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February eNews

February 2011

## PASS THE PLATE!

The hope of having a FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway license plate in Virginia is now a reality!

Thanks to almost 400 FRIENDS members and supporters, the minimum 350 orders have been submitted to the Virginia General Assembly. Delegate Lacy Putney, chairman of House Appropriations, sponsored the legislation and has kept FRIENDS president Richard Wells informed of the bill's progress. Final passage is expected in March.



Once the tag is approved by the General Assembly, FRIENDS will meet with Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to finalize the design. DMV reports that the design and manufacturing process often takes 6-9 months and anticipates new plates will be delivered to applicants late this year.

It's not too late to place your order for the new tag! The fee is only \$25 and FRIENDS will donate 100% of funds received to the Blue Ridge Parkway. For more information on how to reserve your tag, please visit [BlueRidgeFriends.org](http://BlueRidgeFriends.org) or call 800/228-7275.

## FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP SOARS PAST 9000

As FRIENDS Director of Membership, I am so proud to say that our membership has passed the 9000 mark. At this moment our exact membership is 9008. We can do even better than that.

Would you like to give a special Valentine to that special person? Or do you have a friend or family member that has a birthday soon? How about a different and well-received Mother's or Father's Day gift? -- a gift that will benefit the beautiful Blue Ridge Parkway and also give that special person membership benefits, and you, the giver, tax benefits.

As a member they will feel a special part of the Parkway, and also will receive two communications: *High Vistas* sent through the



mail twice a year, plus monthly e-newsletter updates if they have an email address. They will also receive discounts/benefits from several businesses along the Parkway, just by showing their current membership card.



So you see, it is a win-win situation. Everyone benefits: You, when giving a FRIENDS' membership as a gift and the gift recipient becoming a FRIENDS' member.

Just call or write me a note stating the name and address of the gift recipient. I will send a special gift card stating you are the giver of their membership. They will thank you forever.

[Virginia Ehrich](#)

540/772-2992 or 800/228-7275

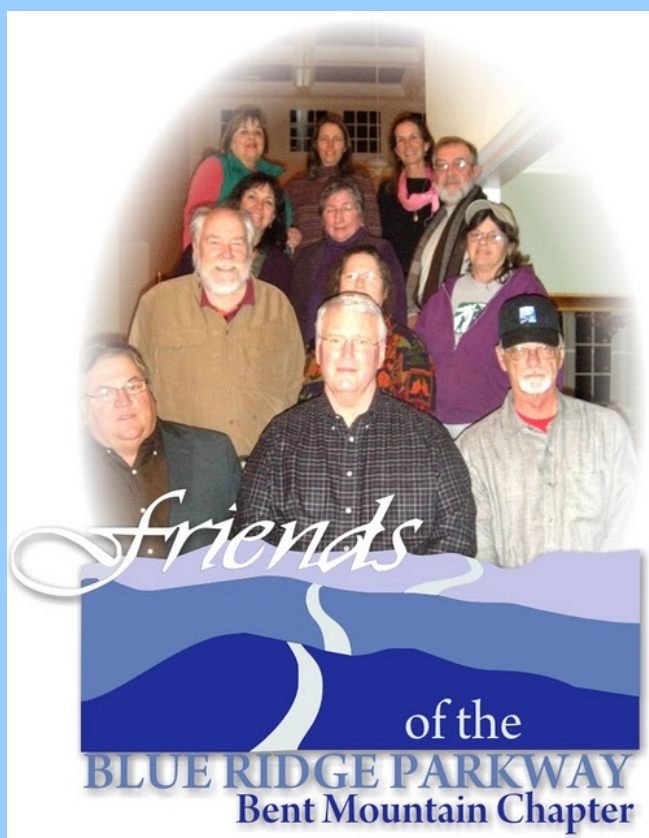
**As of February 15,  
33 FRIENDS have registered  
to help with the Marathon.  
117 more volunteers are needed!**  
Click below to sign up  
or get more information.



## BENT MOUNTAIN CHAPTER

We are pleased to welcome the community of Bent Mountain, Virginia, as the location for the newest of FRIENDS community-based chapters all along the Parkway. Focused on connecting the Parkway to the community and the community to the Parkway, this strong group of leaders held their organizational meeting in early February. They elected [Eldon Karr](#) as chairperson, Jenny Chapman as communications chief, and Steve Hanes as volunteer coordinator. Read [MORE](#).

