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December 2009

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FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway
would like to wish you and yours a

Happy Holiday Season!

FRIENDS News

*FRIENDS Viewshed Planting a Huge Success
Community School students participate*

Blue Ridge Parkway
Information Line
828-298-0398

PARKWAY TRIVIA

Did you know
that the highest point east of
the Mississippi is located just
off of the Parkway?

Mount Mitchell is at Milepost
355.4 and
is 6,648 feet high.

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CONTACT US

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*Community School
student*

saving the Parkway's views.

Tim Boitnott, owner of Creative
Nursery & Landscapes and
event sponsor, then explained in
detail the process of
successfully planting the trees.

The volunteers were served a
lunch of sandwiches, fruit and
drinks which were graciously
provided by The Fresh Market,
Kroger and Starbucks.

Two representatives from Home
Depot were also on hand to
assist the children in building
birdhouses or leaf presses,
which they took home with them.

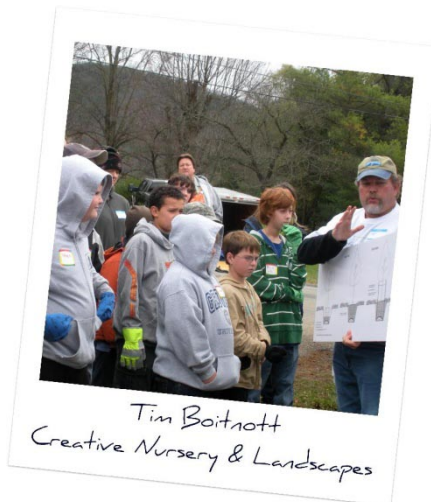


*Home Depot
helped build birdhouses*

Boitnott for going above and beyond to help make this event a

FRIENDS held their annual fall
tree planting on Friday,
November 13 at Milepost 121.1
in Roanoke, VA. Sixty mature
ball and burlap trees were
planted by 44 volunteers; this
included 22 students from the
Community School in Roanoke.

After a brief welcome by
FRIENDS Executive Director,
Susan Mills Peter Givens, BRP
Interpretive Specialist, got the
event under way. He thanked
the volunteers for participating
and explained the importance of



*Tim Boitnott
Creative Nursery & Landscapes*

Throughout the event, the
Roanoke Valley Pickers
serenaded the volunteers with
their unique style of bluegrass
music.

After surveying the newly
planted landscape, Susan Mills
happily declared the event a
"huge success!"

We would sincerely like to thank
each of the businesses mentioned
above for their donations of
goods. We would also like to
send a special *thank you* to Tim

Contributors:
Virginia Ehrich, Kristen
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success!

Astronomy Outreach A FRIENDS First

Kristen Gillespie, FRIENDS Coordinator of Programs, is currently planning FRIENDS' first astronomy outreach. This is a new program that will utilize a Celestron C5 telescope that was recently donated to our organization by a FRIENDS member. Stay tuned for more information.



Trails Forever Program *Volunteers help maintain trails*

If you have ever enjoyed one of the 100+ trails the Blue Ridge Parkway has to offer, thank an Adopt-A-Trail (AAT) volunteer! These volunteers, working under the guidance of a team leader, have committed to maintain their adopted trail for 3 - 5 years.

This commitment includes, but is not limited to:

- Picking up and disposing of litter
- Removing debris from trail
- Refreshing blaze markers
- Cleaning waterbars and drainage devices
- Reporting needed maintenance to FRIENDS

For more detailed information, or to adopt a Parkway trail, please contact FRIENDS Coordinator of Programs, [Kristen Gillespie](#) or call our office at 800.228.7575.



FREINDS FYI *Inquisitive Minds Want to Know*

A FRIENDS member recently asked why tunnels along the Parkway are marked with maximum and minimum height requirements. Great question! Before getting to the answer, here's a little trivia for you... Do you know how many tunnels are on the Parkway? (the answer is at the bottom of this article)

The Parkway tunnels are measured in the middle for their maximum height and at the sides for their minimum height. This information is helpful if a person is pulling a travel trailer behind their vehicle. The height restriction would let the driver know if they should travel more toward the middle of the tunnel to avoid the possibility of hitting the lower tunnel height on the sides.

For a listing of all Parkway tunnels, with minimum and maximum heights, please visit the [National Park Service](#) website.

Now, for the answer: There are a total of 26 Parkway tunnels. One is in Virginia, the remainder are in North Carolina.

Merchandise Item of the Month

FRIENDS Logo Fleece Jacket

It's not too late to do a little holiday shopping! Our FRIENDS logo black fleece jacket would be the perfect gift to keep anyone warm and toasty.

