

The Parkway Sentinel

FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 6

July 2006

Greetings!

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Enter your Blue Ridge Parkway photos now for the 2006 Photo Contest:

FRIENDS and the Blue Ridge Parkway are sponsoring an [Amateur Photo Contest!](#) Entries will be accepted from May 1, 2006 to September 30, 2006. By entering the 2006 Photo Contest, adults and young people can share their talents, memories and simply beautiful Parkway snapshots. This is one more way to get involved this summer with the Blue Ridge Parkway! Forward this email to your friends to get involved!

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



Summer has come to the America's Favorite Scenic Drive, the Blue Ridge Parkway! In this issue we are highlighting Special Events along the Blue Ridge Parkway, an article from a volunteer and a volunteer opportunity.



Susan Mills & Galax's Fishers Peak
Chapter's Chair, Doug Robinson

FRIENDS is proud to sponsor many of these

events for the 20 million visitors that experience the Blue Ridge Parkway as a "living rural museum." FRIENDS is making a difference in its contributions to Parkway programs because of **your support and membership**. You can make a difference! Encourage a friends to join FRIENDS by forwarding this eNewsletter and asking them to consider joining. Start a FRIENDS Chapter in your area. Chapters are been started in the following areas of Virginia: Humpback Rock, Roanoke Valley, Floyd/Meadows of Dan, Galax and in North Carolina: Boone/Blowing Rock and Asheville. Contact me at staff@friendsbrp.org if you are interested in joining a chapter.

You adventures, stories, articles along the Blue Ridge Parkway with pictures are always of interest to FRIENDS. Submit by the 1st of each month. All used in the Sentinel will receive a FRIENDS cap! Send you stories and pictures by email to staff@friendsbrp.org.

Enjoy your summer on the Parkway!

Susan Mills FRIENDS Executive Director



Sitting and talking with the superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway

In Mid-June FRIENDS' volunteer staff member Dick Byrd met with Superintendent Phil Francis at Craggy Gardens picnic grounds for a chat. This is part of this informal interview with the Blue Ridge Parkway's superintendent.



Like just about anything government provides there are pros and cons, friends and naysayers, some bad with the good. New Parkway superintendent Phil Francis knows there are detractors of the Parkway just as he knows there are people who love it, and, as he says, they "love it for many reasons." And in the couple of hours the superintendent spent that sunny day in a canvas folding chair chatting about the Parkway experience, he specifically and grandly talked about "our Parkway" (he specifically said it isn't "his," saying it's "ours.")

The superintendent was reminded that some people along the Parkway

say they don't even try to enjoy it any longer, because, as one man recently put it in downtown Bedford: "The overviews are overgrown. You can't see anything anymore." To that Francis said there is currently a plan underway that will maintain, cut back, and otherwise spruce up one third of the overlooks along the Parkway every year. That way, he says, all of them will get attention at least every three years.

Francis and the entire upper management of the Parkway work from offices in Asheville, NC. But, as he has begun his service he has begun to get out and about along the Parkway. He acknowledges there is a gap between the money the National Park Service has to spend and the growing list of things on which to spend it. He says the budget has increased slightly in the past few years, but the gap between income and outgo continues to grow. So he was asked if, some day, users of the Blue Ridge Parkway might have to pay an entrance fee, like is charged just to the North in the Shenandoah National Park and its Skyline Drive. The superintendent says an entrance fee is a political question. Plus, he says, there are over 100 entrances to the Parkway in Virginia and North Carolina, so it would be difficult to charge a fee. He adds: "We are NOT looking at an entrance fee. We're looking for more volunteer opportunities." He particularly noted the "FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway," as helping the Parkway in its mission. He says their program of planting trees to shield the view of growing development, the viewshed program, is one such example. He describes it as what he calls "Shared Stewardship." He says that also goes to the individual Parkway user. Francis says all of us who enjoy and use the Parkway should also help take care of it. He says currently the Parkway has 46 full-time jobs empty because of budget concerns. He says that's out of 231 full-time jobs. So he asks that people using a trail on the Parkway stop and pick up a piece of trash and carry it out. He asks that everyone try to be good stewards. And he says find a volunteer support group to help in other ways as well. He says hiking organizations are adopting trails. He says donating funds to such groups as "FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway" also helps. And the superintendent says he hopes to have donation boxes located along the Parkway to help fund the work of the volunteer organizations.

Francis has been Parkway superintendent for less than a year, so he has been spending time this summer checking out Parkway operations and talking with visitors first-hand. He recently he visited the section of the Parkway from Otter Creek to Peaks of Otter. He said he hadn't been there since the late 70's, and found it to be fantastic. He said he found himself "humming and whistling and having a great time" from Otter Creek, across the James River, then up hill to Peaks of Otter. He said it's now "on my list" of favorite Parkway locations...and will remain so for visits in the future. So sometime if you are out and about on that portion of the Blue Ridge Parkway, and a man with a National Park Service uniform and one of those "Smoky The Bear" hats on passes humming and whistling.... say hello to Phil

Francis, superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

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



** If you are interested in adopting a Blue Ridge Parkway trail, or would simply like to know more about the Adopt-A-Trail Program please visit our website:
<http://blueridgefriends.org/index.cfm/fa/content.view/menuID/662.htm>

[I would like to donate to help preserve parkway trails.](#)



FRIENDS' Fishers Peak Chapter

All dates are Saturdays - Beginning at 8:00 AM: July 22, August 5, August 19, September 9, and September 23

Volunteers must sign up in advance by contacting: **Dottie Bramley**
Email: pdbramley@valink.com Telephone: (276) 236-7658 Volunteers bring a sack lunch, if you would like to eat together after the trail work.

