“Community groups will join together this spring in a truly ‘groundbreaking’ project by planting a summer garden providing fresh vegetables for our residents,” said Lynne Mason director of Hospitality House which serves seven High Country counties. “We are also committed to offering healthy food selections and produce from our gardens will enable us to do this.” Almost one acre will be devoted to a crop of herbs and vegetables destined for the kitchen which provides three meals a day to anyone in need. Hospitality House residents will help harvest the fresh and nutritional food. “This garden reflects many groups coming together supporting us,” said Todd Carter, Hospitality House director of development. He explained that a project this size is possible through community cooperation. “Communities Putting Prevention to Work,“ a generous grant to Hospitality House from the Center for Disease Control, included a garden project. “A portion of this grant will purchase seeds and plants for our new summer garden, as well as canning and freezing materials to preserve food grown in our gardens,” added Mason. Thad Taylor, president of the Watauga Chapter of the N.C. Farm Bureau, helped initiate the project and procure the land, located just steps from the Hospitality House entrance. The Farm Bureau has purchased a tiller and pledged support to plow and provide soil amendments. The Blue Ridge Garden Club of Boone will be responsible for planning the summer garden. Local President Marilyn Wright explained, “Gardening with a mission to address hunger makes this project especially important. Children are always thrilled to see how vegetables grow and we see this as an important lesson in eating healthy.” Jim Hamilton, Watauga County Director for the NC Cooperative Extension, recently advised the team and suggested the local “Master Gardeners” program could also assist with the project. Local groups interested in donating materials such as gardening tools are welcome to contact Todd Carter at Hospitality House at 828 264-1237. Shovels, spades, hoes, garden hoses and gloves are needed.