



FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Inc.



[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

[Forward to a Friend](#)

Vol. 5 Issue: 4

April 2009

IN THIS ISSUE

- [Saving Parkway Views](#)
- [Omnibus Act Update](#)
- [Merchandise of the Month](#)
- [New Members of FRIENDS](#)
- [BRP 75th Anniversary](#)
- [Interactive Conservation Map](#)
- [469-Mile Award Winners](#)

QUICK LINKS

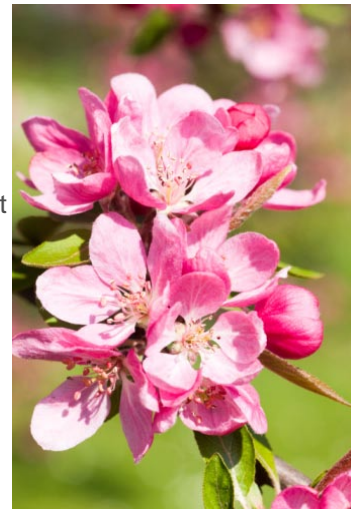
- [About Us](#)
- [Volunteer](#)
- [Join Now](#)
- [Donate](#)
- [Past eNewsletters](#)
- [Press Releases](#)
- [Parkway Trivia](#)

Did you know that approx. 20 million people travel the Parkway every year?

Greetings and happy spring! To welcome this wonderful season, FRIENDS has been busy getting the Parkway ready for all to enjoy. It is our hope that you will travel the Parkway often and experience the spring beauty it has to offer.

To aid you in your travels, you can visit the updated list of Blue Ridge Parkway Facility Openings/Closings for spring 2009 by [clicking here](#).

We thank all of our FRIENDS for sustaining our preservation and protection of the Blue Ridge Parkway!



Saving Parkway Views



FRIENDS recently held their signature project, Saving Parkway Views, at milepost 121.1 on US Route 220 in Roanoke. Susan Jackson Mills, FRIENDS Executive Director, said this was "the best planting ever."

This makes it the most visited site in the National Park System.

The greatest visitation is during summer holidays and during the fall color season in mid-October.

Contact Us

FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Inc.
P.O. Box 20986
Roanoke, VA 24018

540-772-2992
800-228-PARK (7275)

staff@friendsbrp.org

There were close to 80 dedicated volunteers in attendance, including 27 youth. In spite of the light rain and mud, they successfully planted 310 hardwoods and 250 white pines. At the end of the day everyone enjoyed refreshments and bluegrass music.



We would like to send out a heart felt Thank You to all who helped make this year's planting an overwhelming success. You helped ensure the beauty of the Parkway for generations to come.

National News



17th Annual National Trails Day

Calling all Chapters
&
Adopt-a-Trail groups

We would like each one of you to sponsor a trail-related event for

National Trails Day
June 6, 2009

FRIENDS encourages all of its chapters and members to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to celebrate National Trails Day on June 6, 2009. Picking up litter on overlooks and trails along the Parkway is a great way to make a difference as a small group or chapter. Consider planning a trail hike or trail walk and a covered-dish event for your chapter or friends.

Please let us know how you plan to participate by calling us toll free at 800-228-PARK(7275) or by emailing us at staff@FriendsBRP.org.

Congress Votes to Save 2 Million Acres of Wilderness

On March 25th Congress passed the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act. This Act saves and preserves over 2 million acres of beautiful wilderness in nine states. Included in the saved acreage is over 1,000 miles of rivers as well. With the signing of this act, President Obama has assured future generations the magnificent beauty that only nature can provide.



FRIENDS Merchandise Item of the Month

FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway cap



Show off your appreciation of the Blue Ridge Parkway while protecting yourself from the sun with your very own FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway cap. All proceeds from your purchase will benefit the scenic road we love!

[Visit our Online Store](#)

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the newest members of FRIENDS...

Mr & Mrs. Kevin Daly
Mr. Mark Giuliano
Ms. Rita Herbst
Ms. Jessica Lusk
Mr. & Mrs. Tim Martin
Mr. Paul E. Noell
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Plummer
Mr. Paul W. Sult
Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. Tim Williams



Local News

Blue Ridge Parkway 75th Anniversary News

Make Your Event a Parkway Event

This is a free opportunity to advertise your event(s) on the BRP 75 website, which is scheduled to launch this spring. Submitted events must have a tie-in to the Parkway. However, submissions are not limited to only new events.

If you have an existing 2010 event, tailor the event so it becomes a Parkway event and it will be posted on the BRP 75 website. Contact Leesa Brandon, Executive Director of Blue Ridge Parkway 75, Inc. at 828.271.4779 x 224 or by email at lbrandon@ncommerce.com.

