

# History

Nestled in the Foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains is one of the oldest counties in Tennessee. Blount County was the tenth county to be formed in Tennessee by the Territorial Legislature in July 1795 from a portion of Knox County, Tennessee. Blount County was named after William Blount, Governor of the Territory of the United States “South of the River Ohio”. The County seat was authorized to be formed in 1795 and was named Maryville, in honor of Mary Blount, the wife of Governor William Blount. Maryville is situated at the southern border of the Oak Ridge Technology corridor, a nationally recognized high-technology research and development center. Other incorporated towns within the County area are: Alcoa, Friendsville, Louisville, Rockford and Townsend.



The Blount County Courthouse stands majestically in the heart of the City of Maryville. The original courthouse was a log structure built in 1802 for the cost of \$571. It was then replaced in 1820 with a frame structure building. The third county courthouse was completed in 1839. It was a two story structure built for \$12,000. This courthouse was damaged during a Confederate attack in the Civil War. In 1879, the courthouse was claimed by fire.

Construction on the fourth County courthouse was completed in 1882. It was a two-story brick structure built at the cost of \$12,779, but like the previous courthouse the courthouse was destroyed by fire in 1906.

The fifth and current County courthouse was built in 1907 in a new location. The new courthouse was constructed on land previously owned by Dr. John W. Cates. The cost of the structure, land and architects combined was \$61,000. The Blount County Courthouse was renovated in 1957, in 1975 and again in 1999 to the current structure it is today.

## **Municipalities**

The **City of Alcoa** is located in northern Blount County. The quiet ambience of the residential area is the result of a strategic plan to locate the schools and extensive linear park system through the heart of the city. Strong zoning and building codes have assured quality homes and complimentary land use in the area. Emphasis on an excellent school system has historically ranked Alcoa as one of the top schools in the state.

The **City of Friendsville** is located approximately eight miles from Maryville and is surrounded, in part, by Gallahar Creek. Northwest of town lies the Fort Loudon Dam whose backwaters create an ideal area for fishing, swimming, boating, skiing and hunting. Friendsville offers a quiet suburb lifestyle with a genuine hometown feel; however, the convenience of big city life are well within reach as U.S. Highway 321 runs through town making access to two major interstates and the cities of Knoxville and Maryville very convenient.

The **Town of Louisville** is primarily a residential and agricultural area located on the Tennessee River. Although the town provides fire service and quality road maintenance, there is no city property tax.

The **City of Maryville** provides all urban services and utility departments under city government. Parks are abundant throughout the city. Maryville takes great pride in providing a superior comprehensive education program. The superior test scores achieved by Maryville students further illustrate this dedication to high scholastic standards.

The **City of Rockford** was originally incorporated to protect the area and its businesses from possible annexation by nearby municipalities. Since that time, it has evolved into a community where quality services, not growth, have become the special focus. With an industrial park, rural area and several subdivisions, it has a full range of possibilities within a small area.

The **City of Townsend** is located at the Gateway to the Smokies thus leaving tourism the city's primary industry; although the city continually strives to maintain its unique serenity through careful planning and strong zoning ordinances.

## Location and Economic Growth

Blount County is found in the eastern portion of the State of Tennessee. The County is bordered to the east by Sevier County, Tennessee and to the north by Knox County, Tennessee. To the south, the County is bordered by Monroe County, Tennessee and the State of North Carolina. To the west of the County is Loudon County, Tennessee. The County land area encompasses 559 square miles, of which 150 square miles is within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. There are approximately 189.3 persons per square mile in the County. Approximately 50% of the County is devoted to agriculture and forestry.



