



# Feed Fannin News

One Community, One Spirit

Feed Fannin, Inc.

[www.feedfannin.org](http://www.feedfannin.org)

706-946-1001

Spring 2025

## Impact100 Fannin Drives Feed Fannin Into New Age

Impact100 of Fannin County, an organization of women who pool their money to help nonprofits in our county, awarded Feed Fannin a \$30,000 grant this past fall.

Feed Fannin applied for the grant to purchase a dedicated vehicle with which to transport fresh produce, and other food products from our farm and other local providers to the Food Pantry, Snack in a Backpack, the Good Samaritans' Community Thanksgiving Dinner, and other programs that feed the hungry in Fannin County.

For the past 10 years, the majority of Feed Fannin's food products and garden supplies have been transported in a volunteer's personal vehicle, a Jeep that is now 25 years old. This grant will ensure that Feed Fannin can continue to provide food to those in need of food assistance in our community.



***Kathy Beck in the driver's seat, surrounded by other volunteers***

In April, Feed Fannin purchased a Jeep Grand Cherokee preowned by just one owner that had driven it less than 20,000 miles. Many thanks to Board Member Andy Livingston and Treasurer Peggy Caldwell for handling the search for and acquisition of the vehicle. And a huge, heartfelt thank-you to Impact100 of Fannin County's Board of Directors and all 160 members! ❀

## Feed Fannin's Contributions to Snack in a Backpack Honored



***Debby Beck (l), executive director of Snack in a Backpack, presents Feed Fannin Chair Ron Ciochon and Vice Chairs Priscilla Cashman and Kathy Beck with the evening's top award***

On March 4, Snack in a Backpack honored Feed Fannin as a Community Champion during its annual Champions for Children celebration, a special evening celebrating the organizations and partnerships who work together to feed children in our community.

Noting that Feed Fannin plays "a vital role in the fight against hunger," Snack's Executive Director Debby Beck (left) commended the organization for its role as a key partner in Snack's Summer Meals program.

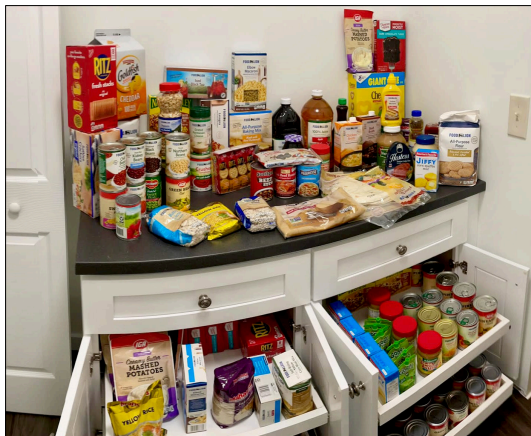
Feed Fannin Vice Chair for Farm, Facilities and Ag Education Kathy Beck told those assembled at the event that, during the eight weeks of the program each summer over the last three years, Feed Fannin has supplied more than 16,250 lbs. of produce to local families with children through Snack in a Backpack.

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# Pantry of New Habitat House Stocked by Feed Fannin

Feed Fannin took on a new initiative this spring, solidly stocking the pantry of a new house in McCaysville built by Habitat for Humanity for a young family in need.

The Kattkes have three children under 9. They had been living in a 2-bedroom townhouse, with the children sharing the bedrooms, and the parents sleeping in the living room. Habitat gave them the opportunity to buy their first home. They were very active in the building of the house, and on April 21, they finally got to move in.



Thanks to Feed Fannin volunteers Carol and Carlos Martel for laying the groundwork for our organization to provide staple goods for the Kattke's pantry. Once it was agreed what

our role would be, Feed Fannin Vice Chair for Food Pantry and Community Outreach Priscilla Cashman, Treasurer Peggy Caldwell and Board Member Andy Livingston selected previously purchased food at the Family Connection Food Pantry and went shopping at

Food Lion for other items (reportedly filling two "huge" carts full). They stocked the Kattke's pantry and fridge with 150 lbs. of goods, including a spiral-cut ham and fresh produce, and presented the family with a \$300 Food Lion gift card that they can use to purchase anything else they need.



"It was a really joyful experience," Priscilla said of the home's dedication ceremony. She noted that Habitat for Humanity of Fannin and Gilmer Counties Executive Director Anita Hardy "was blown away" by the stocked pantry and "incredibly grateful" to Feed Fannin, as were the Kattkes.

