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Greetings!

NPS Director Fran Mainella Announces Resignation
National Park Service
July 26, 2006

WASHINGTON- National Park Service Director Fran Mainella, the 16th NPS director, announced that, after nearly six years of service, she will leave her position to devote more time to her family. In her resignation letter, Mainella wrote, "Thank you, Mr. President for allowing me to serve you and the American people as the Director of the National Park Service. Thank you for your support and confidence in my ability as the first woman to serve as Director." [\(more info\)](#)



Roanoke Valley Chapter Formed

by Mark McClain



I'd like to introduce you to the Roanoke Valley Chapter of FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway. We are a community-based group of members of FRIENDS who have come together to provide support to the Parkway and to the FRIENDS organization through volunteer projects.

Our chapter's territory runs from milepost 80 to milepost 130. This includes the Peaks of Otter area down through Roanoke County.

We already have several projects underway:

- We will participate in planning and event-day work at the November 11th viewshed restoration tree planting at milepost 125.
- We hope to find "parents" to adopt all of the trails along our section of the Parkway. Some of our members are adopting trails along the Parkway, and we are actively recruiting other individuals or groups to adopt trails.
- We will be responsible for the visitor donation boxes along the Parkway in our territory.
- We will be forming a "Speaker's Bureau" to make presentations about the Parkway and FRIENDS organization to community groups.
- We are working on plans to support the Parkway maintenance staff to make improvements and repairs as needs arise.

Any member of FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway who lives in or near the Roanoke area and who is interested in doing volunteer work can be a member of our chapter. We have formed a Steering Committee to plan and organize our projects, and to track our progress toward our goals. Anyone in the chapter may participate in the Steering Committee meetings.

If you want to share some of your time and talent to help us protect and preserve the Blue Ridge Parkway, I hope you'll consider becoming a member of the Roanoke Valley Chapter. Just call me at 540-387-0930 or email me at markmcclain@adelphia.net - I'd love to hear from you!



News Release – FRIENDS Helps Combat Air Pollution

FRIENDS is working with the Blue Ridge Parkway on air quality issue. This November, FRIENDS Board will be reviewing the realities of the air quality of the Blue Ridge Parkway. In addition, FRIENDS working with the Blue Ridge Parkway will establish a plan this next year to address the current conditions.

RTI TO MEASURE AIR QUALITY OF U.S. NATIONAL PARKS

RTI International

July 12, 2006

RTI scientists will analyze air samples for chloride and for sulfur and nitrogen compounds that indicate acid in the atmosphere in more than 150 U.S. national parks and wilderness areas.

[\(PDF document\)](#) / (To download Adobe Reader free [click here.](#))



Trails Forever Program

The Hike, Week 103: 2/1/06 - [Read more of Kurt's Hikes at www.BlueRidgeCountry.com](http://www.BlueRidgeCountry.com)
by Kurt Rheinheimer

It's been noted by others, and occurred to Gail as we walked the Rock Castle Gorge Trail's beautiful, multi-faceted and strenuous 10.6 miles that the hike--off the Blue Ridge Parkway across from the Rocky Knob Campground--provides a delightful microcosm of hiking in general in the Virginia mountains.

When you start the walk headed south in parallel to the parkway (and with it in sight off and on for about three miles), you start on a bald with a stunning 360, on this day into blue skies and wind that seemed to come from every direction. The trail then ducks down a little here and there, and rises to views again and again as it skirts parkway overlooks on its way to turning left into the forest and down toward the gorge. Along this forested section is a series of trees with numbered markers; the accompanying sheets of explanation were nowhere to be found, and with no leaves on the trees, Gail and I came up pretty empty on the identification.

After a series of switchbacks, the trail begins to cross little feeder streams before hooking left onto the forest road that parallels Rock Castle Creek for a little more than 2 miles. It was along this last stretch of descent and the forest road that The Greatest Day Hiker Of Them All--she of the fascinations with wildflowers in some seasons, with scat in others and ice ribbons in still others, cast her eye down on the trail in search of the rock formations that give the area its name--miniature "rock castles" of quartz. She found none, but did come back with a little collection of tiny shiny quartz chunks.

One of the other offerings of the trail is a "two-season" experience. And indeed, just off the parkway at nearly 3,000 feet, it was truly wintertime. Along the flat of the gorge next to the healthy-flowing stream, it was nearly fall, and we ate in comfort (well, we kept our gloves on most of the time) on the bench just shy of the empty campground. The sun was full and the dogs' eyes narrowed against it and their satedness.