You are also invited to sign up for the official BRP 75 newsletter which will begin distribution on May 1st. To sign up, send an email to parkway75@gmail.com. Be sure to [click here](#) and follow BRP 75 on Facebook too!

Community Spotlight

Don't miss this opportunity to promote your community through the Blue Ridge Parkway's 75th Anniversary website. Applications are now being taken for Parkway cities, counties, and towns interested in showcasing their community on the BRP 75 website. The site is set to launch May 15th.

The listing is free and the process is simple: complete the application and return it with a current or past photo (in jpeg format) of your community. Your information will be posted to BRP 75th's website and will be included in the rotation of communities being spotlighted. Your community will also have its very own locator pin on the Parkway region map.

[Click here](#) to access the application. Contact Leesa Brandon at 828.271.4779 X 224 or lbrandon@ncommerce.com for more information.

Start Your Spring Off Green!

On Saturday, April 18th, the Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Destination Center is hosting a day of celebration in honor of National Park Week (April 19 - 25), Earth Day (April 22), and National Junior Ranger Day (April 25).

The activities include Green Gardening Practices, the JAM String Band and a Birds of Prey presentation. All activities are free and open to the public. The Destination Center is located at Milepost 384, just north of the Parkway from the junction of 74-A and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

For more information, please contact Michele Maertens at 828-350-3822 ext. 207 or Amy Hollifield at 828-298-5330, ext. 0.



Announcing Blue Ridge Forever's Interactive Conservation Vision Map



We are pleased to announce that the Blue Ridge Forever interactive Conservation Vision map is now live on their website. With just a click of your mouse you can learn about some of the amazing animals prioritized in the North Carolina State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), the impact that protected lands have on water quality, and the cultural heritage that is dependent on our mountain landscape. You can also learn about what your local land trusts have protected and hope to protect during our five-year campaign to save 50,000 acres by 2010.

See it for yourself at
www.blueridgeforever.info/conservation_vision.html
(The map may take a minute to load)

The interactive map was made possible by a generous grant from The Conservation Fund with support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation

If you would like additional information or to schedule a presentation about the Conservation Vision, please contact Valerie True, Blue Ridge Forever's coalition coordinator, at 828.253.0095 x213 or coordinator@blueridgeforever.info

Parkway News



469-Mile Award Winners

*Former classmates reunite
to
fulfill a dream*

Nathan "Nate" Galbreath and Peggy Miles were classmates at Goodlettsville High School in the late 1940's. After graduating, each married and had families of their own. Due to life's circumstances, they eventually found themselves single by 2006. They reconnected online and renewed a long lost friendship.

They soon discovered they had similar interests and both decided to fulfill Peggy's lifelong dream of traveling the entire length of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Their journey began near Asheville, N.C. on July 10, 2007. Over the next five days they traveled the Parkway visiting several visitor centers and overlooks along the way. They also enjoyed "spectacular scenery" including: Looking Glass Rock, Little Switzerland, Linville Falls, Grandfather Mountain, Stone Mountain, Mabry Mills, Peaks of Otter and Crabtree Falls.

Peggy says she arrived home tired "but was happy with such a wonderful trip with an old high school friend from fifty-eight years ago."

Congratulations to both of them for setting a goal and accomplishing it!

Parkway Road Closure

Craggy Gardens Area

Parkway closure gates will remain in place south of Mount Mitchell State Park at milepost 355.4 and at milepost 367.6, which is just north of the Craggy Gardens Picnic Area junction. The detour between US 70 at milepost 382.5 and NC R out 226 at milepost 330.9 will remain in place until the Parkway can be opened under one-lane traffic control.

Parkway officials estimate that the Parkway can be safely and fully opened for public visitation by mid-June.

Parkway Road Construction

Repaving to begin in May

Repaving construction is set to begin in May on the Blue Ridge Parkway between milepost 359.7 and milepost 375.1. This section includes the Craggy Gardens Visitor Center which is expected to remain open during the duration of the project.

The Parkway will remain open to visitor traffic under flagmen-controlled one lane traffic from May until the expected completion date in December 2010.

Parkway Slide Stabilization Project

Geotechnical design project

From April 14 through April 16, 2009, the Federal Highway Administration drilling team will be working to retain and stabilize the slope at Milepost 400.8. The Parkway will remain open for travel during the drilling but only under one-lane flagmen traffic control.

