

LEARN ABOUT LIFE IN **HIGHLAND COUNTY**

With the right resources and support from the surrounding community, these creative entrepreneurs are shaping the future of Highland County.

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All images courtesy of local Highland County Photographers.



MELISSA MOYERS & ERICA WHITELAW
FOUNDERS, BLUE GRASS VALLEY MUSIC FEST

Two friends, Melissa and Erica, have each spent many summer weekends traveling to music festivals. A few years ago they decided Highland County, with plenty of open space and surrounding scenic beauty, was ready for a festival of its own. In 2014 they started the Blue Grass Valley Music Fest. "It is a celebration of our community, and there is definitely something for everyone," says Melissa.



KIRK BILLINGSLEY
OWNER, BIG FISH CIDER CO.

Highland County native Kirk Billingsley grew up making fresh cider with his father. Last year, he took his hobby a step further when he opened Big Fish Cider Co., a craft cidery located in a colorfully restored building in Monterey. "As a lifelong resident I have always wanted to start a business that would fit in with the character of Highland," Kirk says.



DAVID COCKERHAM
OWNER, MIRRORSLAP PHOTOGRAPHY

As a wedding, portrait, and landscape photographer, David found plenty of work opportunities while living in Richmond, Va. But during his busy city life, he was always longing to be in a more peaceful place. A few years ago he decided it was time to make a move to the mountains, where he has found even more inspiration. "Highland is the perfect place to be a photographer."



TONY HUFFMAN
CO-FOUNDER, APPROVED COLLEGES

As the cofounder of Approved Colleges, a company that helps adults looking to advance their education find the right online courses and degrees, Tony runs a business that allows him to telecommute. Seeking big mountains and solitude, he found just what he was looking for in Highland County — cool temperatures, a small community and plenty of open space.



BRITTANY WHITELAW
OWNER, THRIVE 365 FARM

Thrive 365 Farm is a small commercial operation selling locally grown produce and nursery plants. At the farm Brittany mainly grows no-spray greens and herbs, and the community in Highland has certainly been appreciative. Her greens are also being purchased by the Omni Homestead Resort in nearby Hot Springs, which means her veggies are being eaten by the many guests that visit the world-renowned destination.



RONNIE MOYERS
OWNER, LAUREL FORK SAPSUCKERS

Ronnie and his wife, Sandy, run Laurel Fork Sapsuckers, the county's highest commercial sugar camp, set at an elevation of approximately 4,000 feet on farmland that's been in Ronnie's family for 100 years. He grew up making syrup with his parents, and now, using time-honored methods, he and Sandy are sharing the practice with their daughters and extended family members.

BUSINESS RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AT **THE HIGHLAND CENTER**



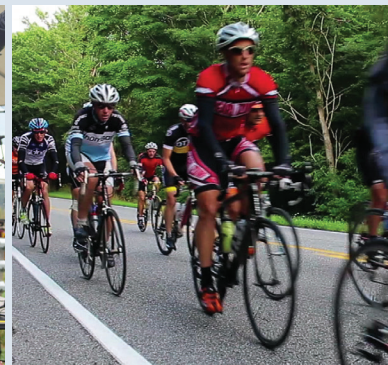
The Highland Center is a place where ideas manifest through action; where community members congregate and spend time together; and where arts and culture can be explored and celebrated. Located in the former Highland Elementary School building, the center is a non-profit community hub that offers Highland County residents a range of resources to advance business, agriculture and the arts.

The Center just underwent a 13-month, \$3-million-dollar renovation and now features a new retreat and conference space, as well as a remodeled business incubator with fiber optic Internet. To support Highland's agricultural and food-based business community, the center has two USDA-inspected commercial kitchens, a walk-in freezer and refrigerator and dry-goods storage. In addition to hosting the local farmers' market, the center houses tenants that include a mix of small businesses, individual artists and non-profit organizations.



THE HIGHLAND CENTER ACCELERATES THE
SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL BUSINESSES
AND NON-PROFITS THROUGH SUPPORT SERVICES,
RESOURCES, AFFORDABLE SPACE
AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES.

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THE BEAUTY OF **HIGHLAND COUNTY**



When you arrive in Highland County, the first thing you notice is the stunning beauty. At an average elevation of nearly 3,000 feet, Highland is located within the scenic Allegheny Mountains of western Virginia. Perfect for those seeking rural solitude and a refreshing sense of freedom, this remote region is characterized by endless vistas, unspoiled forests, pristine waterways and open farmland.

Beyond the natural wonders, Highland holds a tight-knit community full of friendly faces, rooted in traditional mountain culture but open to new ideas that foster sustainability. Opportunities are wide open in an area that embraces the arts, values locally grown food and supports local business. Highland is a place to pursue your passion, make a mark and know that a neighbor will be ready and willing to lend a hand. Let us introduce you to some local residents changing our landscape for the better.



CONSIDERING AN ELEVATED LIFESTYLE?
MEET SOME OF YOUR FUTURE FRIENDS
AND NEIGHBORS >>