



Greetings!

FRIENDS' President's MESSAGE ...



In the next two weeks, the Blue Ridge Parkway will see more visitors than at any period during the year. Travelers from across the nation as well as hundreds of thousands of us fortunate enough to live near the parkway will enjoy God's lavish autumn display of color from our beloved Parkway. Statistically, more people will visit the Blue Ridge Parkway this year than any other park in the country. That fact makes me wonder why this national treasure continues to be the "red-headed stepchild" of the National Park Service. Apparently, this "un-favored" position in the National Park Service is not a new phenomenon. The late Stanley Abbott - Parkway builder, visionary, and the man most responsible for its design - used those same words to describe the lack of support for it during his career.

- While the parkway attracts more than twice the number of visitors as Yellowstone, Yosemite and the Grand Canyons combined, its annual budget is roughly one-half the budgets of each of those western parks.
- The Parkway's budget is approximately the same as it was 26 years ago (inflation adjusted).
- 52 jobs, about one-quarter of the entire Parkway's staff, have been lost in recent years due to lack of funding.
- There currently exists a \$200 million backlog of maintenance work.
- As one third of the maintenance staff have lost their jobs, vistas have become overgrown, restroom facilities are outdated, and campgrounds and picnic areas are opened later and closed earlier each year.
- Safety on the parkway has become compromised by staff cuts. Today the closest ranger can be as much as two hours away.

We're trying to tell the story to our congressmen. This summer we sent 1,223 petitions from you, our members and volunteers, urgently requesting additional support for "America's Favorite Scenic Drive." They have heard our plight and encouraged us to continue writing them and telling them our own personal stories of why the Parkway is important and what it means to each of us. Join me in sharing our stories with our elected officials.

You'll be proud to know that one way we're helping is by placing donation boxes at key locations like the Folk Arts Center in Asheville and at Mabry Mill and Humpback Rocks in Virginia. These funds will go directly to the park service to help fill the gap. Our executive director, Dr. Susan Mills, was instrumental in securing a \$20,000 grant to help print parkway maps. The parkway simply did not have the funds to print the map this year. We've also taken over publication of the PARKWAY MILEPOST, the park's official magazine. It's another way we're

trying to be a "FRIEND."

Thanks to each of you. Please come join us at our Nov. 11th viewshed planting at Milepost 125.5 (see info below).

[I would like to donate to help save Parkway views.](#)



YOU ARE INVITED to help FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway plant trees! SATURDAY, November 11, 2006



FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway began over 17 years ago and is an environmental nonprofit volunteer organization that is dedicated to preserving "America's Favorite Scenic Drive", the Blue Ridge Parkway. Our membership continues to grow with over 7,000 members nationally, but **WE NEED YOUR HELP to SAVE the Blue Ridge Parkway VIEWS!** Through our Save the Views program, hundreds of mature trees and seedlings are planted to re-create the design elements of the original Parkway design. FRIENDS is the only authorized Blue Ridge Parkway partner organization that has been given this project "to restore the Parkway views through landscape plantings" under a formal agreement between FRIENDS and the National Park Service.

FRIENDS needs adult and youth volunteers to help plant approximately 150 trees (oak, maple, poplar, and ash) at milepost 125.5 on Saturday, November 11 at 9 AM. There will be a formal welcome, and the planting will end around noon. Refreshments, activities and live blue grass music will be provided.

Volunteers from previous tree planting events have expressed the wonderful times they had and the satisfaction of being a part of preserving the Blue Ridge Parkway. See more news on plantings of the past:

[Article from Pinnacle Living](#)

Together, we determine the future of our Parkway views. Hands-on support by Blue Ridge Parkway local communities will impact future generations by setting an example. A familiar saying that goes a long way: "Youth can say to their children, I helped plant that tree to save the Parkway twenty years ago."

More details:

- A shuttle bus and county vans will transport volunteers from Virginia's Explore Park to the site starting at 8:30 AM.
- Wear your favorite work clothes. Due to possible muddy conditions, please wear boots or appropriate shoes (no sandals), and bring work gloves. We will have some equipment, but we also need shovels, rakes, 1 gallon jugs, 5 gallon buckets and sledge hammers.
- A contractor will dig all the holes for the trees and place a tree at each hole. The exciting part will be simply placing each tree in a hole, filling in the dirt around each planting, and staking and watering the trees.
- At the planting site, there will be other activities to enjoy including an environmental education program presented by Anna Wills with Virginia's Explore Park, and a fun time with "Express yourself through Art" coordinated by Polly Branch.
- The viewshed planting will be videotaped.
- FRIENDS Roanoke Valley Chapter will be selling merchandise such as caps, T-shirts, and

note cards.