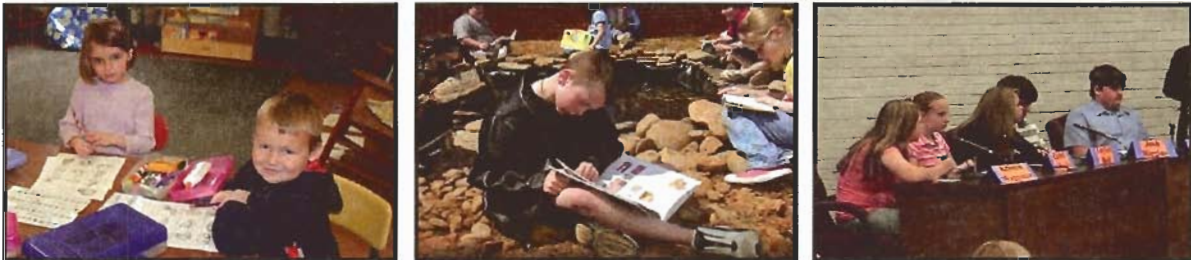
Blount County benefits from being a gateway to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The scenic and recreational attractions of the park attract an ever increasing number of tourists to the County yearly. According to the Smoky Mountain Visitors Bureau, visitors to the park during 2005 were more than 9.1million. One of the most popular natural areas in the nation, Cades Cove, is located within the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. Sights at Cades Cove include a fully operational grist mill with a working waterwheel, historic structures from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, over 1,500 kinds of flowering plants and more than 500 black bears and recently Elk has been re-introduced back into the park.



**Scenery from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

# Education

Diverse offerings take Blount County students on a variety of educational odysseys from grade school through graduate programs. It all starts with a solid foundation of the basics upon which a student can build a strong resume that can take them to the halls of higher learning or put them on track in the professional world.



There are three main public school systems in Blount County: Alcoa City Schools, Maryville City Schools and Blount County Schools. These three systems jointly received the State Department of Education's Governor's A+ Award for community commitment to excellence in education. The Blount County School System is made up of 19 public schools: 12 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 2 senior high schools and one alternative school. The school system has a total enrollment of approximately 11,400 students as of August 2006. There are a number of private schools, colleges and universities that serve the Blount County area, a few of which are: Foothills Christian Academy, the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, Maryville College and Pellissippi State Technological Community College.



## Transportation

The County has excellent transportation facilities by rail, air, river and highway and is conveniently located within 500 miles of 50% of the U.S. population. Both the Norfolk Southern and CSX Railroads have terminals and stops in the County, with lines radiating in nine directions. Of the 1,399 roads in Blount County, 823 miles of road are paved. Three major highways serve the County including U.S. Highway 129, 411 and 321, as well as State Routes 33 and 95.



The McGhee Tyson Airport is located within the city limits of Alcoa whose boundaries are contiguous with the County. This facility is the principal commercial airport for East Tennessee and is owned and managed by the Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority. McGhee Tyson has 82 non-stop flight destinations daily and in 2005, handled in excess of 1.8 million passengers. Recently, a \$70 million renovation and expansion project was completed of McGhee Tyson's main terminal and concourses. The upgrades will allow the airport to accommodate the increased passenger traffic well into the next century.

## Economic Data

Blount County is recognized as a 3-Star Community for Excellence in community development and economic preparedness. The economic base for the County includes a diversified group of industrial companies. According to the Tennessee Department of Employment Security, as of 2005 the County is maintaining a manufacturing employment base of approximately 20 percent of the total employed work force in Blount County. The County currently has twelve industrial parks.

The principal employer for the residents of the County is Denso, Inc. which employs approximately 2,301 associates as of 2006. Denso is a leading manufacturer of automotive parts. Alcoa, Inc. is the second largest employer in our County with 2,004 employees. The aluminum producing and fabricating complex is one of the largest of its kind in the United States. Blount Memorial Hospital, Inc., which employs approximately 1,973 employees, is the County's third largest employer.

According to the Tennessee Department of Labor, the following statistics apply to Blount County for 2005:

Unemployment Rate	4.6%
Average Weekly Wage ranked ninth in the State of TN	\$696

Based on the most recent report from the U.S. Census Bureau, Blount County's population is at 113,744. Blount County is ranked the 11<sup>th</sup> largest county in Tennessee.

