hale-Wilkinson-Carter Home" was built by Captain Fielden Lewis Hale as a thirteen-room three-story home in 1845. The original home was a brick home with four chimneys made in the Federalist style. The Hales were among the wealthiest families in Carroll County, which was carved out of Grayson County in 1842. The home is on the highest hill in Hillsdale, Virginia and was built on the Wytheville Pike, which was the only North-South route through the mountain gap at the time it was built.

In 1864 the home was purchased by James Wilkinson, whose daughter, Mayetta, married railroad tycoon George Lafayette Carter. The Carters lived in the home following Mr. Wilkinson's death in 1914. The Carters added significant additions to the home in 1924 to make it a 34 room five-story home.

After Mayetta died, the house was sold to Carroll County in 1959, and was used for governmental offices until the new Governmental Complex was completed in 2000. In 2001, the house became a community project under the supervision of the Hale-Wilkinson-Carter Home Foundation which has been a 501(c)3 organization. The home's future looked bleak until proposal was made to the Carroll County Board of Supervisors by Mrs. Evelyn Botschen in February of 2001. Upon approval of the county, the Hale-Wilkinson-Carter Foundation, Inc. was established to preserve the home for future generations.

On January 19, 2010, two members of the



What is today "The Hale-Wilkinson-Carter Home" was built by Captain Fielden Lewis Hale as a thirteen-room three-story home in 1845. The original home was a brick home with four chimneys made in the Federalist style. The historic home celebrated its 175th anniversary in 2020.



Many events are still held in the Hale-Wilkinson-Carter Home in Hillsdale.

Foundation met with the county administrator to discuss the conditions of the potential transfer of the Hale-Wilkinson-Carter Home to the Foundation. Shortly afterward, the Board of Supervisors gave their approval for the transfer of the home during a public hearing held at Carroll County High School. The Home, located on .557 acres in historic downtown Hillsdale, was deeded to the Foundation from Carroll County on April 5, 2010.

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The inside of the Grover King VFW Post 1115 in Hillsboro is always full of ammo and guns for purchase during the annual Labor Day Flea Market.

Come to Hillsboro, Virginia just about any other weekend of the year and you will find a laid-back town of just a few thousand folks.

But come to Hillsboro on Labor Day weekend – usually the first weekend in September – and you will find that sleepy little town has become a bustling metropolis of flea market and gun show sellers and buyers half a million strong.

VFW Post 1115 has been sponsoring the Labor Day Gun Show & Flea Market since the late 1960s and it has become one of the biggest events of its type in the state – perhaps in the nation. Pierce Webb, a Laurel Fork native, had retired to Florida and he developed a hobby for collecting and trading guns. Early in 1967, he visited his friend, Glenn



Be ready to walk and wait a while. The massive amounts of people and long lines make for a day of exercise to go with your shopping pleasure.

Jackson, also a native of Laurel Fork.

After the second year, the show outgrew the space inside the VFW hall and the outdoor flea market was added to accommodate the overflow. The rest is history. During the last decade, the outdoor flea market space was increased nearly 50 percent with the addition of the upper lot at the top of the hill way behind the VFW hall.

The VFW Labor Day show is now the largest single event in Carroll and surrounding counties and one of the biggest east of the Mississippi. Money realized from the show keep the Post in operation for the entire year, and a lot of the money that is taken in is returned to the community in the form of donations to many civic groups and individuals in need.



More crowd shots from a previous Labor Day Gun Shows and Flea Market in Hillsville.



You can find just about anything at the annual Labor Day Gun Show & Flea Market in Hillsville.



Guns are in no shortage of supply during the annual Labor Day Gun Show and Flea Market in Hillsville.



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IMPORTANT NUMBERS

CARROLL COUNTY

Population 29,911 (as of 2020 census)

Municipal Buildings - Carroll County Government Center - 605 Pine St, Hillsboro, VA. (276) 730-3000

Town of Hillsboro offices - 410 N. Main Street, Hillsboro, VA. (276) 728-2128

PLACES TO VOTE

Fancy Gap Precincts
0101 Mt Bethel Precinct
- Cana Fire Dept, Mt Bethel
Sub - 94 Mt Bethel Rd, Cana, VA 24317

