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The Mercantile Times

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Welcome to Beech Mountain . . .



As the season changes from Fall to Winter, it's also time to change our thoughts. Our favorite time of the year is almost here and preparing for it is now in progress at Fred's.

With Thanksgiving behind us, a change in our weather (almost 2 inches of snow Thanksgiving morning!) the ski shop open, our shelves stocked for the holidays . . . all of us at Fred's are ready.

Come join us soon for a winter Beech Mountain experience.



Wreaths Galore . . .

Our Christmas Wreaths are ready.

Think about having us ship you a part of Beech Mountain for the holidays.

Between now and December 17, we can help

you have a little bit of Beech on your door by shipping (UPS) your way (or to a friend, customer or relative) a beautiful fraser fir Christmas Wreath.

Order online or just call us at 828-387-4838 from 7:30 a.m. til 10 p.m. daily.

Start a tradition and let Fred's be a part of it.

What's Up For This Winter?

"Who knows" is what some folks will probably say, but thanks to the woolly worm and our very special weatherman friend, Ray Russell, we can do a little better.

Each October Ray and the winning woolly worm from Banner Elk's festival face off to predict the winter's forecast. Here is the prediction right from the source.

Ray is predicting 100+ inches of snow for the High Country mountain tops, of which Beech is one. The following is his 13 winter weeks prediction starting on December 21.

Week 1—12/21 - 12/27	Cold and snowy	Week 7—2/1 - 2/7	Cold with light snow
Week 2—12/28 - 1/3	Cold and snowy	Week 8—2/8 - 2/14	Cold and snowy
Week 3—1/3 - 1/9	Cold with light snow	Week 9—2/15 - 2/21	Near normal temps,
Week 4—1/10 - 1/16	Near normal temps,	only light snow	
Week 5—1/17 - 1/23	Near normal temps,	Week 10—2/22 - 2/28	Mild, no snow
only light snow		Week 11—3/1 - 3/7	Cold and snowy
Week 6—1/24 - 1/30	Cold and snowy	Week 12—3/8 - 3/14	Cold and snowy
		Week 13—3/15 - 3/21	Cold and snowy

Now compare this years winner Woolly Worm's prediction

Weeks 1 - 4 Cold and snowy	Weeks 5 - 11 Cold but no snow	Weeks 12 -13 Cold and snowy
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If it is any consolation to you after reading the above, how about what we see around Fred's. The usual signs of a harsh winter seem prevalent again. A good crop of nuts on the trees, hornets building their nests in the ground, number of fogs in August (there were many) are all things mountain folks consider important in predicting the winter.

We still say that the best way to predict the winter is look out the window and check the thermometer on the porch! If you want to get a five day forecast get on the internet and go to www.fredsgeneral.com, then click into Ray's Weather. It's full of information . . . current, future and past.

Always remember, no matter what the weather is on Beech, give it a few minutes and it will probably change.

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PERIODIC E-NEWSLETTER FROM FRED'S GENERAL MERCANTILE BEECH MTN, NORTH CAROLINA



Our Ski Shop Is Ready . . .

New skiing merchandise is waiting for you to check out. Our familiar faces are ready to help you. A new season and a new energy awaits you in our ski shop.

After twenty-five years of taking care of Beech Mountain skiers, we think we have it down just right. Ski and snowboard rentals, all kinds of winter wear for skiing and outdoors are waiting for you. Our ski accessories selection is the best ever. New equipment to rent and the mountains best rental crew can help you enjoy your skiing experience to its fullest.

Stop in or call ahead and discuss all your skiing needs with John, Meredith, Peter, or any member of our great, knowledgeable ski staff.

See you on the slopes, you all.

Meet the Crew Each ski season we anxiously await to see who will be working in the shop. You have already met John Hoffman, Meredith and Peter Patton, all who run the ski end of things at Fred's.

This season Leif Carter, an ASU student and local boy, returns . . . thank goodness. He has persuaded his younger brother, Jeb, to help us out, too.

Jeff Brinkley, a familiar face on Beech, who is a builder during the warmer months, joins us for his first season. Another new face coming to us by way of the Linville Gorge Outward Bound School is T.J. Farmer, a great new addition.

Returning from the past is Beech Mountain's own, Dylan Fehl, an ASU pre-med student and volunteer firefighter. Also, helping out in a big way again this season is Rory Ellington, our golf course superintendent and a cyclist who often rides down the Parkway to Blowing Rock and back.

All of these great folks are ready to help you with all your skiing needs. Come see them soon!



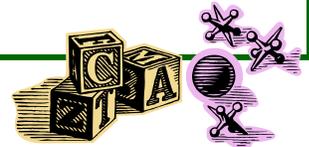
Toys . . . Toys . . . Toys . . .

At the Wizard Toy Shop. Santa's Beech Mountain headquarters.

You don't need to go very far for a great selection of toys for your favorite young person. Moms and Dads, Grandmas and Grandpas, Aunts and Uncles and all ages of kids, young and old, enjoy checking out the Wizard's at Fred's. We carry all the great names in toys . . . Playmobile, Brio, Thomas the Train along with many more to select from.

If you are looking for something special that the big box guys may not have, give us a call. Nancy and Joan always have great ideas for your gift list. We will even ship to you if that will help.

Plan on a visit to the Wizard's for your Holiday shopping needs this Season. The Wizard is waiting.

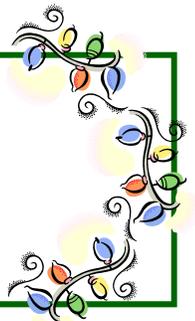


Seasonal Lighting

What's white, bright and comes every winter? If you first thought of snow you're not too far off. What the real answer is Beech Mountain lights that twinkle on trees, fences and buildings all around town.

Each winter season, town volunteers gather to decorate eastern American's highest town. This year Jennifer Ball has headed up the project. Be sure to thank her for a great job.

From the town entrance, down the Parkway and beyond . . . check out bright, beautiful Beech.



Town News

- Recreation Center Update . . . prior to Thanksgiving, all of the floors had been poured and much of the buildings steel framing had arrived. Construction is expected to continue through the winter.
- Storm Damage . . . Hurricane Frances and Ivan arrived on Beech with high winds and many inches of rain (8.20" on Sept. 8 with a storm total of 9.53", Sept. 17 had 4.10" and a total of 7.0" for Ivan)
- Hiking Trails . . . Our town hiking trails took a big hit with the storms. Pond Creek lost stairs and bridges. Trail work will continue for weeks to come. Caution should be taken when hiking any of these trails.
- Town Manager . . . Seth Lawless was named Manager of the Year in the Region D Council of Governments area. Way to go Seth.