

PLATEAU

August / September 2020

MOUNTAIN LIFE IN HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS NORTH CAROLINA

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from the editor



The Garden

This spring, I helped my mother plant her garden. At first, we planned to create something small and manageable. We built raised beds in the back courtyard, where she would feel safe from the elements. As the implications of COVID-19 continued to reveal themselves, we decided to plant in the more expansive garden near the barn.

The garden near the barn has been a work in progress for over ten years. My father welded the outside fence on a foundation three railroad ties deep, stacked and buried, stopping rabbits and coyotes from digging inside. It is more prone to undesirable vegetation, as years of working and composting the soil have made it fertile and hospitable. We worked for weeks tilling the ground, laying soaker hoses and planting. We put down ground cover to prevent wild flora in the beds and pulled the weeds on the gravel trail to make for a clean route. As the vegetables began to take off, so did the unwanted plants in the aisles and my mother's fear of stepping over an unseen snake. We decided to clear the entire walkway, move the gravel and create a square paver passage. It was hard work, but in the end, it was necessary work to create a long-term solution. My mother can now stroll the weed-free path of her garden, inspecting rows of beans and squash with little fear of not seeing a hidden snake.

When I thought our path clearing days were through, a series of summer storms stirred up rattlesnakes, bullsnakes, and coachwhips- creating what we would later refer to as "snake week." Concrete paths connect many of the areas around my mother's house. Because we don't walk

on the native grass and plants outside of these areas, we tend to let them be, but it became clear that the weed pulling project had expanded. I extended my stay and spent mornings and evenings with a shovel removing any intimidating overgrowth for the next month. The truth is that while we plant vegetables in a hundred-foot area, the real garden expands far beyond that- and we are responsible for tending that land too.

The Highlands-Cashiers Plateau is much like a garden, fertile and abundant. In this issue of Plateau Magazine, we highlight many aspects of that yield- from years of work and foundations built by many hands. We talk about booming real estate, leisurely golf and much-loved dahlias. We also talk about the implications of COVID-19, highlighting fears in areas we thought were safe. Maybe the pandemic weeds have worked their way into the mental health of a loved one; it could be that your school or favorite nonprofit is suffering from postponed fundraisers, perhaps food insecurity has revealed itself in your neighborhood. Where there are weeds, there is the capacity to fear the unseen. As we celebrate all that makes our cherished home a slice of paradise, let us not forget to be ever vigilant in slipping on our trusty work gloves. In the garden, there is always work to do.

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A robust group of volunteers help with the day-to-day functions of local food pantries.

Plant for The Plateau

Planting seeds of love against food insecurity

By KAT FORD

MANY OF US ENJOY the plateau's unique mixture of casual luxury, from dining to shopping, country clubs to hotels. The Highlands-Cashiers Plateau is the epitome of sophisticated comfort for countless residents and visitors— a delightful mountain destination. But for some of our neighbors and friends, making ends meet is a daily struggle. The dissonance between these two realities is the first point made when asked about misunderstandings in

local food insecurity by the directors of plateau food pantries—many aren't aware that it is an issue.

Feedingamerica.org describes food insecurity as a household's inability to provide enough food for every person to live an active, healthy life. Many working families experience food insecurity, especially those that are on a tight budget. One unexpected event could be enough to force a household to decide between groceries and medical bills, unplanned car maintenance or rent. Layoffs, a cut

in hours, or in tourist destinations like the plateau, slow traffic during the off-season (and the tips that come with it) are all factors for households balancing on edge. Many plateau employees work extra hours and multiple jobs during the summer to make it through the winter months. Stretching a budget can also be a factor for older community members. Even for those with housing that has been in their family for generations, it can be a struggle to afford property taxes, utilities and insurance on a fixed income.



Tower gardens are one of the ways the Highlands Food Pantry is cultivating fresh vegetables for their clients.

Based on USDA data, in 2018, 11.1 percent of households and one in seven households with children in the nation faced food insecurity. The numbers close to home are a little more staggering. Feeding America's 2019 hunger report for North Carolina states that one in seven people and one in five children face food insecurity. In their Map the Meal Gap study, which uses data from 2018, Feeding America listed 22.7 percent of Macon County children as being food insecure, 20.7 percent in Jackson County. These numbers were pre-pandemic. In 2020 Feeding America created a map of projected food insecurity due to COVID-19, stating that while 37 million people were currently battling food insecurity, the numbers could rise to as many as 54 million nationally. As of the June 3rd update, the map projects Macon County numbers reaching 20.5 percent in overall food insecurity and Jackson County reaching 20.8 percent.