0102 St Paul Precinct - St Paul School - 231 Flower Gap Rd, Cana, VA 24317

0103 Lambsburg Precinct - Lambsburg Community Complex - 130 Learning Ln, Lambsburg, VA 24351

0105 Fancy Gap Precinct - Fancy Gap Elementary School - 63 Winding Ridge Rd, Fancy Gap, VA 24328

Laurel Fork Precincts
Hillsboro B Precinct - Carroll County High School - 100 Cavs Ln, Hillsboro, VA 24343

0202 Laurel Fork Precinct - Laurel Fork Fire Station - 13386 Danville Pike, Laurel Fork, VA 24352

0203 Gladesboro Precinct - Gladesboro Elementary School - 7845 Snake Creek Rd, Hillsboro, VA 24343

Pine Creek Precincts
Hillsboro C Precinct - Carroll County Intermediate School - 1036 N Main St, Hillsboro, VA 24343

0302 Sylvatus Precinct - Sylvatus Ruritan Building - 6915 Sylvatus Hwy, Hillsboro, VA 24343

0303 Dugspur Precinct - Dugspur Rescue Squad - 118 Double Cabin Rd, Dugspur, VA 24325

Pipers Gap Precincts
0401 Oakland Precinct - Oakland Elementary School - 4930 Pipers Gap Rd, Galax, VA 24333

0402 Woodlawn D Precinct - Oakland Elementary School - 745 Woodlawn Rd, Woodlawn,

VA 24381
0406 Woodlawn F Precinct
- Woodlawn School - 745 Woodlawn Rd, Woodlawn, VA 24381

Sulphur Springs Precincts
Vaughan Precinct - Vaughan Civic League Building - 2040 Ivanhoe Rd, Fries, VA 24330
0502 Gladeville Precinct - Gladeville Elementary School - 3117 Glendale Rd, Galax, VA 24333

0503 Woodlawn E Precinct
- Woodlawn School - 745 Woodlawn Rd, Woodlawn, VA 24381

0504 Laurel Precinct - Laurel Elementary School - 46 Pleasant View Rd, Austinville, VA 24312

Central Absentee Precinct
Carroll County Governmental Center - 605 Pine St, Hillsboro, VA 24343

WHERE TO PAY TAXES

Carroll County Treasurer's Office - Carroll County Government Center - Address: 605 Pine St # 10, Hillsboro, VA 24343

WHERE TO PAY WATER BILL

Carroll County Public Service Authority - Located in: Carroll County Government Center - Address: 605 Pine St # 2, Hillsboro, VA 24343

CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Carroll County High School
- 100 Cavs Lane, Hillsboro, VA, 24343; Phone - (276) 728-2125

Carroll County Middle School - 1036 North Main Street, Hillsboro, VA, 24343; Phone - (276) 728-4211

Fancy Gap Elementary School - 63 Winding Ridge Road, Fancy Gap, VA, 24328; Phone - (276) 728-7504

Gladesboro Elementary School - 7845 Snake Creek Road, Hillsboro, VA, 24343; Phone - (276) 398-2493

Gladeville Elementary School - 3117 Glendale Road, Galax, VA, 24333; Phone - (276) 236-5449

Hillsboro Elementary

School - 90 Patriot Lane, Hillsboro, VA, 24343; Phone - (276) 728-7312

Laurel Elementary School
- 26 Pleasant View Road, Austinville, VA, 24312; Phone - (276) 728-9247

Oakland Elementary School
- 4930 Pipers Gap Road, Galax, VA, 24333; Phone - (276) 236-3049

St. Paul School - 231 Flower Gap Road, Cana, VA, 24317; Phone - (276) 755-3512

Carroll County Public Schools Superintendent - Dr. Mark Burnette

CARROLL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Fancy Gap District - Phillip W. Berrier - pwberrie@ccpsd.k12.va.us

Laurel Fork District - Jennifer L. Sowers - jlsowers@ccpsd.k12.va.us

Pine Creek District - Ralph J. "Bob" Martin - bmartin@ccpsd.k12.va.us

Pipers Gap District - Brian E. Spencer (Chairman) - bespence@ccpsd.k12.va.us

Sulphur Springs District - William H. "Bill" Sturgill (Vice-Chair) - whsturgi@ccpsd.k12.va.us

CITY OF GALAX

Population 6,720

Municipal Buildings - City of Galax Municipal Building - 111 East Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333; Phone - (276) 236-2131

PLACES TO VOTE

East Precinct - 107 Country Club Lane, Galax, VA.

West Precinct - 601 South Main Street, Galax, VA.