"It was a very nice and very emotional event for that nice young family," agreed Carol. "I don't think there were any dry eyes after the presentation."

The local Habitat group will turn next to building a house in Gilmer County but hopes to build again in Fannin County after that. ❀

## Holiday Meals Campaign Feeds Thousands

Feed Fannin's very successful Holiday Meals Campaign last fall raised funds that enabled us to greatly expand our community outreach efforts and supply the tables of local food-insecure families at Thanksgiving, Christmas and, for the first time, Easter.

An anonymous donor matched all donations made over a two-month period up to \$20,000, and Feed Fannin supporters generously chipped in another \$20,000 on top of that.

As a result, Feed Fannin purchased 1,500 spiral-cut hams, 101 one-pound canned hams and a variety of staple goods for Family Connection Food Pantry clients to enjoy during the winter holidays (retail value about \$9,100) and 600 additional spiral-cut hams for pantry clients at Easter.

We also contributed turkeys, turkey breasts and fresh sweet potatoes with a retail value of about \$1,500 to the Good Samaritans' Thanksgiving Open Table event; \$1,600 worth of spiral-cut hams and turkeys to First Fruits of Fannin, which serves hot meals to those in need; and 160 pounds of hams, turkey breasts, stuffing mix, green beans, corn, cranberry sauce, instant mashed potatoes, corn muffin mix and brownie mix to the North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network.



**Chair Ron Ciochon**

***Holiday Meals Campaign continued on p. 4***



# Congratulations to our 2025 Scholarship Winners!

Feed Fannin is pleased to have awarded four \$1,000 scholarships to very deserving students this year. Three recipients are Fannin County High School (FCHS) seniors, and one is from Copper Basin High School (CBHS). All awardees have strong academic records, have shown leadership in their school activities, and have served as committed volunteers in their communities. Their further education and future career plans align with Feed Fannin's mission relating to food supply and providing support for people suffering with food insecurity.

When Feed Fannin started offering scholarships, the focus was to support students pursuing degrees related directly to agriculture. That was later expanded to include students planning to pursue degrees in education. Since then, the criteria have been expanded again to include environmental sciences, nutrition and food sciences, horticulture, agri-business, and veterinary medicine — areas tied closely to the production, use and management of agricultural products and the issues that impact their production and consumption.

This year's recipients from FCHS are:

- **Abigail McFarland**, who intends to pursue a degree in Veterinary Medicine (large animal) at North Georgia Tech and then Animal Science/Pre-Vet at Berry College;
- **Aidyn Patterson**, who plans to study Nursing with an emphasis in Nutrition at the University of North Georgia; and
- **Leighla Isabella Patton**, who intends to major in Education/Spanish at Berry College.

From CBHS, **Josie Emmaline Adams** was awarded a Feed Fannin Scholarship to help her pursue a degree in Elementary Education at Tennessee Wesleyan University.



**Martel with Adams**



**Feed Fannin Treasurer  
Peggy Caldwell (l) with  
Patton (c) and McFarland**

students' applications, and selection of four outstanding young people from our area schools to further their educations consistent with Feed Fannin's efforts to better lives by providing nutritious food to people in need. ❀

Additional support to young people in our communities is provided through our 2025 grants (\$500 each) to support gardens in Fannin's public schools. To date, Blue Ridge Elementary, East Fannin Elementary and West Fannin Elementary have applied and been approved for this year's grants.

We also provided \$1,600 to send four students from Fannin County to 4-H Summer Camp this summer. Polk County will also be requesting funds soon for its 4-H Summer Camp.

Thank you to our Feed Fannin financial supporters who make these awards possible, and to this year's Education Committee members: Sue Blakeman, Peggy Caldwell, Jim Hatten, Jane Kimzey, Kelly Maniscalco, Carlos and Carol Martel, and Diane Tortis. We are grateful for their participation and careful review of the



**Caldwell (r) with  
Patterson**

By Carol and Carlos Martel, Co-Chairs  
Feed Fannin Education Committee

# Spring Planting Done, Another Growing Season Underway

## Farm/Garden Report

By Kathy Beck, Farm/Facilities Manager  
and Vice Chair of Agricultural Education

As the Spring gardening season arrives and most planting is complete, I acknowledge a sense of relief and gratitude for all that helped to arrive at this point. Lately, I have thoughtfully reflected on all the volunteer hours and people who have come and gone over the past 15 years and how each contributed to the success of Feed Fannin.