On the plateau, Fishes & Loaves Food Pantry in Cashiers and the Highlands Food Pantry serve community members of Jackson and Macon counties. Directors from both pantries note that they serve households coming from Cashiers, Franklin and Highlands and that currently, it is not necessary to qualify need. "Our goal is to assist those who step forward and ask for help, not to question their need, and to treat those individuals with respect and dignity," says director of the Highlands Food Pantry, Marty Rosenfield. The Highlands Food Pantry is a program of the International Friendship Center (IFC), partnering with the Highlands Methodist Church, which provides the space for the IFC to operate the pantry's day-to-day. These operations are largely thanks to a robust group of volunteers who rotate through various job functions. Similarly, Fishes & Loaves Food Pantry partners with twelve area churches that provide volunteers each month. "We have a working board and several of them work each night the pantry is open as well as receiving, stocking, building boxes of food and cleaning up," says director of Fishes & Loaves, Larry Morris.

Currently, both food pantries are continuing to connect with local farmers and suppliers to source quality proteins, fruits and vegetables. When it comes to

immediate needs, Fishes & Loaves has demand for dried beans and rice. The Highlands Food Pantry is looking for suppliers for grass-fed beef and pork, non-antibiotic chicken and good sustainable fish. According to IFC executive director, Taylor Ashley, in addition to utilizing donated land to cultivate fruit and vegetables for food pantry clients, the ultimate goal is to "reduce food insecur-

ity by increasing financial security, by providing a bilingual (English and Spanish) professional development service to the unemployed and underemployed members of our community."

These two food pantries are not the only organizations assisting individuals in need. The Highlands Emergency Council, a nonprofit ran entirely by volunteers, has a long history of supporting

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BUZZ

conservation

the community – not just as a food pantry but also with household supplies, clothing and utilities. Their fuel fund provides fuel oil, propane, kerosene and wood to those who apply and meet requirements. Applicants are accepted twice a year; sign-up dates are advertised in local papers. According to Mary Anne Creswell, the Highlands Emergency Council has seen a jump in families in need – helping 80 in May and nearly 200 by mid-July, some coming from as far away as Franklin. Many of these items, such as furniture, come through donations- which are always welcome.

In June, pantries encouraged the community to #PlantForThePlateau and bring harvested crops to the pantries as donations. Fresh produce from local gardens and fruit trees help increase offerings and stretch donation dollars to purchase other items. A Facebook group titled Plant for The Plateau began for like-minded community members. The group has served as a think tank for plans, like saving seeds from kitchen waste, and as



Local pantries work to feed those in need

a way for local gardeners to share tips and resources with an end goal of sharing their yield with the local food pantries.

There are plenty of ways to plant seeds of love against food insecurity for those looking to help. Each food pantry has major fundraisers that they rely on for funds. Fishes & Loaves hosts a Big O'l Mountain Country Breakfast on the first Saturday of July. The Highlands Emergency Council hosts Blue Grass in The Park each August and Food for Fuel, which supports their fuel fund, is hosted

on their behalf by the First Presbyterian Church of Highlands the first Sunday of each September. Both the Highlands Food Pantry and the Highlands Emergency Council benefit from the BBQ lunch every year after the Highlands Christmas parade. Fishes & Loaves and the Highlands Food Pantry are part of the annual Empty Bowls event held every October. Aside from fundraising events, donations and grants are essential for funding. Contributions, whether they be in time through volunteering, food or financial gifts, are beneficial to these organizations' missions. Awareness is also crucial, starting conversations, liking Facebook pages and sharing information are more helpful acts than you may think. Many things make the plateau a delightful mountain destination. The kindness of the people who choose to call this area home for a moment or a lifetime is one—May the goodness in our hearts plant seeds that yield blessings of love for generations. **■**



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Showcase

Q & A with designers from this year's Cashiers Historical Society's Designer Showhouse

By KAT FORD

THE CASHIERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S 2020 DESIGNER SHOWHOUSE KICKS OFF WITH A VIP Preview Day on August 21st and will be open through September 5th. Proceeds from this fundraising event, including a portion of McKee Properties' commission if the house sells, go directly toward the Cashiers Historical Society's operating budget and help fund educational outreach programs, historic preservation projects and upkeep of grounds. Since February, Plateau Magazine has been giving our readers a behind-the-scenes look in a three-part series that highlighted the Meyer Greeson Paullin Benson designed Mountain Cottage, one of the several residential offerings at Silver Run Reserve, that will serve as this year's showhouse. In this issue, we take a more in-depth look into design.