WHERE TO PAY WATER BILL

Galax Municipal Building, 111 East Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333; Phone - (276) 236-2131

WHERE TO PAY TAXES

Galax Finance Department, 111 East Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333; Phone - (276) 236-2131

GALAX CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Superintendent - Susan Tilley

Galax Elementary School
- 300 McArthur Street, Galax, VA, 24333; Phone - (276) 236-6159

Galax Middle School - 202 Maroon Tide Drive, Galax, VA, 24333; Phone - (276) 236-6124.

Galax High School - 200 Maroon Tide, Galax, Virginia, 24333; Phone - (276) 236-2991

GALAX SCHOOL BOARD

Mrs. Melissa Pddy, Chair, melissapddy@galaxschools.us

Dr. James Adams, Vice Chair, jamesadams@galaxschools.us

Mr. Larry Spangler, larryspangler@galaxschools.us

Mrs. Leah Henck, Member, leahhenck@galaxschools.us

Mr. Brett Sexton, Member, brettsexton@galaxschools.us

GRAYSON COUNTY

Population 15,651

Municipal Buildings - Grayson County Courthouse - 209 State Route T 1101, Independence, VA. (276) 236-8149

WHERE TO PAY TAXES

Grayson County Treasurer's Office - Grayson County District Court - 129 State Rte T 1101, Independence, VA., 24348

WHERE TO PAY YOUR WATER BILL

Grayson County Treasurer's Office, 129 Davis Street, Suite 205 PO Box 127, Independence, Virginia, 24348

GRAYSON COUNTY POLLING LOCATIONS

WILSON DISTRICT

Bridle Creek, Grace Freewill Baptist Church, 6211 Wilson Hwy, Independence, VA 24348

Flatridge, Flatridge Elementary School, 8496 Flatridge Road, Troutdale, VA 24378

Grant, Grant Goodwill Grange, 840 Grange Hall Road, Troutdale, VA 24378

Mouth of Wilson, Oak Hill Academy, 2335 Oak Hill Road, Mouth of Wilson, VA 24363

Mount Rogers, Whitetop Community Center, 16309

Highlands Parkway, Whitetop, VA 24292

Rugby, Rugby Rescue Fire Building, 53 Rugby Road, Mouth of Wilson, VA 24363

Troutdale, Troutdale Fire & Rescue Squad, 291 Ripshin Road, Troutdale, VA 24378

Comers Rock, Community Center, 692 Mt. Zion Road, Elk Creek, VA 24326

ELK CREEK DISTRICT

Elk Creek, Elk Creek Rescue Squad, 9109 Elk Creek Parkway, Elk Creek, VA 24326

Independence, Grayson County High School, 110 Blue Devil Dr, Independence, VA 24348

OLDTOWN DISTRICT

Baywood, Baywood Wesleyan Church, 1995 Old Baywood Rd, Galax, VA 24333

Fairview, Fairview Elementary School, 2323 Fairview Road, Galax, VA 24333

PROVIDENCE DISTRICT

Fries, Fries School Auditorium, 114 East Main Street, Fries, VA 24330

Providence, Old Providence School, 56 Bainbridge Rd, Fries, VA 24330

Oldtown, Bible Baptist Church, 1149 Greenville Road, Galax, VA 24333

CAP, Grayson County Courthouse, 129 Davis Street, Independence, VA 24348

GRAYSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Fairview Elementary School - 2323 Fairview Road, Galax, Va., 24333; Phone - (276) 236-2365

Fries School - 114 East Main Street, Fries, Va., 24330; Phone - (276) 744-7201

Grayson County Career and Technical Education Center - 110 Blue Devil Drive, Independence, Va., 24348; Phone - (276) 773-2951

Grayson Highlands School - 6459 Troutdale Highway, Troutdale, Va., 24378; Phone - (276) 579-2235.