Also present and committed to serving are others pictured (left to right) in the accompanying photo: Top Row - Patti Hanes, Karen Scott, Bert Bondurant; Row 2 - Ginny Weisz, Jenny Chapman, Ed Kinser; Row 3 - Eldon Karr, Tammy Belinsky, Annie Krochalis; Front Row - Glenn Reed, Steve Hanes, Ed Elswick; Others attending, but not in photograph - Tom Bondurant, Tom Reeder, Kelly Reeder.



## NOW YOU CAN ADOPT YOUR FAVORITE OVERLOOK

The Blue Ridge Parkway has 382 overlooks and associated parking areas that need our help! Individuals, families, clubs, businesses, and groups of friends are encouraged to adopt one or more of these overlooks. Visit the [Adopt-an-Overlook](#) page of the website for information about the adoption process and for the list of overlooks that have been adopted or are available for adoption.



Patty Landrum recently wrote FRIENDS to tell how important Parkway overlooks were to her and her husband John, now deceased: *On one trip we made all the pull-offs on the right from milepost 200 to milepost 469; then did a repeat on the right from milepost 469 to milepost 110. At various times we have made every pull-off on the Parkway and many several times. Those from milepost 1 to milepost 200 have been made too numerous times to count. John and I were fortunate to be able to travel to 44 of the 48 contiguous United States and extensively in most of them ... and our favorite trips were to the mountains and, in particular, the Blue Ridge Parkway. ...*

*The FRIENDS are in my will. Thank you for a beautiful place to travel.*

Many thanks to these individuals and groups who have recently joined others already invested in adopting overlooks: Paulette Albright and Keep Nelson Beautiful, the Charles Hamm Family, and the

Curtis Joyner Family.

## DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU

"Travel and change of pace impart new vigor to the mind." That was instruction which Seneca (c. 4 BC - AD 65), a Roman philosopher and statesman, once gave to his pupil, Nero. Unfortunately, Nero, who later became Roman Emperor, seems not to have taken his advice to heart. And the outcome, as we know, was tragic for Nero and all of Rome.



So don't let "lack of a vigorous mind" happen to you! Begin now to plan your Spring travel along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

We celebrate with this group of vigorous-minded people who have completed all 469 miles of the journey along the Blue Ridge Parkway and received their award. Visit here for more information about what it takes to earn your own [469-Mile Award](#).

Congratulations to Susie and Charlie Coleman, Carlos F. Ruiz, Robert and Phyllis Stump, James R. Hinkel, Patty Landrum, Michael Hughes, Jim and Sue Taylor.

## GREETINGS FROM GROVER

Greetings from Me -- Grover Groundhog! Like all good groundhogs, I've been in hibernation over the winter months, but I'm about to make an appearance, in a new and improved state!

As you know I am the environmental mascot of the FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway and, as such, I hope to attract children to the beauty of the Parkway as well as inspire their interest in nature in general.



Many of us have read and have been moved by Richard Louv's book, *Last Child in the Woods*. In this age of technology where children are attached to all things wired and battery-operated, we need to make the effort to interest our younger generations in the great outdoors, in the beauty and miracle of nature.

Whether you are lucky enough to live within proximity of our glorious Blue Ridge Parkway, or merely have wooded parks and trails in your area, let me, Grover Groundhog, inspire your children to enjoy and appreciate nature.

With my own [Facebook](#) page (Grover Mascot), my own [email](#) address, and my own eNewsletter, I'm expecting to become quite the media personality. I'll even be making guest appearances at BRP events. Wow!

In the meantime, I'd love to hear from you, your children or grandchildren. If you want to be one of my special FRIENDS, please send me your email address, and any Blue Ridge Parkway-inspired poems, stories, photos and drawings you'd like to share. I'll be sure to reply!

Grover Groundhog

[GroverGroundhog@FriendsBRP.org](mailto:GroverGroundhog@FriendsBRP.org)

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Roanoke VA 24018

## ADVERTISE WITH YOUR FRIENDS

If you own a business or manage your company's advertising, consider what FRIENDS can do to strengthen your visibility among FRIENDS and all who love the Parkway. Click [Advertise](#) to download for more information.