The average effective buying income for Blount County is as follows:

\$50,000 and over	31.8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	20.6%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	24.9%

The Medium Household Effective Buying Income per Household is \$36,201

### **Major Employers in Blount County**

1. Denso, Inc.	2,301 employed
2. Alcoa, Inc.	2,004 employed
3. Blount Memorial Hospital	1,973 employed
4. Blount County School System	1,207 employed
5. Clayton Homes	1,203 employed
6. IJ Company	804 employed
7. Eldon Office Products	605 employed
8. Maryville City School System	585 employed
9. Blount County Government	584 employed
10. Wal-Mart, Inc. & McGhee Tyson Air National Guard	560 employed

## Principle Taxpayers in Blount County

1. Denso, Inc.
2. Alcoa, Inc.
3. Alcoa Aluminum Company of America
4. Blount County Economic
5. Clayton Homes, Inc. (CMH Services, Inc.)
6. Sanford LP
7. CBL & Associates Limited
8. Presbyterian Homes of Tn, Inc.
9. Faulkner Properties
10. Rockford Manufacturing



### **Denso, Inc.**

Blount County's economy has experienced significant growth in the manufacturing sector over the past few years, but the County continues to maintain strong rural representation. The most recent data from the University of Tennessee Agriculture Extension Office indicates that 40% of the population is currently living in what is categorized as a rural area and that approximately 1,302 farms are in existence. Even though the County has seen significant growth in urban areas and new development in subdivisions, these numbers indicate increases over prior years. This can be attributed to the fact that the size of "farms" (defined as those reporting gross income over \$1,000 annually) is decreasing, with most of the increase in 3 to 15 acre mini-farms.

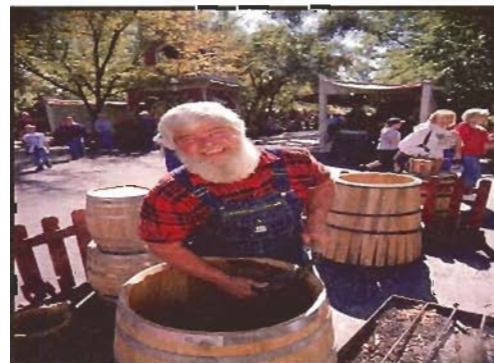


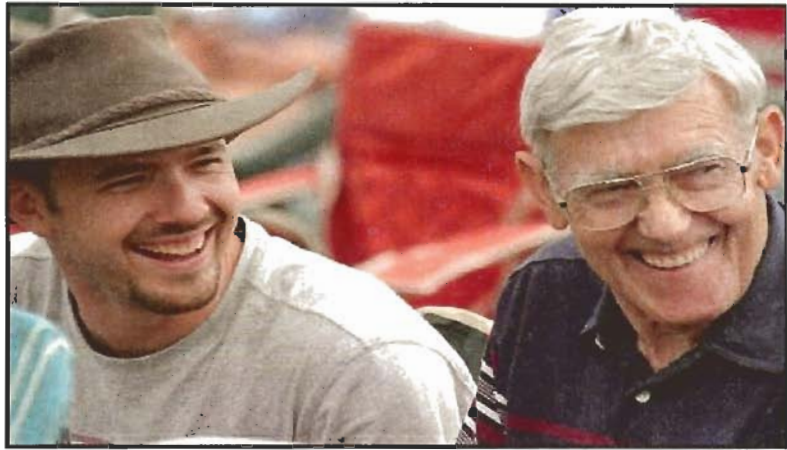
## Recreation

One of Blount County's greatest charms is its prevalent sense of community. Even in the midst of continuing growth and progress, the people who make their home here manage to stay closely connected. Often we manage to have fun in the process! Throughout the year, a well-rounded slate of special events and festivals gives folks a chance to come together, share special moments and celebrate life on the Peaceful Side of the Smokies.