It is made of 100% polyester and is machine washable. We offer sizes small through extra large for only \$39.95 plus shipping.



As an added holiday bonus, we are also offering 20% off of every case of FRIENDS logo peanuts purchased this month. There are 12 cans per case and with the discount, would only be \$153.50. Think of it as one stop shopping for neighbors, relatives or any other peanut lover!

You can purchase these items and many more in our [online store](#).



Newest FRIENDS Members

We Sincerely Thank You

We are pleased to welcome the following new members...

A.W. & Charlene Hargrove; Cathy & Jon Poer; Champe Burnley; Edward Frederick; Glenn & Brenda Saller; Janet Ferguson; Jocelin Hackathorn; Kristi & Frank Palermo; Mel & Thelma Melloy; Neil Mara; Oleander Spring; Peter & Jean Huber; Robert Glover Robert Jessee; Sharon McGaughey and Shawn Rhodes

Thank you for joining us in our effort to help preserve, promote and enhance the Blue Ridge Parkway. Not a member of FRIENDS? For information, including how to join, please visit our [website](#).

The 469-Mile Club

Recent Award Recipients Announced

Champe Burnley
Julie Fernandez
Rusty Higgins
Doris M. Lee
Pamela Mitchell
Joel Mitchell
Marilyn S. Peeler
Sandra Penrod
Scott Penrod
Barbara Pinter
Steven W. Queen



Congratulations to all of you for traveling all 469 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway. What an accomplishment!

If you have driven, biked or hiked the full length of the Parkway, we invite you to complete our online [application](#).

Blue Ridge Parkway Paintings

A Painting a Day



Art teachers never retire. So after 30 years of teaching K-college, Janet Wimmer began another life as a self employed artist. Her new goal is to paint one Parkway scene a day for an entire year. Her endeavor will coincide with the Blue Ridge Parkway's 75th anniversary celebration.

Janet has graciously agreed to donate \$10 from every painting sold to FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway. To view her work, visit her blog [Blue Ridge Daily Painter](#). To purchase one of her amazing works of art, please [email](#) her.

FRIENDS Chapter News



Humpback Rocks Chapter *Ridge District*

The newly-formed Humpback Rocks Chapter recently held their first steering committee meeting. There were nine members in attendance. Upcoming Chapter projects were discussed. They plan to meet again in January.

If you would like more information about this Chapter, are interested in volunteering, or want to serve on the Chapter's Steering Committee, please contact

Chapter Co-Chairs [Gregory Bruno](#) or [David Munn](#). You can also call the FRIENDS office at 800.228.7275.



Peaks of Otter Chapter *Ridge District*

For information about this Chapter, please contact [Greg Eaton](#) or [Kristen Gillespie](#).



Roanoke Chapter *Plateau District*

The Roanoke Chapter met November 29 to clean up the Fisherman's Trail at Milepost 115. They continued work they began during their previous trail work day in October.

For more information about upcoming work days, or for information about joining the Chapter, please contact Chapter Co-Chair, [Regina Desper](#) or call the FRIENDS office at 800.228.7275.

Rocky Knob Chapter
Plateau District

The Rocky Knob Chapter held a steering committee meeting on November 11, 2009 at the home of Chapter co-chairs, Gloria and Kerry Hilton. New officers were elected to fill the positions of volunteer coordinator, secretary and historian. Plans for future fundraising events were also discussed. For more information about the Rocky Knob Chapter, including how to join, please contact Chapter Chair [Gloria Hilton](#) or call the FRIENDS office at 800.228.7275.

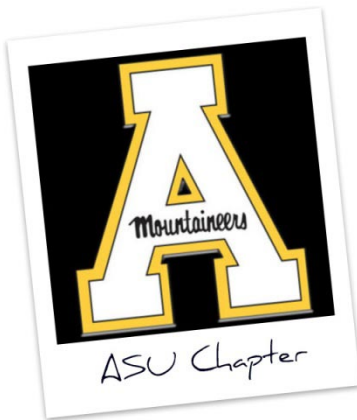
Fisher Peak Chapter
Plateau & Highland Districts

The Fisher Peak Chapter will be holding their annual Christmas party on Saturday, December 19. For more information about the party, upcoming work days, or about the Chapter, please contact [Dottie Bramley](#) or call the FRIENDS office at 800.228.7275.



West Jefferson Chapter
Highland District

This newly formed Chapter will be holding its first meeting on Saturday, January 9 at the home of Julie Roberts. If you live in this area and are interested in being a part of this inaugural meeting, or would like to serve on the Chapter's steering committee, please email FRIENDS Coordinator of Programs, [Kristen Gillespie](#), or call her at 800.228.7275.