## HOWDY, PARTNER

FRIENDS joins in welcoming Leesa Brandon into her new role as Community and Partnership Coordinator for the Blue Ridge Parkway. Here's what Superintendent Phil Francis had to say about Leesa and this new position:

*I am delighted to announce that the Blue Ridge Parkway is taking an initial step in continuing the momentum generated during its recent 75th Anniversary by establishing a new Community and Partnerships Coordinator position. Emphasis on the entire Parkway region, and thinking beyond Parkway borders, was a central approach for Anniversary initiatives, and it will now be a more central activity in the Parkway's day-to-day operations. ...*

*The Community & Partnerships Coordinator will initially be filled by Leesa Brandon, who recently served as the executive director of the Blue Ridge Parkway's 75th project. Leesa's awareness of Parkway and regional issues, as well as emerging opportunities will serve the Parkway region extremely well. ...*

*The Community & Partnerships Coordinator will focus on three main areas of work: (1) Fostering regional communication and engagement with neighboring communities' (2) Oversight of the Parkway's Volunteers-in-Parks program; and (3) Facilitating work among and between formal Parkway partner organizations such as FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, the Blue Ridge Parkway Association, and others. ...*

## HELP FROM HOME

Responding to the call for FRIENDS volunteers working from home, a number of people have stepped forward to help. Additional remote volunteers welcome; there is plenty of work to go around. If interested, please email [Rod Broker](mailto:Rod.Broker@friendsofbrp.org) or phone 800/228-7275.

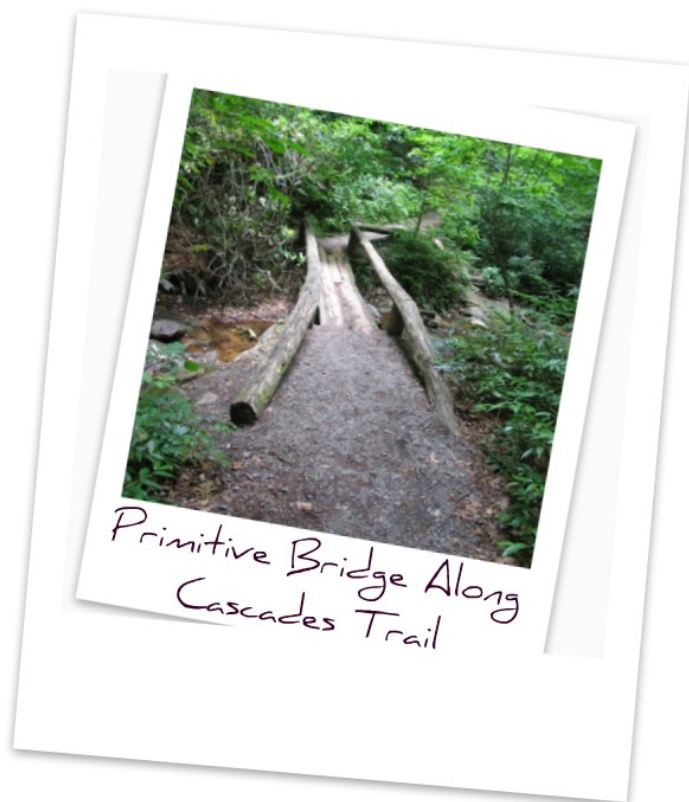
## I AM CASCADES TRAIL

### PLEASE ADOPT ME

First of all, thanks to the following Parkway promoters who have recently stepped forward to adopt Parkway trails, including trails highlighted in this "Please Adopt Me" series: James Elliott, Paulette Albright and Keep Nelson Beautiful, David Pleasant and the John Denver Memorial Team, the Appalachian State University FRIENDS Chapter,

Along with hundreds of other trail volunteers, these adopters are helping to preserve and enhance one of America's most valuable public resources, the Blue Ridge Parkway. Visit the [Adopt-a-Trail](#) page on the website for more information about adopting a Parkway trail.

This month's trail in-need-of-adoption is Cascades Self-Guiding Trail at mp 271.9. Author [Randy Johnson](#), who has written about many trails along the Blue Ridge, calls Cascades Trail "one of the Parkway's best self-guiding interpretive trails and evocative artifacts of human habitation ..." Rated moderate in terms of terrain and difficulty, Parkway officials measure the trail at just under one mile in length. Visit [Virtual Blue Ridge](#) for more information about Cascades Self-Guiding Trail.