- The Blue Ridge Parkway requires all participants to complete a **volunteer form** before participating in the planting. All volunteers under age 18 must bring a signed parental consent form. Please contact the FRIENDS office for more information and to request these forms in advance.
- [PDF NPS Form 10-85](#)
- [PDF Parental Approval Form](#)

FRIENDS Saving Parkway Views project is lead by a Roanoke community-based steering committee. The committee includes representatives from Creative Nursery & Landscapes, Virginia Department of Forestry, The Kiwanis Club of Roanoke, Virginia's Explore Park, Merrill Lynch, Western Virginia Land Trust, Roanoke Department of Parks and Recreation, FRIENDS Roanoke Valley Chapter and Michael Wray, County of Roanoke Board of Supervisors. The Viewshed Steering Committee and FRIENDS volunteers have planted more than 150 seedlings on March 25, 2006 at Milepost 125.5, over 100 trees at Milepost 125.5 on November 5, 2005, more than 150 seedlings in April 2005, and 100 trees in October 2004. November 5, 2005 was a beautiful, warm fall day and a great time to enjoy the outdoors. We anticipate another remarkable turnout this year.

If you are unable to be with us on November 11, but you would like to participate in the planting, please mail your donation to: FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, P. O. Box 20986, Roanoke, VA 24018. Call our office at (540) 772-2992 or (800) 228-7275 if you have any questions.

[I would like to donate to help save Parkway views.](#)



Message From...

Suzette Molling
Park Environmental Protection Specialist
Blue Ridge Parkway



We want to hear from the public and concerned citizens so that we can make the most informed decisions concerning alternatives on park projects. Broad public involvement and a shared understanding of the decision making process as it progresses is critical to the success of Parkway projects and the long-term protection and enjoyment of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Public review periods provide an opportunity for the public to help us shape the future of the Blue Ridge Parkway. We prepare a variety of planning and environmental documents to help guide in managing park resources. These documents can range from site-specific impact analyses on facility locations to broader park-wide plans for future use and management of the park. To see all of the publicly available plans and environmental documents for the Blue Ridge Parkway, as well as the National Park Service, please go to the [NPS Planning website](#). Or you may also contact Suzette Molling, Park Environmental Protection Specialist, at 828-271-4779 ext. 219.

Suzette



Comments sought for Mt. Pisgah Environmental Assessment

The National Park Service has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a proposed wastewater treatment plant for Mt. Pisgah, near Milepost 410 on the Blue Ridge Parkway, and is seeking public review and input during the September 22 to October 22 comment period. The EA analyzes the potential effects of the replacement of the existing wastewater treatment plant located at Mt. Pisgah, in Haywood County, North Carolina.

For more information and to comment on this proposal, visit the [National Park Service website](#). Select Blue Ridge Parkway from the park dropdown menu and then click on the project that you wish to comment on. Information is also available, and comments may be made by writing to: Blue Ridge Parkway, ATTN: Suzette Molling, 199 Hemphill Knob Road, Asheville, NC 28803. **Comments must be postmarked by October 22, 2006.**

Parkway Seeks Public Input for Watauga County School Board Right-of-Way Permit

(Asheville)- The Blue Ridge Parkway is seeking public input through November 1, 2006 on an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a right-of-way permit for the Watauga County Board of Education (School Board). Parkway officials said the EA evaluates the impacts of issuing a right-of-way permit to the Watauga County School Board to utilize an existing NCDOT deed reserved roadside park on National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway lands in Watauga County, North Carolina. The EA looks at two alternatives.

Those who wish to review and comment on these documents may do so by visiting this [Internet site](#). Even though using this website is recommended, written comments may also be submitted to: Blue Ridge Parkway, ATTN: Suzette Molling, 199 Hemphill Knob Road, Asheville, NC 28803. Comments must be sent by November 1. Ideas and concerns expressed by those who comment will be used to prepare the final proposal and impact analysis. **Public review will end on November 1, 2006.**



- Internet, fuel costs cited as visits lag
- The Boston Globe
- August 21, 2006



. . . After decades of thriving popularity, national parks across the country are experiencing serious declines, falling 14 million since a high of 287 million in 1999.

[PDF Article from the Boston Globe](#)

[I would like to donate to help preserve the legacy.](#)



From the Newsletter of Natural Resource Management on the Blue Ridge Parkway

Witch Flower is Last?