The word that keeps coming to my mind is tapestry. Figuratively we use tapestry to mean “something that is made up of lots of different intertwined parts.” Each volunteer has woven their thread or left their mark weaving relationships and collaborations to help build the Feed Fannin brand.

We are an all-volunteer organization, so we do not make a living from our work, nor is it even a profession, but more of a calling. We are on mission to create connections and link local needs and opportunities between people and common goals and projects that collectively make a positive impact. Our volunteers have worked hard to earn trust and support and give back to the community, and I am in awe each day of what we have been able to accomplish through the generosity of those we serve.



## ***Holiday Meals Campaign continued***

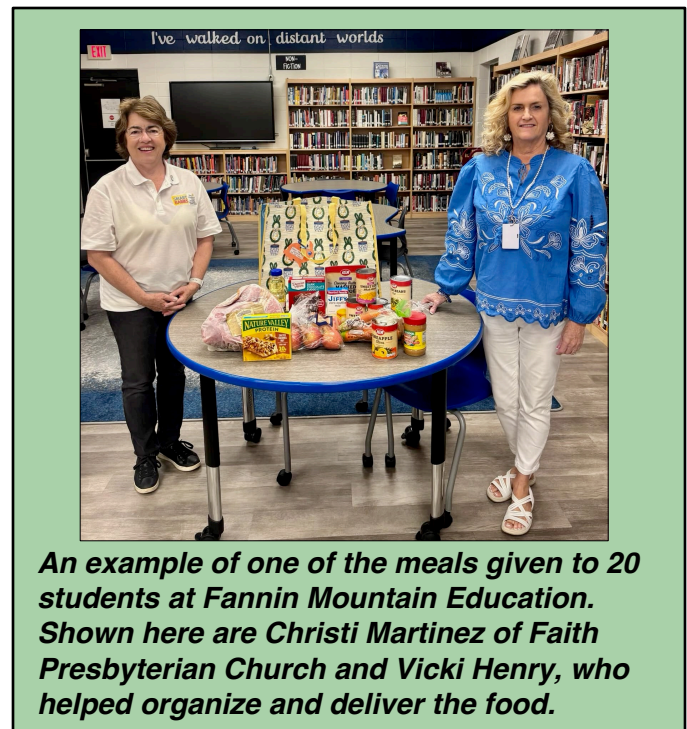
Twenty students in need at Fannin Mountain Education received spiral-cut hams and staple goods valued around \$900.

Feed Fannin delivered more than \$500 worth of hams, turkey breasts, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce and brownie mix during the winter holidays to Eema's kitchen, which serves hot meals weekly at St. Anthony's Catholic Church and delivers meals to the Senior Center twice a month.

## **What's New at the Farm this Spring?**

- **Lease Extended** — Gratitude is expressed to the Fannin County School Board, which provides the property on which the Feed Fannin farm and home base are located. The School Board recently extended a lease giving Feed Fannin the option to lease the property on which our farm is located for up to six more years. We are so blessed!
- **Roof Restoration Complete** — Huge thanks to the Steve Stacy Roofing family, staff and workers for their contribution to the Feed Fannin Roof Restoration on the farmhouse, carport and shed (see p.4). We are overwhelmed by their generosity!

***Continued on. p. 5***



***An example of one of the meals given to 20 students at Fannin Mountain Education. Shown here are Christi Martinez of Faith Presbyterian Church and Vicki Henry, who helped organize and deliver the food.***

We donated over \$600 of canned hams to the Senior Ministry at Faith Presbyterian Church using money from the Holiday Meals Campaign, and low-income disabled seniors living at North Court Apartments who are Food Pantry clients received \$25 Walmart gift cards in November and December. ❀



### ***Farm/Garden Report continued***

- **New Raised Beds Filled** — six new galvanized beds were added to the garden. Mountain Men Excavating and Tree Services LLC crew took time from their busy schedule to spend a Friday afternoon donating their time and labor to work in the garden filling the raised beds with soil. We appreciate their service!
- **Additional Gate Added** — An additional gate was added to the garden fence to make it easier to dispose of weeds. Why didn't we think of this sooner?
- **New Boxes and Bees** — Thanks to Doc's Healing Hives owners Tim and Lisa Doherty for donating and installing hives and two new bee boxes and becoming a regular addition to our Monday crew of volunteers.
- **Group Helps Prep the Garden for Planting** — Jeff Milway from North Georgia Mission Lodge and 12 youth and adults from Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church in Duluth visited

the farm for a workday helping with chores and prepping the garden for planting while they were visiting Blue Ridge. What a great group of workers!

