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News Release

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For Immediate Release

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FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway Rocky Knob Chapter Looking for Working Members to Assist with Projects on the Parkway

MEADOWS OF DAN COMMUNITY CENTER – FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway Rocky Knob Chapter will hold its first group meeting Tuesday, July 17, 2007, 6:30 p.m. at the Meadows of Dan Community Center, Old Highway 58 in Meadows of Dan. The Community Center is located across the highway from the new fire house. Please invite anyone that you think might be interested in volunteering for FRIENDS. The Chapter wishes to extend a special invitation to young people who are able and willing to work. Thirty-five seventh graders from Woolwine spent a day in June planting shrubbery for FRIENDS Fisher's Peak Chapter and, according to Parkway Maintenance Supervisor, Lester Wood, they did an excellent job.

The Rocky Knob chapter formed its Steering Committee in May, 2007 and has increased its number from 9 to 28. The Chapter has participated in split rail fence restoration training, milepost marker painting, and collection of the FRIENDS donation box at Mabry Mill. They are also sending members to chainsaw training in mid-July and to assist with the construction of bridges to the Blue Ridge Music Center the week of July 10. These projects need many volunteers, so the Chapter wishes to extend its invitation to residents of Carroll, Floyd and Patrick Counties, whether temporary residents or full time residents. Additionally, tourists are invited to attend. Chapter projects typically fall within the milepost markers 130 to 195.

Mindy DeCesar, Interpretative Ranger for the Blue Ridge Parkway and Susan Mills, Ph.D., Executive Director of FRIENDS of the Parkway, will present information about the Parkway and how FRIENDS supports the Parkway efforts. The goal of this meeting is to grow the current membership from 28 to 50 working members.

Nine members of the Rocky Knob chapter have painted 100 miles of markers from milepost 130 through 230. Plans are underway to continue painting the mile post markers to Asheville, N. C.

Five members participated in split rail fence restoration in May, 2007. And four groups have agreed to collect the donation box at Mabry Mill and make deposits with a local bank. The FRIENDS donation boxes return 100% of visitor contributions back to the Parkway.

Six chapter members have volunteered to help Fisher Peak Chapter with the installation of the bridge leading to the Blue Ridge Music Center July 10, 11 and 12th.

Plans are underway to have Lester Wood, Maintenance Supervisor of the Parkway, conduct a chainsaw safety training class. Tentative dates are 7/17 and 7/18. This two day class is necessary for anyone who uses a chainsaw on Parkway property. The Chapter needs volunteers who are willing to participate so that they can start repairing the split rail fences. For those attending, lunch and FRIENDS tee-shirts will be provided.

If you have any questions, please contact Gloria Hilton at 540-593-3081 or via email gjhilton1@yahoo.com.

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FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Inc. is a Blue Ridge Parkway partner organization. FRIENDS is a nonprofit membership organization that has served the Blue Ridge Parkway for over 19 years. Individuals or organizations interested in learning about other volunteer opportunities or ways to financially support Parkway programs should call, write or visit on the Internet: FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Inc. P.O. Box 20986, Roanoke, VA 24018 / Telephone 540-772-2992 or 800-228-PARK (7275) / E-mail: staff@FriendsBRP.org / Website: www.BlueRidgeFRIENDS.org