Independence Elementary School - 915 East Main Street, Independence, Va., 24348; Phone - (276) 773-2722

Independence Middle School - 100 Blue Devil Drive, Independence, Va., 24348; Phone - (276) 773-3020

Grayson County High

School - 110 Blue Devil Drive, Independence, Va., 24348; Phone - (276) 773-2131

Grayson County Public Schools Superintendent - Kelly Whitmore

GRAYSON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Diane Haynes - Oldtown District, Chairman, 276-236-3842, diane.haynes@gcpsva.org

Rick Sage - Wilson District, 276-579-2352 rick.sage@gcpsva.org

Randy Shinault - Providence District, 276-233-5736, randy.shinault@gcpsva.org

Chris Anders - Member-at-Large, chris.anders@gcpsva.org, 276-768-7177

Fred Weatherman - Elk Creek District, Vice-Chairman, 276-773-2284, Fred.Weatherman@gcpsva.org

PATRICK COUNTY

Population 17,660

Municipal Buildings

Patrick County Administration Building, 106 Rucker St #218, Stuart, VA 24171 Phone: (276) 694-6094

WHERE TO PAY TAXES

Patrick County Treasurer's Office, P.O. Box 668, Stuart, Va., 24171; Phone - (276) 694-7257.

WHERE TO PAY WATER BILL

Town of Stuart, P.O. Box 422, Staurt, Va., 24171; Phone - (276) 694-3811; or **Patrick County PSA**, 100 Patrick Avenue, Stuart, Va., 24171.

PATRICK COUNTY VOTING PRECINCTS AND THEIR LOCATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Dan River District: Ararat - Ararat Ruritan Bldg. 4711 Ararat Hwy

Claudville - Claudville Community Bldg. 1828 Red Bank School Rd.

Willis Gap - Willis Gap Community Center 144 The Hollow Rd.

Peters Creek District:

Dry Pond - Peters Creek Community Bldg. 2130 Dry Pond Hwy.

Patrick Springs - Patrick Springs Fire Station 181 Spring Rd.

Russell Creek - Russell Creek Community Bldg. 1808

Ayers Orchard Rd.

Mayo River District:

Critz/Stella - Hardin Reynolds Elementary School 3597 Dogwood Rd.

Liberty - Patrick Henry Fire Department 3125 County Line Rd.

Blue Ridge District:

Meadows of Dan - Meadows of Dan Community Bldg. 2858 Jeb Stuart Hwy.

Stuart Fairgrounds - Hooker Building (Rotary Field) 420 Woodland Dr.

Smith River District:

Stuart Community - Stuart Community Center (Patrick Henry Community College, Patrick Site) 212 Wood Brothers Dr.

Elamsville - Fairystone Fire Station 6687 Fairystone Park Hwy.

Woolwine - Smith River Rescue Squad Bldg. 9962 Woolwine Hwy.

WHERE TO PAY TAXES

Patrick County Treasurer - Patrick County Administration Building -Address: 106 Rucker St #221, Stuart, Va., 24171

PATRICK COUNTY

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Superintendent of Schools

- Jason Wood, Division Superintendent, jason.wood@patrick.k12.va.us

Blue Ridge Elementary School

- 5135 Ararat Highway, Ararat, Va., 24053; Phone - (276) 251-5271.

Hardin Reynolds Memorial School

- 3597 Dogwood Road, Critz, Va., 24082; Phone - (276) 694-3631.

Meadows of Dan Elementary School

- 3003 Jeb Stuart Highway, Meadows of Dan, Va., 24120; Phone - (276) 952-2424

Patrick County High School

- 215 Cougar Lane, Stuart, Va., 24171; Phone - (276) 694-7137

Patrick Springs Primary School

- 75 Elementary Lane, Patrick Springs, Va., 24133; Phone - (276) 694-3396

Stuart Elementary School

- 314 Staples Avenue, Stuart, Va., 24171; Phone - (276) 694-7139.

Woolwine Elementary School

- 9993 Woolwine Highway, Woolwine, Va., 24185; Phone - (276) 930-2811

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New River Trail **STATE PARK**

Spanning four counties and the City of Galax, the New River Trail State Park is a 57-mile linear park that affords an abundance of activities for outdoor lovers of all kinds.

While the New River Trail itself is a 57.7-mile odyssey that follows an abandoned railroad right-of-way, the park parallels the scenic and historic New River for 39 miles. Offering everything from hiking to biking to guided horse tours, tubing, fishing, canoeing and kayaking, it's easy to see why the Southwest Virginian outdoor paradise draws an average of almost one million visitors per year. Behind just First Landing at Virginia Beach and Pocahontas in Richmond, the New River Trail State Park draws the third most visitors of any state park in Virginia.

"It's kind of unique. Foster Falls usually brings in 20 to 25 percent of the traffic flow and I think that is what brings them, use of the new river," said Sam Sweeney, New River Trail State Park Manager. "So many people float in the river and fish in the river, whether it's on boats or canoes or bank fishing. There are so many different activities for different times of the year. There are also campsites on the edge of the river and a lot of people like that."

