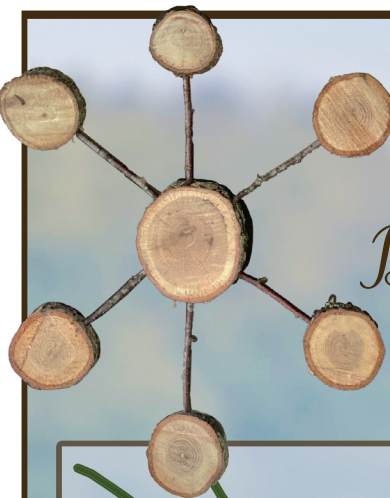
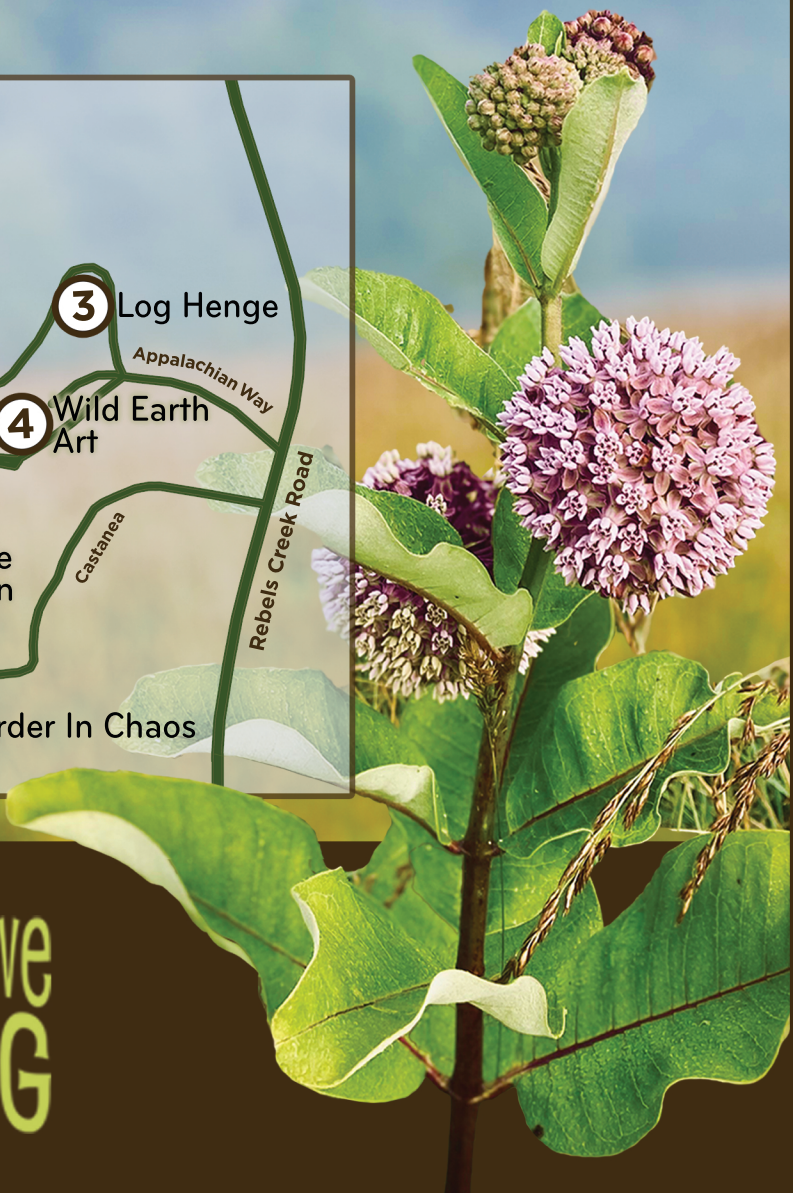




LEAVING BEAUTY IN OUR WAKE

Beautification & Art Sites



11TH ANNUAL HIGH COVE
GATHERING

1. Order in Chaos

205 Castanea Street, Driveway at Matt and Sue's house

Project Lead: Sue Clemons

From the first time Matt and I walked up Castanea Street with Olga Ronay, I have considered it one of the prettiest little mountain roads I know of. After building the house, we put up a beautiful standard wavy little Rhododendron blind (so popular in the mountains) to hide the car to some degree. The hope was to keep the natural beauty of the road as intact as possible.

Then came Helene! The Rhodie blind was crushed! After months of work trying to put the area around our property and Castanea back into some sense of order, I decided to rebuild the blind. This time, however, the building

of the blind served a two-fold purpose. One was to hide the car, and one was to help me calm my mind after the storm by putting some order back into my life. In dismantling the remnants of the old Rhodie blind there was the battle with all the screws we had used in the original construction. This time I decided that there would be no screws, just hemp lashing. I knew that the beautiful little Rhodie blind was not right anymore. I would build a stick blind. Uneven, harsh, yet strong and purposeful.