Silver Run Reserve's design director, Michael Fernandes, embraced a traditional mountain cottage with a modern feel, inspired by great designers and architecture over the years in Cashiers. Working with lead spec designer, June Chamberlain, who is also the kitchen's interior designer in the showhouse, the two teamed up to work with builder and development partner Ben Harris to pick everything from plumbing to paint. For those not familiar with building or renovating, it is in these beginning stages that interior design starts taking shape. According to June of June Chamberlain Interiors in Atlanta, it is critical to have a designer in the beginning stages of a project. Designers work with their clients to discuss lifestyle and envision the flow of a home. What areas will experience the most traffic? How will a client fit the

four-poster bed they have been daydreaming about in the bedroom? These are the type of minutiae that an interior designer considers and can work with builders and architects, suggesting small changes in plans before costly and timely renovations are needed later. For instance, it was during this stage in the showhouse that Michael and June suggested the master bath be enlarged to allow more gracious space for the freestanding tub.

One of the most exciting experiences when walking through a showhouse is to see how different tastes can be embraced within the same space, to see a house through the lens of several personalities. In the showhouse, the mountain modern style that highlights the beauty of Silver Run Reserve will be the muse for 14 designers. The foundation for future home-

owners and designers alike was created in the spec design work of Michael and June, whose similar love for clean and classic, light and bright, can be found in flooring, countertops and tile.

This year's Designer Showhouse will be a celebration of all things design, including DESIGN DAY on September 4th when Plateau Magazine will moderate a panel titled "Style and Stewardship." This panel will allow guests to hear from industry leaders about design inspired by the responsible development and mountain modern style that preserves the serene natural environment of properties like Silver Run Reserve. We asked a few of the designers of this year's showhouse a series of questions inspired by our panel discussion, in hopes that we might get clues as to what they have up their sleeves for us in late August.

WELL STYLED showhouse



June Chamberlain



Elly Poston



Zeb Grant

QUESTIONS

1. The Silver Run Reserve development team uses a mountain modern style to preserve the property's serene natural environment in an exciting and current way. What does mountain modern mean to you as a designer and how do you plan on incorporating this with your design aesthetic?

2. A tour of the Silver Run Reserve property immediately summons visions of activities ranging from lakeside fishing to poolside cocktails. As an interior designer, what visual cues will you use to capture that same sense of a natural luxury lifestyle inside?

3. Big windows, high ceilings and light floors create a backdrop for stunning views within the showhouse. What tips do you have for plateau homeowners looking to create a seamless transition from home to homesite?

June Chamberlain

June Chamberlain Interiors, Atlanta
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KITCHEN

1. To me, mountain modern is earthy, fresh and uncluttered. I plan to carefully place accessories, indigenous

to the region, and feature local artists. The kitchen has been thoughtfully planned out, and I intend to keep it both functional and a place you may want to sit and relax.

2. Natural luxury comes in many different forms. In the kitchen, we selected natural quartzite countertops which are both beautiful and extremely durable. The bar seating is very comfortable but stylish, and the use of natural materials such as cowhide, linen and stone pottery elevate the space.

3. Always bring the outside in. We selected green for the kitchen cabinet color to reflect the green in nature outside. Also keeping the flooring and walls a light, calm color, keeps the eye moving outside.

Elly Poston

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MUD ROOM/LAUNDRY ROOM

1. Cashiers is such a magical section of the world where you want to maximize the sweeping vistas by bringing the outdoors in. When scheming our spaces, it was fun to imagine how the palette changes throughout the seasons. There is always an abundance of greens, big blue skies and golden yellows

as we make our way into fall. We knew immediately we wanted to mix iconic block-prints like Michael Smith's Indian Flower and the Cowtan & Tout ikat for a sophisticated and fresh spin on mountain decor.

2. I wanted the space to be as multi-purpose and functional as possible. An antique chestnut table can easily convert to a potting bench, a bar for entertaining, or a makeshift desk (Which is an even more important design element to include as everyone works from home!) and the slipcovered ladderback chairs are a practical place to slip on even the muddiest of boots. The shaker style pegs system is less fussy than the traditional mudroom lockers and allows for lots of storage to throw a jacket, dog leash or wet towel from the pool. The antique bird prints were purchased on a trip to Europe and are a colorful reminder to get outside and enjoy the gorgeous natural surroundings that Silver Run provides.