At this time of year just about all of the flowers have come and gone, but there has to be one that is last. Waiting until the end of September, or even later, the witch hazel is just beginning to flowering as other trees have already started to go into their fall colors.

At the same time that this plant is producing flowers its fruits are ripening. These fruits started with last year's blossoms but take one year to mature. As they dry and shrivel the shell opens and the seeds are spit out, sometimes traveling up to 50 feet.



Contributing Author: Peter Givens, Interpretive Specialist, Blue Ridge Parkway

Hawk Migration

Do you know about Hawk Migration?



Many species of hawks migrate south during the winter and one of their major routes follows the spine of the Blue Ridge. Warm air in the valleys rises up the sides of the mountains. Hawks catch a ride on these "thermals" and circle higher and higher, almost going out of sight. Then they head south, "coasting" in order to save energy and flying as far down the Blue Ridge as possible. Another thermal, another twisting, corkscrew ascent, and then another glide south. This pattern takes them hundreds of miles down the mountains toward their winter destination.

North of Roanoke, Virginia at Harvey's Knob Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway is a favorite spot for hawk watchers from September through November. Tens of thousands of hawks, along with a few Peregrine Falcons and Bald Eagles are counted by local birding clubs each year during this spectacular migration.

A mountain memo from your neighbors in the Appalachian consortium, in celebration of our regional natural and cultural history.



A Special Thank You to the Carolina Mountain Club

The Carolina Mountain Club (CMC), established in 1923, is a model club for trail maintenance in North Carolina. The CMC is one of the most prominent hiking and trail maintenance organizations in the western part of the state. Member crews and individual members work on 95 miles of the Appalachian Trail and on 125 miles of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Its members come not only from its home base of Asheville, but from other communities in the region and out-of-state. The CMC cooperates in joint concerns with the U.S. Forest Service, the Appalachian Trail Conference and other hiking clubs including organizations in Tennessee.



Bob and Chris Poe

Carolina Mountain Club – Wednesday Trail Crew



Bob has been involved in trail maintenance for over 2 years. He retired from a 30-year office job and just yearned to get outdoors. He had always enjoyed hiking yet has learned a whole lot more about hiking in general and the trails themselves through getting involved with the Wednesday Trail Crew. The camaraderie of the crew is also a big part of the enjoyment factor.

He now takes the family out on hikes that he would not even have known about prior to being on the crew. "You get to see things that you just wouldn't see otherwise." There is also a great sense of satisfaction gained from seeing the trails you have been a part of creating, and then hiking on those same trails a year or so later and knowing that more people are also out there enjoying them.

Bob is a very energetic person and loves smashing up rocks and laying trail in the best way that he can possibly do it, taking into consideration the terrain and the tools at hand. Sometimes he takes his grandson, Chris, and gets a real kick out of seeing him enjoying it just as much as his "granddad" does.

Chris is the youngest member of the crew at only 15. He tags along with his granddad, who is quite rightly proud of his grandson. He is a young American football player with aspirations to get a college scholarship through football, so involvement in this kind of active volunteering helps keep him in good physical shape for sports. It also keeps his resume in good shape for college applications!

As the youngest and strongest, Chris gets to carry a lot of the heavy stuff like rock bars and sledge hammers. Rock bars are about 25 pounds each, so he gets a good workout. He spends a lot of time smashing up rocks and helping lay them in the trail, which he really seems to enjoy – they all call it "the fun part!" He works really hard and is a valued member of the crew, as is any young man due to their strength and energy. It is also good to see the young guys getting interested in the natural environment. Chris appreciates the beautiful views along the Parkway and the need to preserve those views. He takes his dog out hiking to see what he and the crew have accomplished on the trails.

[I would like to donate to help the Volunteers in Parks.](#)



Carolina Mountain Club

HELP NEEDED - RESERVE NOVEMBER 4, 2006 - Build another piece of the MST

Your help will be appreciated to continue the extension of the MST south of Balsam Gap to Soho Gap. Please reserve November 4, 2006 for this trail work. Meet at Moose Café next to the Farmers Market @ 9:00 AM for car pooling or at BRP mile marker 447. If you have tools, bring them. If not, we will supply them. Please invite your friends and pass the word on to hiking clubs in your area.

We guarantee a beautiful day, nice and cool (we will be above 4200 ft.). Perfect fall work day.

A great day for the entire family to enjoy the out doors and give back a little for all the wonderful days we have enjoyed hiking.