Order in Chaos. A multi-pieced part of the new Castanea, that fits in with the new theme Mother Nature has given us.

It is good.

2. And Life Goes On

38 Stonewall Lane, Ron and Jane's front garden

Project Leads: Ron and Jane Greene

Early on September 27, 2024, as Helene blew through, Tweedledum, our red oak, surrendered to a particularly strong gust. A piece of us fell with him. You see, trees are a big part of why Ron and I are here. Those of note have names and the circumference of each tree on our lot has been measured almost every spring equinox for 14 years.

A few days later, it was Ron who said, "Wouldn't it be cool to have a totem carved from Tweedledum's trunk?" I added, "And it would be especially cool if we could find a chainsaw artist to create it."

(Coming Soon)

Serendipity led us to Brian Carter. Not only is he a magician with a chainsaw, but having lost a close friend and patron in Swannanoa to Helene, he brings that felt understanding to our project.

Together we picked the animals to be represented in our totem, all having special meaning for us and our lives here at High Cove. We've titled the piece "And life goes on". The totem will stand in our front garden, a daily reminder that with equanimity, Mother Nature moves ever forward and adapts.

So, hopefully, do we.

3. Log Henge

The bottom of Appalachian Way along the creek bed

Project Leads: Rebecca Blanco and Deb Weir

Log Henge was created to bring order to the chaos left by Hurricane Helene in this prominent creekside area. The idea emerged from the EarthArt Group discussions, starting as a sketch in early 2025 and taking shape in May. Inspired by online images of log art, we've worked on it most Sunday mornings—our "church" in nature. Though mainly built by us—Deb and Rebecca—we've had help from others along the way. Heavy chainsaw work was completed by two men from New Generation Tree Service as well as neighbors, Kevin Silva and Marc Poland,

who were able to cut large felled trees into the log sections.

The space features wattle-style fencing, flowing log forms, a stone fire pit, a sitting circle, and a "teepee" hiding a massive root ball. Still to come: a welcoming entrance modeled after Sue's fence, wood sculptures, and more pathways. This ongoing project is both a creative meditation and a way to grieve the loss of our forest together.

Neighbor, Matt Clemmons, named the space Log Henge.

4. Wild Earth Art

Firefly Lodge, 75 Appalachian Way

Project Lead: Gabriela Masala

Hurricane Helene inspired immense creativity in so many of us. All the Wild Earth Art pieces around the lodge were made from debris left in the aftermath of the storm. Amidst all the disarray of branches, fallen trees and destruction, I began to clean and clear up the chaos. Playing with the process of "allow" (an emerging direction) and "join" into bundles and families of sticks and branches, structures began to take shape. A new order arose and a sacred, creative feeling guided me to weave new life and leave beauty in the wake of the destruction.

There are many pieces around the lodge as well as offerings along the creekside below the Lodge. All of them were created

below the Lodge. All of them were created in 'art as meditation mode.' They are humble and whimsical, some are human sized nests, to enter and lay on the Earth. Most of them were made with only my hands, with no hardware included. Conversely, Solomon loves tools and you'll also see many pieces created by him around the Lodge and the Pavilion area. Solomon and myself, along with Deb Weir created new rhododendron railings that lead to the front porch of Firefly Lodge. I have always loved creating with Earthen elements—shells, sticks, stones and organic found objects.

I find the wild world so beautiful.

5. Miyawaki Forest

370 Appalachian Way, Jessica's lawn
Project Lead: Jessica Lynn

One of the things I love is that living at my house is like living in a treehouse. Unfortunately, Hurricane Helene took out many trees on my lot and the area on the lower north side was particularly hard hit. Luckily, I had already been in touch with Chardin Detrich at Preservation Arborists in Asheville, who came out in the Spring and suggested planting a Miyawaki forest.

Miyawaki forests were developed by a Japanese botanist and plant ecologist, Akira Miyawaki. It is a method that involves using native trees and shrub seedlings that are planted densely with some soil improvement to encourage growth. The idea is to mimic the way a forest would naturally regenerate, but at an accelerated pace. Trees and shrubs can grow up to 10x faster because they are competing for light and nutrients.

As in the existing forest, over time some of the trees and shrub saplings will not make it, but the ones that survive will be stronger. It has been shown that these forests support an increase in biodiversity, even compared to the surrounding forest, and become self-maintaining after 2-3 years.

You'll find the Miyawaki forest inside the deer fencing in 2 places on the lower north side of my house. When first planted in April, everything just looked like little brown sticks. You can see the growth is already happening, although trees and shrubs are still small (except for what was already inside the fence line.) I'm excited to watch the progress!

Note that the path to view the two sites is from Talking Leaves. To see them up close you'll be walking on slightly sloped uneven ground. Wear appropriate shoes and bring a walking stick if needed.

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