The New River Trail itself covers territory from the Virginia counties of Carroll, Grayson, Wythe and Pulaski as well as the City of Galax and the towns of Pulaski and Fries. Its gentle slope is a major drawing card for visitors of all ages to hike, bike and ride horseback.

Wildlife is also in abundance in the area, including an active Bald Eagles' nest near Foster Falls. The majestic birds have been spotted near the area of the Fries Junction most recently. Sweeney told of a staff member making his rounds in the picnic area one morning when he experienced the view of a lifetime.

"He was working there near the bank and one of those eagles came down below the falls, picked up a fish and turned around and took it back to the nest," Sweeney said. "He said it was one of those truly unique moments to be able to witness something like that."

The Foster Falls area of the park alone features guided horseback trips, canoe and bike rentals, boat launches, gift shops and a horse arena. There are access points to the trail at Allisonia, Chestnut Yard, Cliffview, Dannelly Park (near Galax), Draper, Dora Junction (near Pulaski), Foster Falls, Fries, Galax, Gambetta, Hiwassee and Ivanhoe. Horse trailer parking is available at Allisonia, Austinville, Cliffview,



Waterfalls and an abundance of water provide for many activities on the New River Trail.



Kayaking, canoeing and swimming are popular activities on many parts of the New River Trail.

Dora Junction, Draper, Fries, Ivanhoe and the Mark E. Hufeisen Horse Complex near Foster Falls arena.

The historic Foster Falls and the Shot Tower are two of the most popular destinations in the New River Trail State Park. The town of Foster Falls was once a part of the booming iron industry that dominated the economy of the New River Valley during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The major factor behind the development of the town was an iron furnace built in 1880 by the Foster Falls Mining and Manufacturing Co., which shipped pig iron by rail to major manufacturing centers in St. Louis, Baltimore and Cincinnati. In modern times, the Methodist church, a post office, several homes and a group of deserted buildings along the river are all that remains of the past bustling community.

Local miner and business owner Thomas Jackson took about seven years to build the Shot Tower, which was completed in 1807. At the historic tower, one of just three in the United States, and perhaps the only in the world with its unique design, shot of varying size would be molded, sorted and shipped down river where it would be sold to hunters, traders, and merchants.

At 75 feet high, the tower looks more like a fortress than a factory. Beneath the base, is a lower shaft from the tower floor, that drops 75 feet to the river level. A restored interior winding wooden staircase leads to the tower's top room where there was a large kettle heated by a furnace. The lead was melted and then poured through different sized sieves, producing shot of varying sizes. Historians believe that either slave labor or a pulley system was used to move the lead to the top of the stairs.

The hot lead fell 150 feet to a large kettle of water at the bottom. The long fall was thought necessary to properly mold the round shot and the kettle of water served as a cushion. The kettle was reached through an access tunnel near the river, which provided a constant supply of water for the kettle. The cooled shot would then be sorted and put on the market.

Located within New River Trail State Park, the Inn at Foster Falls is just steps away from the 57-mile New River Trail and the New River, each offering boundless possibilities for outdoor recreation. The Inn also serves as a beautiful and convenient venue for weddings, reunions, small meetings and other gatherings. There are 10 guest rooms on two floors and a lovely two-story Victorian porch looks out on the grounds.

The original Foster Falls Hotel was opened in 1888 by the Foster Falls Mining and Manufacturing Company.



Photo by Dale Johnson

A bald eagle looks from high above a perch near the New River Trail, which spans four counties and the City of Galax. The New River Trail State Park is a 57-mile linear park that affords an abundance of activities for outdoor lovers of all kinds.

For several decades thereafter, it served not only as a hotel, but as a post office, commissary, meeting hall and boarding house for those associated with the local mining industry. In 1919, the hotel was sold and converted into an industrial school for women. Finally, the building served as an orphanage until 1962 when it relocated to nearby Wytheville.

Many decades later, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation took ownership of the hotel structure as part of the acquisition that would become New River Trail State Park. Renovations to the inn began in 2013. Over many phases of restoration, construction professionals used vintage photographs to recreate the appearance of the roofline and porch. Today the structure known as the Inn at Foster Falls provides modern amenities and accessibility while retaining a sense of the past.

The Inn at Foster Falls is managed and operated by New River Retreat, LLC. For more information or to book a room, visit www.stayinnfosterfalls.com or call New River Retreat at 1-800-916-9346.

