

# Cashiers Outside

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS  
Junior Appalachian Musicians member Isabelle Orr (left) a fourth grade student at Blue Ridge School, practices on her fiddle this past spring. JAM member Liberty Crawford (above), also a fourth grade student at Blue Ridge School, practices on his banjo during the same session. Registration is now open for Blue Ridge students who want to participate in this school year's JAM classes, which start Sept. 11.

## Mountain Youth Charities partners with JAM

From staff reports

After a very successful first year as an after-school program at Blue Ridge School, the Blue Ridge Chapter of Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAM) has entered into an agreement to continue operating as a program within the local nonprofit organization Mountain Youth Charities (MYC).

Blue Ridge JAM was started in September 2016, to enrich the students' education by introducing them to the old-time and bluegrass music and dance traditions of the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Through small group instruction, the program at Blue Ridge School provides instruction in fiddle, banjo, guitar, mandolin, bass, autoharp and dulcimer. It also includes singing, traditional

dance, games and story-telling. The program coordinator is Sarah Hall, a music instructor at the school. JAM instructors are drawn from throughout the Cashiers-Highlands plateau and its surrounding areas.

Additional guidance for the program is provided by the JAM Advisory Council. The members include Debbie Lassiter, Teri Walawender, Sarah Hall, Wanda Crisp, Jarrett Davis, Jennifer McKee, Sandi Rogers and David Wansley.

### MYC aids program

The board of directors of Mountain Youth Charities will serve as JAM's "fiscal agent" and will provide additional fundraising and program support. MYC board members include Marcia Shawler, Vicky Robson, Danie Beck, Virginia Willard and Jarrett Davis, who is liaison representative from



JAM.

"JAM is exactly the kind of program Mountain Youth Charities wishes to embrace as part of our mission to support great programs for great children," said Marcia Shawler, president of the MYC board of directors.

"We are very excited about this partnership. It will enable us to grow the program with the goal of having the capability to offer the JAM program to all children in the area," said JAM Advisory Council Chairman Lassiter.

### JAM classes start Sept. 11

Last year, approximately 30 Blue Ridge School and Early College students participated each session in the JAM program at Blue Ridge School. This year's classes will begin on Sept. 11 and registration is now open to Blue Ridge School and Early College students. Students may register at the school, or they may contact Sarah Hall, at shall@jcpsmail.org or call 828-743-2646.

Tuition per 12-week session is \$75, but no child will be turned away because he or she is unable to pay. Thanks to generous donors, JAM has money for scholarships and financial aid.

This year the program is limited to Blue Ridge students, but plans are in the works to expand it to Summit Charter School students and home-schooled students in near future.

### JAM background

Blue Ridge JAM is one of 40 affiliate chapters located in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. The first chapter was started 17 years ago to help preserve mountain culture while providing positive activities for youth.

Mountain Youth Charities (MYC) is a nonprofit 501c3 organization created to financially support programs that help southern Jackson County youth reach their full potential through positive leadership, mentoring and inspirational activities. MYC provided the initial funding to launch the Boy and Girls Club of the Plateau and recently awarded \$40,000 to the Blue Ridge School Educational Foundation.

To volunteer or donate, contact Vicky Robson at info@mountainyouthcharities.org.