For more information call- Piet Bodenhorst –828 298 8371 E-mail- pietboden@bellsouth.net



For more Blue Ridge Parkway Special Events and Blue Ridge Parkway information, go [here](#).

[Humpback Rocks Special Events.](#)

Oct. 14, 10am-3pm – **LIVESTOCK and FARM ANIMALS** demonstration from the Augusta County 4-H Clubs This event made possible by a grant from the COMMUNITY FOUNDATION of Staunton/Augusta Co. /Waynesboro. Call 540-943-4716 for more information or check www.blueridgefriends.org

2pm-4pm - **HUMPBACK ROCK FAMILY BAND** Easy-listening old time music with fiddle, banjo, guitar, Appalachian dulcimer and hammer dulcimer. Free. Bring your own lawn chair.

Oct. 15, 2pm-4pm - **"TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC – Past and Present"** with KEVIN DONLEAVY and FRIENDS Free. Bring your own lawn chair. Call 540-943-4716 for more information or check www.blueridgefriends.org

October 21 & 22 - 10pm-4pm - **HUMPBACK FARM FESTIVAL** – apple cider pressing, plow animal demonstrations, fiber dyeing with local plants, and cabin tours. No charge.

October 22 - 2pm-4pm - **STEPHEN MOORE** a conduit of American folk traditions, doing "hamboning," songs and stories. No charge. Bring your own lawn chair. Call 540-943-4716 for more information or check www.blueridgefriends.org

October 22 - 2pm-4pm - **"MOUNTAIN MESSENGERS"** Blue Grass/Gospel "Home Grown Boys" from the Valley, playing hard-driving, foot-stomping old time and bluegrass music. Admission is free. Bring your own lawn chair. Call 540-943-4716 for more information or check www.blueridgefriends.org

FRIENDS' co-sponsors The Musical Heritage of the Blue Ridge Series at the Blue Ridge Music Center.

FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway is Co-sponsoring a Special Series of Lecture/Concerts and Workshops presented by the National Park Service and National Council for Traditional Arts at the Blue Ridge Music Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway, milepost 212.5

Lecture/Concert and Workshop Series

Sunday, October 15

Lecture/Concerts: 1pm-2pm; Blue Ridge Music Center Indoor Theater

Workshops: 3pm-6pm; Blue Ridge Music Center Classroom

Lecture/Concerts

Many people have delved deep into the region to explore the roots and diversity of Blue Ridge music. Experience this rare opportunity to learn the stories of these songs and the people who play them during these special programs.

Reservation and Ticket Information

Call 276-236-5309 for all advance ticket sales and workshop reservations. Tickets \$5.00 per person Tickets may be purchased at the door or in advance. Seating is limited to 100 for each program, so be sure to get to the Music Center early or call ahead and reserve a seat.

Workshops

Pre-registration required.

Participation fee \$40.00 per person per workshop. Fee includes free admission to lecture/concert. Registration must be made at least one week in advance. Participation is limited to 15 people per workshop.

For more information, go to: [Blue Ridge Music Center](#)

Bass Lake at Moses Cone:

October 28th - Creepy Halloween Night Hike: Meet at Bass Lake off of Rt. 221 near Blowing Rock, NC for a night hike focusing on stories and creatures of the night. Two tours will leave from the Bass Lake parking area at 7 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. For more information call 828-295-6308.

For more Blue Ridge Parkway Special Events, go to: [National Park Service - Special Events](#)

[I would like to donate to help the Volunteers in Parks.](#)



by Dick Byrd, Volunteer Video Producer
FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway



It is my delight and pleasure to be able to drive up and down the Blue Ridge Parkway in all months and in all seasons; videotaping and photographing the comings and goings of the scenery, the visitors, the wonder, and the might of our Parkway. In doing so, I get to witness the beauty, solitude, wonder, and yes, the heartaches of "our Parkway." By beauty, I mean what we all enjoy. By solitude, I mean the times when I'm all alone; at an overlook, a picnic ground, or any stretch of parkway "all to myself." By wonder, I do indeed mean the wonder that God has given us, and our government has saved for us, of this magnificent 469 miles of linear national park. But, unfortunately, I also mean the heartache that comes from: litter, paths worn where there shouldn't be paths, graffiti which shouldn't be anywhere at any time, speeding (which is just so "against the idea of the Parkway") and any and all other ways people decide to do "their own thing" despite the wishes of other parkway users.