- **Gratitude for Volunteers Past and Present Ready to Garden** — Volunteers from the past who haven't worked in a few years are ready to garden again and some first-time gardeners are ready to learn, and the "small but mighty" group of regular volunteers from past years have shown up again to help get the planting done and the growing season underway. I am so thankful for all the help!
- **Equipment Ready for Action** — Our Kubota riding mower and Honda push mower were serviced and new belts added. We have a group of groundskeepers at the farm who mow and string trim and do chores such as oil changes on equipment. When there is more skill needed, Chris Walden is the mechanic that is called. Thanks, Chris for always doing a fantastic job of keeping our mowers and tractor repaired when needed.

*Continued on. p. 6*

## **Steve Stacy Roofing Gifts Roof Restoration Project**

Feed Fannin is humbled and gratified by the generosity of Steve Stacy Roofing. When Farm and Facilities Manager Kathy Beck contacted this company and others for estimates on the cost of restoring the aging roof of the organization's farmhouse and carport, along with the roof on the shed beside Ada Street, Stacy stated he was impressed with the work Feed Fannin does and offered to do the job for free!

The farmhouse provides a home base and identity for Feed Fannin to be able to address food insecurity. Maintaining our home property is crucial to our operation and mission.

The work was done in late April, and "the Steve Stacy Roofing crew did a first-class job," Kathy reported. "What an incredibly generous offer and blessing to have the materials and labor donated for this repair!" ❀



***Kathy Beck (l) presents a certificate of appreciation to Steve Stacy and members of his staff***

## ***Farm/Garden Report continued***

- **Research Garden Prepared** — The Feed Fannin Research Garden on the Fannin County Family Connection property has been prepped and planted, thanks to volunteer Sue Blakeman.

### **2025 Ag Activities to date:**

- January 25, Feed Fannin Board of Directors attended and participated in the **Fannin County**



***Caleb and Ashlee Griggs***

**Young Farmers (FCYF) Awards Banquet** and sponsored and presented the Farm Family of the Year Award to Ashlee and Caleb Griggs and the Young Ag Professional Award to Tayelor Long.

- The **Champions for Children award** was presented to Feed Fannin on March 4 by Snack in a Backpack (covered in a separate story on p. 1).
- The week of March 17 was **Georgia Agriculture Week**, and Feed Fannin volunteers participated by reading and speaking to students at local elementary schools to promote agriculture.
- **Blessing of the Farms** was held at Mason Farms. Local FFA students and Feed Fannin's farm manager and others involved in agriculture in the community attended and a devotion was given by Pastor Chan from The Ridge Community Church. Prayers were offered for a successful growing season at the Feed Fannin Farm as well as others in the area.
- March 21, Feed Fannin was represented at the **Women in Agriculture lunch** sponsored by FCYF at Doc's Healing Hives property. It was a beautiful setting in which to network with other women who celebrate and support the importance of agriculture in our daily lives.

- On April 22, Feed Fannin sponsored and provided lunch for a **class at the Fannin County Agriculture Facility** taught by UGA Extension Agent Anna Bass. The event was a collaboration with FCYF, Feed Fannin and UGA Extension, and the class was on Troubleshooting Diseases on Ornamentals.
- May 6 and May 15, several Feed Fannin Garden volunteers and FCYF members participated in a **field day at 6 Ponds Farm**, helping elementary school students realize the importance of agriculture through crafts and activities, followed up with roasting hot dogs for lunch. Thanks to Dr. Gilda Lyons for providing the beautiful location and hosting the students.



What a busy Spring we've had! We are praying for a bountiful growing season and harvest. If you have never planted a garden, I hope this summer you decide to give it a try. I would suggest starting with a Potager or French Kitchen Garden, a small and contained garden or raised bed planted with herbs or vegetables. Make sure it has at least 6 hours of sunlight.