Parkway Visitor Survey Results

Over 200 pages available for public to view

The National Park Service, along with the Blue Ridge Parkway, conducted an exhaustive survey in the fall of 2007 and the summer of 2008. Close to 2,700 surveys were handed out along the full length of the 469 mile scenic route. An impressive 74% were returned.

Phil Francis, Park Superintendent, said "This information is highly valuable in adjusting park programs and services to meet visitor needs as well as park planning for the future."

To view or download the report in its entirety, visit the National Park Service's [Park Study Unit](#).

Chapter News

Appalachian State University Chapter

The ASU Chapter assisted Parkway biologists on March 21, 2009 with the removal of debris from an historic dam. In 2008, the Parkway hired a local contractor to take apart the 3-foot tall, 25-foot wide concrete dam on Sims Creek in Price Park. Since the location is not accessible by vehicle, the contractor was unable to remove the remaining debris. The ASU volunteers provided approximately 50 hours of volunteer labor over the two workdays, saving the Parkway \$5,000.

If you are interested in volunteering for upcoming chapter projects, please contact Heather Paige Preston at Prestonhp@appstate.edu or call 828-262-2449.

Asheville Chapter

The Asheville Chapter is having their annual FRIENDS' Spring Gathering, Friday April 17, 2009 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., featuring Anne Whisnant, author of "*Super Scenic Highway: A History of the Blue Ridge Parkway*," at REI Biltmore Town Square, Asheville, NC.

The Asheville Chapter would also like to invite you to REI Asheville's Friends and Family Day on Saturday, April 18th from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. You will receive 10% - 25% off on select outdoor gear and clothing. This is a one-day savings event so be sure to stop by.

The Asheville Chapter has several projects in the planning stages: the placement of donation boxes and/or POS donation opportunities at selected area merchants in the Asheville area; a series of "Children in Nature" summer events involving youth and the Parkway; participation in the Asheville Weed Team's Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) project, headed by Nancy Fraley, Coordinator, Southeast Exotic Plant Management Team for the NPS; participation in a National Trails Day at the Parkway HQs in Asheville; and hopefully another "gathering" in the fall.

If you are interested in volunteering for upcoming projects, or would like more information, please contact Tom Morgan at tmorgan51@bellsouth.net or call 828-242-4131.

Fisher Peak Chapter

Below are the scheduled work days/volunteer opportunities through June.

April 18, 8:00 a.m. - Trail Work (meet at the trail head parking lot off of Foothills Road)

May 2, 8:00 a.m. - Trail Work (meet at the trail head parking lot off of Foothills Road)

May 16, 9:00 a.m. - Landscaping (weeding, etc. around amphitheater in preparation for the concert season) at BRMC (meet at the service road that goes behind the amphitheater)

June 13, 9:00 a.m. - Information table at Leaf and String Festival in Galax (help needed to answer questions about FRIENDS and the Fisher Peak Chapter)

If you would like more information about any of these events, please contact Dottie Bramley at pdbramley@valink.com or call 276-236-7658.

Roanoke Valley Chapter

If you are interested in volunteering for upcoming projects, or want information on joining the Chapter's Steering Committee, please contact us at staff@FriendsBRP.org or call toll free 800-228-PARK (7275).

Peaks of Otter Chapter

If you are interested in volunteering for upcoming projects, or want information on joining the Chapter's Steering Committee, please contact Greg Eaton at eaton.g@lynchburg.edu or call 434-661-8360.

Rocky Knob Chapter

We met April 6 at 6:30 p.m. for an informative and fun program presented by Lee Chichester. Lee is a master class falconer who brought her partners and birds of prey, Elfie, a red tail hawk and C.J. (Crow Joe) a hybrid falcon. Lee's experiences in Wales and England along with her many years of participating in the ancient sport of falconry, made this hands-on meeting very special. After an hour presentation with questions and answers, the audience still wanted more. Advertising of this event in the local papers and on the radio enticed new folks to attend our meeting.

A new project for us this year will be the painting of two recycling boxes to be located at Rocky Knob Campground and the Ground Hog Picnic Area. These boxes will be used for aluminum products. We will collect the cans weekly and sell them at the end of the season as our FRIENDS of the Parkway project.

We continue to encourage communities to get involved with cleaning up our earth. Some of our members have adopted roads near their homes and have committed to picking up garbage at least four times a year. One of our members suggested that all of us pick up one bag of garbage a week (52 bags a year) to make a difference in our neighborhoods. This is not too much work and might even become contagious.

If you are interested in helping the Rocky Knob Chapter, please contact Gloria Hilton at gjhilton1@yahoo.com or call 540-593-3081.

A blue, rounded rectangular button with a green border and a slight gradient, containing the word "DONATE" in white, uppercase letters.