I drive 45 mph where the Parkway says to drive 45 mph. I drive 35 mph where the Parkway says to drive 35 mph. I drive other speeds where the Parkway says to drive other speeds. I'm on the Parkway to enjoy the Parkway and to allow others to enjoy the Parkway. And yes, I do practice good manners in pulling off at overlooks to let "speeders" go by. I wish they wouldn't speed. At least I'm moving out of their way to protect my future as a Parkway user. (I've been in nasty accidents elsewhere than the Parkway... and don't want to be in other such accidents). The National Park Service is conducting a "crack-down" on traffic problems, as per their recent news release. Despite funding problems, they are managing to work on the speeding problems. Thank you, NPS.

I also witness ugly graffiti scrawled on walls, signs, trees, rocks, and retaining walls along the Parkway. Why? Don't people know who they are already without leaving "their mark" on this wonderful place? If you want to "leave your name" on something, how about on a check to FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway! The Parkway leaders ask us "kind users" to pick up trash when we find it. I do. I see others doing the same. It's just a shame that there are people who desire to litter the Parkway despite the rest of us. Please, take only pictures. Leave only footprints (and not many of those, if you're careful)! Why can't people stick to the designated and pre-routed pathways and trails along the Parkway? There is now an effort underway to stop the use of unofficial trails on and near the Parkway. Yes... it is true, that overall usage of our Parkway is down in the past three years, or so. It is possible that overgrown overlooks are one reason for this decline, but it is my personal feeling that much of the decline is due to "commuters" in the Asheville and Roanoke areas learning to avoid the Parkway (finally) for "faster" routes to and from work.



It is true that tourism industry slogans attributed to "Silver Springs" in Florida have taken hold on the Parkway. For instance; a Silver Springs slogan attributed to a former manager of public

relations at that historic attraction says: "You come to Silver Springs twice. Once as a kid, and a second time WITH your kids." Unfortunately, some people see the Blue Ridge Parkway in the same way. That's a shame, because the Parkway is so many things, in so many seasons, to so many people.



Walk along Otter Creek north of the James River. You'll find a piece of the Parkway you may not have known existed. This tiny stream flows beside the roadway for miles; easily accessible, easily photographed, easily useful to ease your mind and spirit. Set up a portable chair at an overlook, pull out a cup of coffee, and learn to listen to the wind, watch the hawks, and view the distant horizon. Climb the Humpback Rocks. Walk around the upper reaches of Peaks of Otter. Sit and listen to the mountain music at the many opportunities on and near the Parkway. Drink in the scenery at Mabry Mill, the history at Virginia's Explore Park, the fields behind the Inn at Doughton Park, sunset at Price Lake, evenings at Mount Pisgah Inn, and the striking mountain peaks viewable just above Oconaluftee. Use, but please don't abuse this grand Parkway. I relish each and every trip... whether it is 250 miles on a video shoot, or 15 miles "just to clean out the cobwebs in my mind." Oh, and another thing: write your congressman and senator. Ask them to help keep the Parkway alive and well funded. Ask them to see to it that federal government appropriations are provided to upgrade, update, and otherwise "up" OUR PARKWAY. And join "FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway." It's a worthwhile "join." I have renewed my membership. I hope you will, too.



FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway T-Shirt ([view now](#))

Comes in White, Black, or Gray

- Small
- Medium
- Large
- X Large
- 2X Large

[Visit Store](#)



Help Us Preserve the Legacy

FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway offers young and old, together, the opportunity to connect with friends and family to save the Blue Ridge Parkway for their continuing enjoyment - and for future generations.

The Blue Ridge Parkway connects the Shenandoah National Park with the Great Smoky

Mountains National Park. It is America's most scenic drive encompassing 469 miles traversing 29 counties in Virginia and North Carolina. Over 20 million people touch its borders annually - making it America's most frequented park treasure!

By joining Preserving the Legacy you will be supporting projects that will protect this extraordinary Parkway and adjacent land and views for yourselves and for future generations. FRIENDS is an official National Park Service partner. Please join us by choosing one of our deserving Programs today!

If you wish to make bequests in your will to the FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, please send us this: [FRIENDS Blue Ridge Parkway Legacy](#).

Please forward this e-newsletter to anyone you feel would be interested! If this message was forwarded to you by a friend, you can [receive your own subscription](#) by visiting our web site.

[Donation Page](#)

If you have any questions, please [contact us](#)

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We sent you this email because you requested information on Preserving the Parkway. If you'd rather not receive email updates from FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, you can delete your name from our email list by [clicking here](#).