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PATRICK COUNTY'S BREATHTAKING OVERLOOKS & HISTORIC SITES

Dotted throughout the mountains of Patrick County, Virginia are many scenic overlooks that are waiting to take your breath away!

FRED CLIFTON PARK

Conveniently located just off of Route 58 on Meadows of Dan mountain is Fred Clifton Park. This small park hosts three different overlooks with picnic tables and grills scattered in the privacy of trees and rhododendron bushes. The uppermost overlook is steeped in local lore. Legend has it that a Native American maiden, Morningflower, and a colonial man fell in love, but both their families forbade them to be together. With the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains as their backdrop, they jumped into the great blue yonder to be together forever. Some say you can still hear them when you stand on the overlook platform and look out at the expansive view.

LOVER'S LEAP SCENIC OVERLOOK

Named after the tragic love story that took place at adjacent Fred Clifton Park, Lover's Leap Scenic Overlook is by far the largest overlook in the area. Its colorful rock wall runs alongside the roadway of Route 58 with easy on, easy off parking. Travelers from all over the world stop here to gaze into the distance. Witness the panoramic views of the mountains & valley and see hundreds of miles out.

ANGEL OVERLOOK

Angel Overlook is located on notoriously curvy Squirrel Spur Road between Ararat and Meadows of Dan. This is the perfect place to pause your backroads cruise for a picnic lunch and enjoy the views of the neighboring North Carolina skyline. This overlook gets its name from the Angel family who donated the land for travelers to enjoy in 2009. You can find travel and area information at the information kiosk located right beside the overlook.

ROUND MEADOW OVERLOOK

Take an easy 20-minute walk on the Round Meadow Creek loop trail at milepost 179.3 on the Blue Ridge Parkway and view the Round Meadow Overlook of the massive 20th-century parkway bridge. Take the right fork at the start of the trail to gradually descend into a hollow. Walk through a grove of giant white pines, see colorful flowers and patches of ferns, and walk along a creek that is deep enough to wade in

(and cool in the summer). Continuing on the loop, you will pass under the bridge at the bottom of the trail, and then once again as you near the trail's end at the top of the hill. This second pass under the bridge lends an amazing "underlook" of this engineering marvel. Short on time? Skip the walk and take the left fork at the beginning of the trail to quickly arrive at the overlook.

ROCKY KNOB OVERLOOK

This grassy overlook is located at milepost 169 on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The soft, open space is perfect for picnics and letting the children roam free. Across the road is the Rocky Knob Visitor Information Center and picnic area. From here you can start a few different hiking trails, use the restroom, take a break from the shade at a picnic shelter, and get area information from Parkway employees.

ROCK CASTLE GORGE OVERLOOK

Located at milepost 168.8 on the Blue Ridge Parkway, this overlook, along with the Rocky Knob Overlook, sits in the direct path of the Rock Castle Gorge National Recreation Trail. You will often see hikers appear on the forest edge, cross the overlook meadow, and continue on the path back into the trees on the other side. At this overlook, you can read about the history of the Rock Castle Gorge, including the geographic features that give the gorge its name. Close by on the parkway is the Rocky Knob Campground, a great place to pitch your tent or park your camper during your travels.

GROUNDHOG MEADOW OVERLOOK

Step back in time at the Groundhog Mountain Observation Tower at Groundhog Hill, located at milepost 189 on the Blue Ridge Parkway. This structure was used by the Forest Service to watch for fires and other emergency situations. Climb the stairs to the top of the tower for amazing 360-views of the surrounding Mountains. This site also offers picnic tables and restrooms.

For history lovers who want to get away and experience the simple life with a variety of historical points of interest, abundant natural beauty and even some wine tastings and luxury treatments, Patrick County, Virginia is your perfect destination. Here are 20 must-see places to help you unplug, unwind, and step back in time.

REYNOLDS HOMESTEAD

Step back into the Victorian era at the historic Reynolds Homestead, built in 1814. This tobacco plantation, named the Rock Spring Plantation, was home to R. J. Reynolds, founder of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. Here you can take a tour of the main house and other buildings around the homestead, learn the history of the Reynolds Tobacco Company and of the enslaved men & women that lived and worked on the plantation & visit their cemetery. Take a self-guided tour around the property or sign-up in advance for a guided tour by one of the Homestead's knowledgeable guides. While you are there, enjoy the one mile loop walk on their self-guided L.E.A.F. trail to experience the beautiful forest and learn about the flora & fauna native to the area. Visitors on the third weekend of June will be able to enjoy their annual Bushels & Barrels: Local Food, Wine & Beer festival.