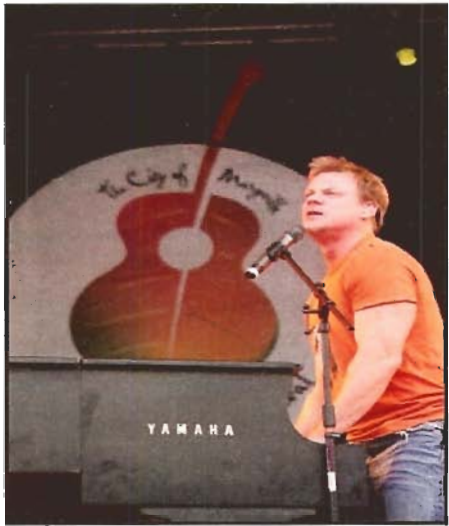
The Taste of Blount is an event that allows area restaurants to show off their best recipes while letting guests sample a diverse gathering of flavors.

We celebrate our heritage twice a year with Old Timer's Day in the spring and the Fall Heritage Festival held in Townsend, Tennessee and at the Cades Cove Mill in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. These festivals are packed with Appalachian arts and crafts, bluegrass music and nature programs.

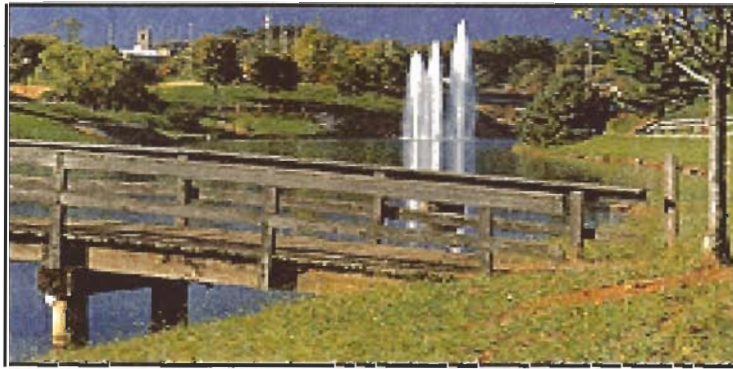




Each year the City of Maryville hosts the Foothills Fall Festival. This mid-October festival has been drawing 100,000 or more people from across the country to Blount County for three fun filled days of art and crafts, live music from big name venues as well as local bands, children's activities and great food.



By working together, Maryville, Alcoa and Blount County have created an 18-mile Greenway, offering a peaceful, nature getaway in the heart of the Blount County community. Maintained by the two cities of Alcoa and Maryville, this paved and lighted walkway is popular for biking, jogging and strolling with your children. The Greenway spans from Alcoa's Springbrook Park through Maryville's Bicentennial Greenbelt Park on to Sandy Springs Park and ending at Foothills Elementary School. The Bicentennial Greenbelt Park offers popular walking trails, picnic areas and a special Bicentennial Time Line Monument honoring Blount County's past.



**Bicentennial Park**

Blount County is well known for its beautifully wooded rolling hills, sky-blue lakes and majestic mountains and scenic streams. For the outdoor enthusiasts, Blount County is a wonderland. The south eastern portion of the county is located in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park where you can observe unspoiled wildlife, hiking, horse back riding and camping. If you prefer the water, in addition to our trout streams and the floatable Little River; Blount County has several lakes such as Calderwood, Chilhowee and Tellico all of which are perfect for boating, swimming, water sports and fishing.



## Climate

Blount County enjoys four distinct seasons. Blount County is particularly a showcase in the fall featuring beautiful fall colors in the mountains.

Annual Average Temperature	59 degrees
Monthly Average High Temperature	Jan 47 degrees / July 87 degrees
Monthly Average Low Temperature	Jan 30 degrees / July 68 degrees
Annual Average Snowfall	12 inches
Annual Average Precipitation	48 inches
Elevation	989' above sea level
Prevailing Winds	Southwest
Mean Length of Freeze	186 days



## Invitation

This is a cordial invitation to stop and spend some time here in beautiful Blount County. Odds are you'll want to stay awhile, so gather your loved ones, pack a picnic, spread out a blanket and enjoy all the wonderful pictures of life Blount County has to offer. We look forward to seeing you.

# Notes