

Founders

Elk Creek Mountain Partnership Profile

The make up of partners is nearly as unique as the community they are creating.

Elk Creek Mountain at Todd, 284-acres of unblemished mountain land beside the charming village of Todd and the New River, is managed by Developer Mark Harrill, Artist Joe Miller and Entrepreneur Kenneth Wilcox.

Individually, they are arguably the premier players in their respective fields. Collectively, they share a deep-seated passion for western North Carolina, its mountains, its heritage, for preserving the magical lifestyle made possible in the region and for creating opportunities that enhance that quality of life.

Mark Harrill is founder and president of Foscoe Companies, a collection of community-development enterprises that build fabulous residences and vacation rentals throughout the High Country.

The most famous of these communities is Echota, which Mark and his team began crafting shortly after Foscoe's creation in the 1980s. He recognized a void in the real estate market for reasonably priced resort homes. Especially those with fabulous views.

Personally and professionally, Mark and his family have insured that the region retains its natural beauty and grace. Many homesites blend into the surroundings. And his purchases of dozens of acres for preservation protect the Watauga River Basin.

Joe Miller is one of those few people you know who was born in a car. True. Right outside Boone Drug Store. His daddy just didn't get the hospital delivery room in time. And as fate would have it, he became a pharmacist. At the Boone Drug Store.

And at an age when most people ponder slowing down, Joe was just getting going and launched his second career, art. Watercolors. Next thing you know, Joe's love of art has spawned Cheap Joe's, an energetic, robust and global resource of art supplies with customers in more than a dozen countries.

Joe knows Todd like the back of his paintbrush. He grew up in the area; has family in the community. When the opportunity to create a special place on Elk Creek Mountain came along, Joe was first in line. His buddy Mark was right there with him.

So was **Kenneth Wilcox** the so-called "Godfather of Boone." Kenneth's great-grandfather cultivated and sold botanical herbs in Todd in 1875. By 1900 the business had grown into Wilcox Drug. In 1994 Kenneth co-founded an international nature products operation and continued his botanical business.

And like Joe and Mark, Kenneth wasn't content with sitting back on his laurels and basking in past successes. The High Country could even be a better place to live, work, play, relax and raise a family. He built restaurants and hotels, held leadership positions in churches, hospitals and universities.

It took him about three seconds to sign on with Joe and Mark as a partner in Elk Creek Mountain at Todd. After all, what a great gift to give to the region.