3. We always begin a project by looking at both the natural surroundings and the way our clients live. Our goal is to create a space that is a true reflection of the clients who call our projects home. This home is perfect for bird watching and cocktail on the porch. We designed our spaces to take full advantage of the Cashiers lifestyle while bringing a fresh take on the traditional mountain palette.



KerryHoward

Zeb Grant

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BEDROOM

1. Originally from North Georgia and spending a lot of time in the mountains as well as the outdoors, nature and its bounty have always played a large part in my design aesthetic. For the show house I am bringing in many shades of green and lots of other beautiful colors found in nature. My paint color is Sherwin Williams Grassland, it doesn't get much more outdoorsy and I love how it changes with the day. The Villa wallpaper in the bathroom is by Cowtan & Tout, which is a grass cloth with the design of overlapping cut agate. A perfect choice for this setting and really continues the theme of bringing the outdoors in.

2. For a refined lodge feel, I started with a custom grass green velvet headboard paired with a beautiful embroidered floral fabric that acted as my main inspiration, as well as the drapery for the bedroom. I brought in a very handsome plaid with earth tones for bedding and pulled a pop of orange in for the bench fabric and pillow. Other nods to nature in the space include the collection of antique stained boxes, the tortoise shells hanging over the art and the antique gourd lamps.

3. We always are looking at new ways to bring the outdoors in on our projects, especially when it comes to mountain retreats or beach houses. The ever-popular open concept with large windows and doors leading to the exterior spaces is always a good start. Layering materials on the interior such as exposed rock, brick and paneling also help to create a beautiful transition. I also almost always use lots of upholstered pieces outside, so it truly feels like an extension of the house and not just a patio or porch with tired metal or plastic pieces.

Kerry M. Howard

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 Dillard Jones, Cashiers/Greenville
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MASTER BEDROOM

1. I would define mountain modern as a clean more modern approach to design but incorporating elements of nature that complement the surrounding region. Also, being very careful not to get so modern that the space becomes

cold and sterile. I plan on incorporating color, texture and little whimsy into my master bedroom space to help express my mountain modern approach. I'm even using a cork material on the upholstered bed to give the bed a more modern feel, I have also incorporated two modern Kelly Wearstler Chairs to help anchor the space.

2. Designing the master suite in the Cashiers Designer Showhouse is the perfect space to showcase luxury by incorporating layers of bedding. Bedding that begs you to crawl into it and take a midafternoon nap while enjoying the beautiful views out the master bedroom windows.

3. Spend the money on floor to ceiling windows. Especially when you have great views. Add architectural interest to your home with wide crown and base moldings. Keep in mind clean moldings with beveled edges give more of transitional feel.

Go with 5" to 8" width hardwood floors to expand your real estate when shopping for hardwood floors.

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WELL STYLED showhouse



Lynn Monday

Lynn Monday

Lynn Monday Home, Cashiers
www.mondayshouseofdesign.com
828.743.2094

GREAT ROOM

1. Monday's House of Design will take mountain modern to a new level, using antique furniture with contemporary tables, lighting and mirrors. With additional accessories we will add a nod to wildlife, both plants and indigenous animals.

2. Monday's House of Design has complete understanding of the lifestyle that Silver Run will bring to their homeowners, as a designer we need to take advantage of the beautiful vistas. Our room will be inviting, we will set up a tray in the great room with wine glasses and create a place to enjoy the vista and have a glass of wine with our guest.

3. Designers are there to bounce your needs and ideas to create an environment that is both your style and dream.



Cathy Rhodes

Cathy Rhodes

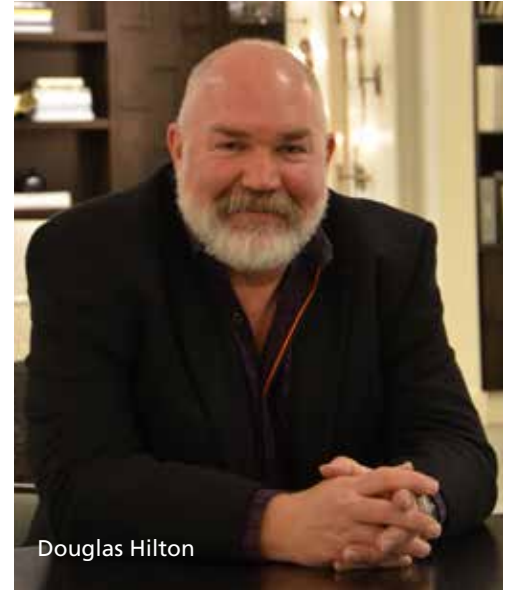
Cathy Rhodes Interiors, Atlanta
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SECOND MASTER/BATH

1. I see mountain modern design as rustic and casual, full of natural cotton and linen fabrics in the soft colors you find in nature like greens and browns and soft blues. The combination of textured fabrics paired with clean lined furniture pieces in natural wood and other organic materials helps to create the new modern mountain aesthetic.