Carolina Mountain Club

Trail day- Saturday, August 19 – Beginning at 9:00 AM

Meet at Moose Cafe Exit 42 of I-40 to car pool to worksite. Purpose of outing - Extend the MST from Cascade/ Woodfin Overlook (mile 447 of BRP) south toward Soho Gap. No experience needed. Tools will be supplied

Volunteers must sign up in advance by contacting: Piet Bodenhorst -
Email: pboden@bellsouth.net Telephone: 828-298-8371

Mountains-to-Sea Trail

July 21-23, 2006 - Save the Date! - MST Trail Construction along the Blue Ridge Parkway between NC-18 and NC-16.

During the week of September 9-16, 2006, the FMST and American Hiking Society will host a Volunteer Vacation on the Blue Ridge Parkway between NC-18 and NC-16 to construct the MST.

Volunteers must sign up in advance by contacting: Jeff Brewer - Email: pboden@bellsouth.net Telephone: 919-868-6274



Phyllis Stump- With a background in teaching English, Phyllis has lots of experience in drama and poetry. She heard the story of the legendary midwife, "Aunt" Orlene, and decided that this was a story that needed to be told to help perpetuate a piece of the local history which was in the process of being forgotten.



Phyllis dedicated a considerable amount of her time to researching the story and interviewed many descendants of both Orlene's family and those families to whom she was midwife. She has written the story in the form of a monologue, which she performs dressed as Orlene would have been, all in black with an apron on and holding a walking stick.

The legendary Orlene was born in 1839 and actually gave birth to 24 children of her own, but tragically none survived past infancy. At the age of fifty she began her midwifery career and from then to her death in 1939 she delivered over 1000 babies. As legend has it, she lost not one child or mother in that time.

Puckett Cabin on the Parkway is allegedly where Orlene and her husband, John Puckett, lived, so this is where many of Phyllis's monologues have been performed. Keep an eye out for "They Call Me Aunt Orlene."



Humpback Rocks MP 5.8:

Sunday, July 16th "**Oral Traditions Handed Down**" 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Ginny and Sarah Hawker: Unaccompanied and Primitive Baptist Singing.

For more events at the Humpback Rocks, see the poster: [MP 5.8 Blue Ridge Parkway National Park Service](#)

Blue Ridge Music Center 2006 Summer Concert Series

6 pm - rain or shine. Amphitheater opens at 4:30. Bring lawn chair or blankets. Picnic fare is permitted, but alcohol is not. A small concession stand serves hotdogs, chips and cold drinks. The Visitor Center is open 9-5 pm and until 8 pm during concerts.

July 15-Slate Mountain Ramblers
Galax Little Leaves
Blue Ridge Country Kickers Clogging Team

July 22 -The Courtney Hollow Band
Zephyr Lightning Bolts

July 29 -Tribute to Galax Old Fiddlers Convention featuring " Best All Around Performers 1965-2005"
also New Ballards Branch Bogtrotters

Aug 5- (\$5 gate)The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities presents
Artists from The Crooked Road CD Series

Aug.19- The Sigmon Stringers
The Oriskany Strings
The Craig County Boys

Aug.26 -High Ground
Oldtime Boys

Moses H. Cone Memorial Park MP 294:
Saturday, August 12th "**Cone Heritage Day**" 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Craft demonstrations, storytelling, singing, special activities for kids and ranger programs about Moses H. Cone Memorial Park. Located at milepost 294. Call 828-295-6308 for more information.

NC Museum of Minerals MP 331:
Thursday, September 14th – Saturday, September 16th **Overmountain Victory Celebration:** A celebration of the Revolutionary War at the NC Museum of Minerals (milepost 331).
September 14 - 15 (9 a.m. - 2 p.m.) Special demonstrations for area schools. Reservations are required - call 828-765-1228.
September 15 - 16 (7 p.m. - 9 p.m.) Ranger led candlelight tours of the encampment site. Open to the public.

Orchard at Altapass:
September 16th - (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.) A day full of special events for all! Firing demonstrations, drilling, games and special demonstrations. A re-enactment of the skirmish will be held at the Orchard at Altapass. Open to the public.

Bass Lake:
Saturday, 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.



Volunteer Needs:



URGENT NEED: Assistance staffing the Visitor Center desk at Blue Ridge Music Center. Especially need someone Saturday mornings, 8:30-12:30.

Qualifications and Basic Skills:

- Must enjoy helping the public and be able to represent the National Park Service and the Blue Ridge Parkway in a professional and friendly manner.
- Be able to follow all security and emergency procedures, including fire alarms, reporting of accidents/injuries, etc.
- Be able to direct visitors using the Parkway strip map and assist them with services using the map and Directory.
- Direct visitors to services and activities.
- Be able to make Eastern National cash and credit card sales.
- Handle phone inquiries.
- Morning shift must open gates, disable alarms, unlock Visitor Center, set up change fund and open by 9 am.
- Late shift must lock and secure building after 5pm, close out cash and credit sales and prepare a daily shift report, set alarms and lock main gate.

For more information: [Blue Ridge Parkway News Release April 24, 2006](#)

Contact:

Mindy DeCesar – District Interpretive Supervisor, Plateau District
1670 Blue Ridge Parkway
Floyd, VA 24091
Ph: 540-745-9680 Fax: 540-745-9665

[Email:Mindy_DeCesar@nps.gov](mailto:Mindy_DeCesar@nps.gov)

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





FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway Peanuts ([view now](#))

Enjoy these delicious premium salted peanuts while also helping to protect the Blue Ridge Parkway for future generations. [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 Smoky Mountains National Park. It is America's most scenic drive encompassing 469 miles transversing 29 counties in Virginia and North Carolina. Over 22 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 Park Service partner. Please join us by choosing one of our deserving Programs today!

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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