

## Cataloochee Valley: Rugged home to history and wildlife

### These Hills...

By John M. Climer  
Editor in Chief

Cataloochee Valley, located nearby in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, offers visitors a host of opportunities—fishing, camping, hiking, and horseback riding. Additionally, Cataloochee is an extremely popular and interesting place to visit because of its most famous resident—elk.

Additionally, visitors have the opportunity to view historic buildings that have been preserved throughout the valley. These buildings range from two churches, to school to homesteads, all of which were built by the roughly 1200 people that lived in the valley in the early 1900s.

Cataloochee is also a place where visitors are surrounded by some of the most rugged mountains in the Southeast, with 6000-foot peaks nestling in the valley floor.

Cataloochee also offers hikers the notoriously popular seven mile loop, the Boogerman Trail, in addition to many other trails which lace the

valley. If camping is your forte, Cataloochee has 27 primitive campsites, but all sites must be reserved in advance and are only open seasonally from mid-March to Oct.

The most popular attraction in the valley came about in the winter of 2001, when 25 elk were experimentally released into the area. In 2002, the Park Service introduced an additional 27 elk to the area. All animals were tagged and radio collared and then monitored as part of the Park Services environmental assessment and long-term management plan for elk reintroduction.

According to the National Park Service, elk once inhabited the southern portions of the Appalachian Mountains, but a combination of overhunting and habitat loss reduced their numbers. It is believed that the last elk in North Carolina was killed in the late 1700's and the few remaining elk in Tennessee were killed in the mid 1800's. In addition to elk, the valley teams with other wildlife – bear, deer, turkey and wild boar all call the valley home.

The stunning geography, ample wildlife viewing opportunities and historic sites that span Cataloochee Valley make it a truly

stunning place to visit and all Brevard College students are encouraged to make the drive sometime soon. For additional information about Cataloochee Valley, go to [www.nps.gov/grsm](http://www.nps.gov/grsm) or call: 865-436-1200.



Elk, the Cataloochee Valley's most popular attraction, were reintroduced to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the winter of 2001. The elk are part of a Park Service initiative to bring the area back to its the state it was in before the animals were eliminated from overhunting and habitat loss.

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## A message from the Editor in Chief:

There is a great amount of responsibility that comes with publishing a weekly newspaper such as *The Clarion*. The content we publish each week impacts the reputation of Brevard College, especially its students. We aim to publish quality, engaging material that we feel appeals to students each and every week.

*The Clarion* is very much a learning process. While occasional mistakes are inevitable, several items printed in the previous issue, published on Nov. 19, deserve a formal apology.

First, the headline in the print edition of the obituary for Dr. Len Giffiths contained incorrect information; Dr. Griffiths was 72 at the time of his passing. This error has been corrected in the online version of the *Clarion*.

We also apologize for a serious lapse in journalistic ethics in an article on cyberbullying that appeared in our last issue. Staff writer Ashley Fortune quoted an anonymous source, and in so doing breached standards of professionalism, violated a standing confidentiality agreement, and presented an overly slanted view of the matter. Fortune commented, saying, "I want to apologize to any reader who was offended by my story."

Finally the *Clarion* retracts the story titled

"Where the white squirrels go in winter" by staff writer Caleb Welborn, which contained factual inaccuracies and fabricated information. According to Welborn, the article was meant as a practical joke to the senior staff of the *Clarion*. Upon initially fact-checking, the article contained enough credible information to seem truthful.

Welborn responded, saying, "not only do I offer my apology to the readership of *The Clarion* for violating your trust of the paper, but also to *The Clarion* staff, for compromising the integrity of the paper we all work for; to Dr. Padgett, for not taking journalism as seriously as I should have; and to the White Squirrel Research Institute, for wrongly attributing false information to your organization."

As representatives of Brevard College we strive to uphold tenets of journalistic integrity. *The Clarion* staff sincerely regrets this recent lack of professionalism, and pledges to work diligently in the future to ensure *The Clarion* remains a publication Brevard College can be proud of.

John M. Climer  
Editor in Chief

### Letters Policy

*The Clarion* welcomes letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit letters for length or content. We do not publish anonymous letters or those whose authorship cannot be verified. E-mail: [clarion@brevard.edu](mailto:clarion@brevard.edu).