2. When designing a home in the mountains I like to bring the outdoors in by using the colors we see in the mountains inside the rooms, such as greens, browns and white. My goal is to create a serene setting that helps the homeowner relax inside and focus on their beautiful surroundings and plan their next activity.

3. Use a soft color palette with the colors you see outside so that the interiors do not detract from the views outside. Use natural materials like wood, wicker, cotton and seagrass rugs for a casual look. I also like to use outdoor furniture pieces such as rattan chairs and sofas and repurposed barnwood tables in the interior rooms. This helps you blend the line between the outdoor spaces and the inside spaces in a house.



Douglas Hilton

Douglas Hilton

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SECOND FLOOR LANDING

1. To me modern means a breaking out of the restrictions of limiting a room to only one style or period. "Mountain modern" to me should be a comfortable environment to allow the homeowner a space of sanctuary and quiet. We come to this part of North Carolina to slow down and recharge. I designed the upstairs landing to be a blend of different cultures, periods and styles. Taken as a whole it is a layering of colors and textures which are pleasing to the eye and the touch. The antiques in the room provide a sense of continuity. The textiles are based on Arabic, Eastern European and Celtic patterns that are centuries old. To bring balance to the room – art is modern. Signs of life changes from dancing in the ruins, to flashes of the past, to glimpses of fantasy and ending in the expectation of new life. The sculpture calls out to be touched - we learn so much from our fingertips.

2. Today's homeowner is looking for options – Silver Run Reserve provides a huge number of ways to spend your time. To be social, to be energetic, but also it allows us the right to be quiet. My space is designed to remind you of that right. A space to curl up with a good book, listen to music, play a musical instrument or bridge/solitaire on your iPad.



Ann Sherrill

3. Keep your drapery treatments simple. Let them frame the window and the view. Keep trims and rods to a minimum. The classic Arabic pattern I have used in the room is based on a garden design. It has the border printed into it so that no trim is necessary. While the pattern is strong it is also soothing.

Ann Sherrill

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FRONT PORCH

1. Mountain modern indicates to me a rather simple, clean, no unnecessary frills look...casual and inviting, yet sophisticated at the same time. It should be a place you can relax and unwind and enjoy the beauty of the mountains that surround you.

2. My area of the house is the small front porch from which you enter the house. I was asked to make it a very welcoming first experience with the charming house inside. A porch swing says "welcome" to me, so of course there will be one!

3. Take full advantage of your beautiful surroundings. Bring the outside in. Place the house on your lot so that when you look out each window, you feel thankful you chose the mountains of North Carolina to spend your leisure time.



Douglas Weiss

Douglas Weiss

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BEDROOM

1. Mountain modern to me refers to a lifestyle, a chosen way to live in your environment. It suggests a nature driven aesthetic that

is warm and welcoming with a fresh, youthful perspective. I hope that a visitor to my home office/guest bedroom will feel instantly engaged in the narrative of this multi-purpose space as well as the dynamics of the furniture, fabrics and art.

2. From its conception, the Silver Run community showcases mountain luxury – sweeping landscapes, picturesque views, serene waterways – all of which are sure to influence design choices. Interior design is not literal; rather it interprets both our environment and the desired activities.

3. In this beautiful mountain community, it's important that interior spaces reflect the environment in which they reside. I like to start with a color palette that to a certain degree mirrors its surroundings but that also reveals the personality of the residents. Antiques with their historic roots feel at home with nature's history, while modern art suggests our desire to make our own personal footprint on the property. Fabrics can display colors, textures and patterns that are based in nature's design but also elevate inspiration to new heights. ■

As an organization committed to the community, CHS continues to monitor COVID-19 on a daily basis. Strict health and safety measures are available on the CHS website. In anticipation of the Governor's next announcement on our state's reopening plans, CHS plans to release an update on July 20 regarding further changes to the Showhouse and its myriad of events.



A room with a view... towards versatility. This mood board from Douglas Weiss shows his plans to create a multifunctional space.



Douglas Weiss Interiors