JACKS CREEK COVERED BRIDGE

Walk through the historic Jacks Creek Covered Bridge, located in Woolwine. It was built in 1914 to gain access across the Smith River to the neighboring Jacks Creek Primitive Baptist Church, where the bridge derives its name. Now substituted by an adjacent modern day steel beam bridge, Jacks Creek Covered Bridge is still open to visitors to walk through and sign the guest book. The site of the bridge is a wonderful spot for a blanket picnic or getting your feet wet in the river on a hot Summer's day. Visitors on the third Saturday in June will be able to catch the annual Virginia Covered Bridge Festival located just across the road. The festival was originally designed to celebrate two of Patrick County's Covered Bridges, the second being Bob White Covered Bridge which was tragically swept away by floodwaters in 2015.

LAUREL HILL

Laurel Hill is the birthplace and childhood home of Civil War General J.E. Stuart. Upon arrival, visitors can pick up a self-guided tour brochure at the entrance and proceed onto the grounds. Visitors on the first weekend in October can enjoy the Civil War Reenactment & Living History Weekend that takes place on the property every year. Neighboring Laurel Hill is the oldest grave in Patrick County belonging to Stuart's great-grandfather William

Letcher who was a member of the local militia during the Revolutionary War. Letcher met a tragic end, being murdered in front of his family on his own doorstep by British Loyalists.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

Breaking ground in 1935, the Blue Ridge Parkway was built by order of President Franklin D. Roosevelt to connect Shenandoah National Park in Virginia to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park at the edge of North Carolina. Spanning 469 miles, this famous scenic drive was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps camp which created much needed jobs during and after the Great Depression. No commercial vehicles, billboards or other non-essential signage are allowed, leaving the Parkway to show off the natural beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains. A smooth 45 mile and hour drive down the Parkway will offer breathtaking overlooks, recreation areas with camping and picnicking, hiking trails, and abundant wildlife.

MEADOWS OF DAN VILLAGE

On top of the mountain lies the charming village of Meadows of Dan. Here, you will find local home-style cooking as well as many unique places to shop. Poor Farmers Market offers a variety of quirky treasures and gifts as

well as locally produced honey, jams, produce and more. Concord Corner Store offers an expanse of high quality, local artisan crafts such as large quilts, household woodworks, local wines, jewelry, moroccan lamps, lace dream catchers and more. Nancy's Candy Company is a working candy factory with its own delightful storefront. Inside, you can look through the windows and watch your candy being made. Indulge in a variety of fudge, chocolates, gummies and more. The Blue Ridge Parkway runs right through Meadows of Dan and is an easy hop on or off for a beautiful drive.

GRIST MILLS

Patrick County is home to two historic grist mills. The oldest is Cockram's Mill. Built in 1885, this grist mill sits on the banks of the Dan River headwaters. The mill was also once the home of the Dan River Queen, a passenger River Boat that offered tours along the water. The Queen can still be seen today, laid to rest beside the mill. The second mill is the famous Mabry Mill, located North on the Blue Ridge Parkway. This grist mill, built in 1908, is the most photographed spot on the Parkway. In the warm months, the property offers visitors the opportunity to go inside the mill and also tour the other buildings on the property to learn

about the skills and trades of the time. There is also a restaurant and gift shop on the property. In the Winter months, the grounds are still open to visitors without tours or restaurant hours.

PATRICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

In the museum of the Patrick County Historical Society, visitors can learn all about the history of Patrick County. This museum houses many interesting exhibits like a rare three-seat horse-drawn buggy called a "drummers hack", an original moonshine still owned by a Patrick County moonshiner, historical artifacts, vintage memorabilia and genealogical research assistance. Talk to a historian about where you've been and they can tell you where to go next!

HOLLOW HISTORY CENTER

Make an appointment at the Hollow History Center and be treated to a walk through the history of the Patrick County "Hollow" in Ararat at no charge. On site you will find exhibits such as the Riley Puckett Cabin, the Library Cabin, a Log Tobacco Barn with farm equipment and a section of the Mount Airy and Eastern, or "Dinky," Railroad. You will also find a collection of local history, photos and genealogy. Bring your lunch to enjoy the picnic shelter on site.

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