ASU Chapter
Highland District

For information about this Chapter, including how to join, please contact [Heather Preston](#) or call the FRIENDS office at 800.228.7275.

Asheville Chapter
Pisgah District

The Asheville Chapter will be participating in the Deerfield Retirement Community's Volunteer Fair on December 9 from 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. For more information about the Asheville Chapter, please contact [Hugh Stephens](#) or [Beth Siegel](#). You may also call the FRIENDS office at 800.228.7275.

National News

National Park Foundation

Where's Your Favorite Spot?

The National Parks belong to everyone, but the special places and moments you find and create within them are entirely your own. Now you can share your indelible memories with the world.

Visit nationalparks.org and mark the spots in America's National Parks that mean the most to you. To find the Blue Ridge Parkway, just look under North Carolina. Let the world know what the Parkway means to you!



Blue Ridge Country Asks Readers...

What's your "don't miss"?



[Blue Ridge Country](#) magazine is planning a special issue in March/April to celebrate the Blue Ridge Parkway's 75th anniversary, and are compiling a huge list of what not to miss on, and just off, the Parkway - trails, waterfalls, overlooks, places to eat, inns, sunset spots, attractions, etc. What are your "don't misses"? Email them to the [editor](#), or tweet them to @BRCEditor. Send as many as you'd like. Deadline is December 16. Don't forget, you can visit Blue Ridge Country [online](#).

Parkway News

Parkway Volunteers Honored

VIP Volunteer Recognition Event

Each year, Parkway staff nominate volunteers that have gone above and beyond their "volunteer" call of duty to receive special recognition. The Ridge District winner this year was Greg Baltad. Greg and his wife moved to Bedford, VA one year ago from Los Angeles, CA where he had just retired from 38 years with the LAPD.

From May through July, he volunteered nearly 100 hours. He assumed responsibility for distributing directories, strip maps and Trip Planners to the Peaks of Otter and James River areas. He handles all aspects of the Kid Fishing program on Saturday mornings. He also works independently in the Nature



Center, Visitor Center and on Johnson Farm. He also assisted rangers in all areas of both Junior Ranger camps this past July. He's even played the part of Smokey the Bear!

Randy Sutton, NPS Ridge District Interpretive Supervisor, says "Greg has been invaluable at all the major events this season at the Peaks of Otter. He has not only agreed to work whenever he's asked but he has done it enthusiastically and with a smile." He continues, "If I could have only one volunteer to help at the Peaks, there is no question that it would be Greg."

Congratulations, Greg, and thank you from FRIENDS for being an invaluable resource to Parkway staff.

Birding the Blue Ridge

Migratory Hawks



The cold December breezes bring fewer hawks and fewer hawk-watchers. Viewing hawks along the ridges of the Blue Ridge Mountains in the winter is not for the faint of heart. There are still some enthusiastic individuals visiting hawk-watching sites, even though some sites officially finished their counting season at the end of November.

November year end counts this season brought large numbers of Broad-winged hawks. Rockfish Gap (MP 0) had a total seasonal count of 13,761 hawks; 12,069 of those were Broad-winged hawks. Broad-wings also topped the count at Harvey's Knob (MP 95.3), representing 8,195 of the total fall count of 9,692. Mahogany Rock (MP 235) had a total fall count of 3,095 raptors; 2,397 of those migrants were Broad-wings. For more in-depth totals visit the [Hawk](#)

[Migration Association of North America](#) website.

New NPS Director Sworn In

Jon Jarvis Accepts Challenge

Jon Jarvis, a 32-year veteran of the National Park Service, was recently sworn in as its 19th director. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar administered the oath of office.

"Our national park heritage will surely benefit from Jon Jarvis's leadership," says NPCA's president Thomas Kiernan. "Jon Jarvis is a seasoned professional and strong leader who understands the challenges of managing national parks and the importance of inspiring excellence among the thousands of National Park Service professionals who are the stewards of our national treasures for

our children and grandchildren." [continue reading](#)



Blue Ridge Parkway to Replace Substandard Guardrails

From Milepost 0 to Milepost 356

Blue Ridge Parkway management has announced that on Monday, Dec. 7, 2009, the replacement of substandard guardrails on the Parkway will begin. All construction work will commence under one-lane traffic controlled by flagmen. Contract work will be limited to weekdays, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. This project is expected to be completed by May/June of 2011. [continue reading](#)



Make a
Donation

FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway utilizes volunteer services, but needs your support to fund our programs. Please offer your generosity in support of our mission to preserve, promote and enhance the Parkway. Thank you.