If you would like to see first-hand how to plant a garden or raised bed, check out the Feed Fannin Farm and garden located at 762 Ada Street in Blue Ridge. On most Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 9 am, you will find volunteers working in the garden or tending their raised bed in the allotment garden. Come learn and give us a hand working in the garden as we grow produce for distribution at the Family Connection Food Pantry.

Seize the opportunity to join a mission that matters and make a difference while enjoying fellowship and communing with nature on this beautiful property we have been entrusted to call our Feed Fannin Farm and home. 🌸



# Farewell to Two Special People to Feed Fannin

## Sue B. Campbell, 1938-2025

In the beginning, there was Sue....

From the first Feed Fannin meeting in February 2009 — there was Sue Campbell. Sue was one of the first and most knowledgeable and dedicated members Feed Fannin ever had — and she was with us from the start.



Many remember Sue's gardening skills, her willingness to work and share, her humor and love of nature and Mother Earth.

Who can forget her Stone Soup Tales? Yes, we followed her recipe (stone and all) and partied with the delicious results.

In the beginning, we farmed the Davenport Lumber Yard side lot. Being it was once a road bed, we cultivated "stone and gravel." That year featured also one of Georgia's famous summer droughts. How well we recall the stories of the Feed Fannin irrigation team of Sue and Del Woods. There was a foot-wide stream down an embankment. Del would climb down the hill with Sue's milk jug, fill it and return it to Sue! Next time you are at the farm house notice the

painting (done by Joan Dickenson) of Sue rationing out the precious water to each seedling.

As a Master Gardener, Sue had many projects. She loved her heirloom



plants and teaching seed saving classes. She also loved "weeds" and could tell you all about them, what they were used for, and why to shun some and cherish others.

You could always find the "Hat Lady" at the Farmer's Market selling plants, answering questions and showing her buttons. All of this while bearing several health issues.

Sue Campbell's love of God's world, the environment, and Feed Fannin will always keep her close to our hearts. You are loved, Sue. ❀

— **Barbara Ferer, Founder of Feed Fannin**

## Lynda Chambers, 1955-2025

Lynda and Glenn Chambers have been dedicated and generous volunteers and donors of Feed Fannin and Fannin County Family Connection (FCFC) for many years. Lynda and Glenn volunteered every Tuesday at the Food Pantry, a tradition that Glenn continues.



On March 28, Lynda passed away. To honor Lynda, the other members of the Tuesday Morning Crew from the pantry planted a Yoshino Cherry tree in Lynda's memory at FCFC. It

will be a beautiful blossoming tree in the Spring. Cherry trees

were one of Lynda's favorites. The crew also donated \$440 to Feed Fannin in Lynda's honor.

The Tuesday Morning Crew is made up of Ron Ciochon, Priscilla Cashman, Peggy



*Lynda Chambers continued on p. 8*

### ***Lynda Chambers continued***

Caldwell, Andy Livingston, Donna Crews, Grace Randolph, Cindy Hunt, Susan Scullo and Gail DuFresne.

The Chambers family was able to place a plaque honoring Lynda at FCFC on May 4. ✿

### ***Snack in a Backpack Award continued***

This summer's eight-week program begins June 4, and Feed Fannin will be providing fresh produce for approximately 200 families (up from 175 last year). ✿



## **Please Make a Gift to Feed Fannin Today**

Your generosity during the past few challenging years made it possible for our all-volunteer organization to help more people in more ways than ever before. Feed Fannin is 100% funded through private donations.

To continue our work, we ask that you again give generously. We are expanding our outreach to help feed more people as we have done in new and innovative ways since 2021 by partnering with service and faith-based organizations to help distribute food we grow and food we purchase to those in need. We appreciate your support.

You may use the form on the right to make your donation or go online at [feedfannin.org/donate](http://feedfannin.org/donate).

### **Yes, I Want to Help!**

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to receive information about Feed Fannin by email? Y\_\_\_\_ N\_\_\_\_

Amount of gift donation: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Need a tax receipt? Y\_\_\_\_ N\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:  
Feed Fannin, Inc.

Mail form and donation to:

Feed Fannin  
PO Box 1085  
Blue Ridge, GA 30513

**Your gift is greatly appreciated!**



## **Stay in Touch!**

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### **Our Mission**

Working together to educate and encourage our community towards self-sufficiency while providing food for those in need.