**VA TECH COACH  
FRANK BEAMER  
INVITES YOU  
TO BE A SPONSOR**

FRIENDS of the  
Blue Ridge Parkway  
**Inaugural Golf Classic**  
Ballyhack Golf Club  
Roanoke Virginia  
May 21, 2011



## ACT NOW, Sponsorship

opportunities are limited!  
For more information, contact [Kay Christiansen](#)  
or call 88/228-7275

## ITEM OF THE MONTH IN FRIENDS ONLINE STORE



Watercolorist Lona Cox, a longtime member of FRIENDS, resides in Galax, Virginia. One of her paintings, Galax Leaves in Winter, showcases the native southern Appalachian plant, galax, in mid-winter. Lona has generously donated 100% of the proceeds from the sale of this print to FRIENDS Fisher Peak Chapter. The print measures 19 x 27 inches, and is available for \$50.00 including shipping. Click here to order [Galax Leaves in Winter](#), or go to the [Online Store](#) for information about other items for sale.

## THANK YOU FOR BEING A FRIEND AT WINTERGREEN

A handful of members and volunteers are needed to represent FRIENDS at several Wintergreen Resort events and festivals in 2011. [Wintergreen](#) is located in beautiful Nelson County, Virginia, and is one of FRIENDS newest active partners in support of the Parkway.

Earth Day (April 23) as well as Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Labor Day weekends at Wintergreen will provide great opportunities to mingle with area residents, guests and visitors. As volunteers, you will provide basic information about the Parkway and FRIENDS, promote merchandise and membership sales, distribute materials and resources, and mingle with other agencies and organizations that are represented.



Help one day, or help one or more weekends - whatever time you can give. Full training and support will be provided. Contact [Rod Broker](#) if you are available to serve or have additional questions.

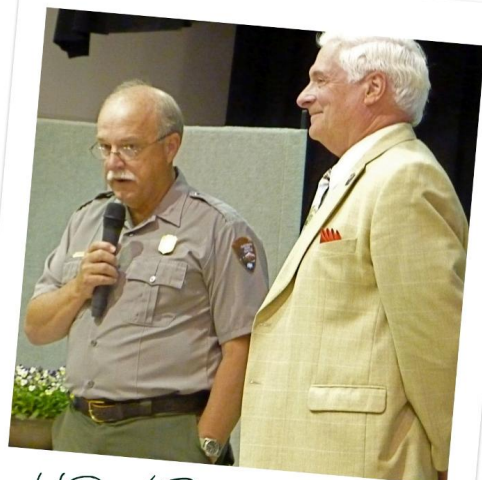
## HQ VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Dan Brown was recognized in October 2010 as Headquarters Volunteer of the Year for his service to the Parkway as a Volunteer in Parks (VIP). Parkway Superintendent Phil Francis presented Dan with his award and basket of gifts of FRIENDS. Here's what Phil had to say about VIP Dan Brown:

*I would like to thank you for the invaluable service you provided to the Blue Ridge Parkway during its 75th Anniversary year. After serving a distinguished career as Park Ranger, Superintendent, and Deputy Regional Director, you elected to continue to serve the parkway. In 2008, we asked you to share some of your garden and bridge club time to plan and implement the Parkway's 75th Anniversary celebration.*

*At every step of the way you went above and beyond what was asked, showing your deep level of care about this park and the success of its staff. As a volunteer, you served as the Chairperson of the non-profit board and led the organization from its inception. ... You worked tirelessly to ensure that the goals of the anniversary were met, and you did so cheerfully and effectively. There are many great parkway volunteers - now you can count yourself among their ranks.*

*It is a bit unusual to recognize a retired Superintendent as one of our most valuable volunteers, but this is an unusual year. As a consequence of your actions and leadership, it is clear that the parkway's 75th Anniversary has contained a memorable series of events with far reaching effects. You are an invaluable resource to the Blue Ridge Parkway, its staff, and the millions of visitors who enjoyed the fruits of your efforts this anniversary year.*



HQ VIP of the Year  
Dan Brown



Make a  
Donation

FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway benefits significantly from volunteer services, but we need your financial support to fund our programs. FRIENDS is unique: for every \$1.00 you invest, Parkway volunteers provide \$3.00 of volunteer service back to the Blue Ridge Parkway! Together we are making a difference! [Please be generous](#) in support of our mission to preserve, promote and enhance the Parkway. Thank you.

## WE'D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Do you have a comment to share or question to ask about the Parkway or FRIENDS? What would you like to read about in a future edition of the eNews? [EMAIL](#) your comments or questions.

### STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR FRIENDS

FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway  
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