As always, the primary drawback of a hike of any distance off the parkway is that it goes down, down, down and then has to come back up, up, up. And the northern end of the trail has a climb that had even The Day Hiker huffing and puffing. In fact, the climb back to winter is about 1,300 feet in less than three miles (the beginning and end are more gentle, with the real climb packed in the middle). But that, once you're through it, is just one more aspect of this Virginia-mountain hiking sampler; some of our mountains are pretty steep, and not all the trails up them take the

switchback approach.

** 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: [Adopt-A-Trail](#)

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



Adopt-A-Trail Groups' Trail Dates:

FRIENDS' Fishers Peak Chapter

All dates are Saturdays - Beginning at 8:00 AM: 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 off I-40 to carpool to worksite. Purpose of outing - Extend the MST from Cascade/ Woodfin Overlook (mile 447 on BRP) south toward Soco 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

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



Parkway Funding

FRIENDS is working to raise much-needed funds for the Blue Ridge Parkway. FRIENDS members signed 1,090 petitions that have been forwarded to Senate and House representatives to help the Blue Ridge Parkway.

To help:

[Join FRIENDS](#) / [Donate to a Parkway Project](#) / [Sign a Petition](#)

The Post-Journal
July 06, 2006

One thing of which Americans can be very proud as we roar full speed into summer is that, in some ways, we have taken better care of our nation's natural and historic treasures than any other country. Our system of national parks is evidence of that.

[Government Must Fund National Parks](#) (PDF Document) / (To download Adobe Reader free [click here.](#))



Blue Ridge Parkway Special Events

[Humpback Rocks Special Events](#)

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

Roanoke Mountain Music Programs

From: Cave Spring Connection - June 16, 2006

Roanoke Mountain Music Programs are presented weekly at the Roanoke Mountain Campground on the Blue Ridge Parkway, milepost 120.4, are now underway on Sunday evenings. Local

musicians will perform a variety of traditional music. Performances are on Sundays, 7:00 – 8:00 pm, through August 27; and 5:00 – 6:00 pm September 3 – October 15. All performances are free of charge. Bring chairs and blankets. Picnic fare permitted but alcohol is not.

THE PERFORMERS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON ARE:

- 6-Aug-06 Olen and Frances Gardner and Friends
- 13-Aug-06 The Roanoke Valley Pickers
- 20-Aug-06 Appalachian Heritage
- 27-Aug-06 Mountain Fling
- 3-Sep-06 The Flying Cowboys
- 10-Sep-06 Original Orchard Grass
- 17-Sep-06 Mac and Jennie Traynham
- 24-Sep-06 The Moor Hounds
- 1-Oct-06 Virginia Homestead
- 8-Oct-06 Olen and Frances Gardner and Friends
- 15-Oct-06 TBA

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.

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

For more events, dates and times at the Blue Ridge Music Center: [A Special Series of Lectures and Workshops](#).

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.

Bass Lake at Moses Cone:

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.

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.

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





Bunyan Fortune was introduced to FRIENDS through the Master Gardener Program, of which he has been a volunteer member for five years. As the gardener at Humpback Rocks, this is his first year working for FRIENDS on the Parkway.

The garden at Humpback is an early American garden, planted with vegetables that would have been grown in the period from 1800 to 1930, such as tomatoes, squash, and corn. All the varieties are the original, old-time styles grown in original conditions using hand-made tools and no chemicals.

Bunyan believes that people are losing contact with how folks lived 50-100 years ago and believes they need to get some idea of how they survived. He is certainly on to something; some people who have never laid eyes on a chicken come to the farm!

As a retired military man, Bunyan has a good idea about survival techniques and can appreciate the skills of the mountains. He looks at volunteering as giving something back and appreciates being outdoors in the garden. Just like mountain folk, he wastes nothing, making wreaths out of the "Trees of Heaven" he is clearing from the forest.

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



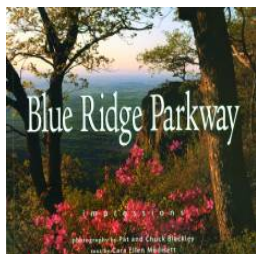
2006 Photo Contest

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.](#)



Our Online Store



Blue Ridge Parkway Impressions

Photography by Pat and Chuck Blackley
Text by Cara Ellen Modisett ([view now](#))

One of the most beloved parks in the country, Blue Ridge Parkway, called America's Most Scenic Drive, is a 469-mile roadway that climbs the ridgelines and peaks of the Appalachian Mountains between Shenandoah National Park and the Great Smoky Mountains. Historic sites such as gristmills, bridges, and one-room schoolhouses exist along the Parkway, and 350 miles of trails crisscross its length, connecting with the Appalachian Trail and even older pathways that wind through forests of hardwood, evergreen, and the endangered hemlock. Pat and Chuck Blackley's beautiful photography immortalizes for posterity the essence of this culturally rich and visually stunning land. [Visit Store](#)



Donate or HELP support FRIENDS

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](#).