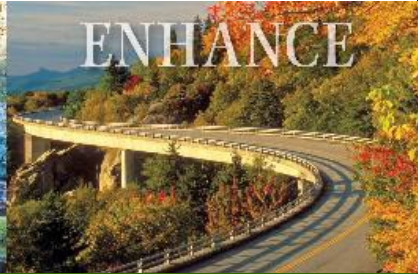
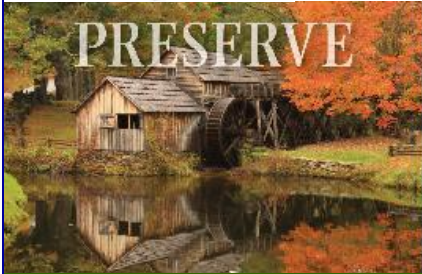




FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Inc.



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Dear Phyllis, Greetings!

All of us at FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway wish you a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, Happy Hanukkah, and send Season's Greetings.

Thank you for your generous support. Our members and donors made it possible for FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway to give more than \$1.3 million dollars of service to the Blue Ridge Parkway in 2008. We hope as you share your family traditions this holiday season that fond memories of time spent in the Blue Ridge Parkway will keep you warm! And as you finish (or start) your holiday shopping, remember that gift memberships and honorariums are great gifts for friends and family. [Click here](#) to visit our secure membership gifts page.

Thank you again for being FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway!

Remember - Holiday Gift Memberships

To celebrate this holiday season, FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Inc. is offering you \$10 off a \$25 gift membership (final rate is \$15) for your child's teacher or that hard to buy for person on your holiday gift list!

A FRIENDS' gift membership for the Parkway lovers on your holiday gift list will include a gift notification, subscription to the semi-annual newsletter, *High Vistas*, and all other regular membership benefits. Plus, you will receive a tax-deduction! Gift recipients will be reminded of your generosity with each arrival of their eNewsletter. Call FRIENDS Membership Services Representative at 800-288-PARK (7275) or email us at staff@friendsBRP.org and we will be happy to assist you with your holiday subscriptions.

Don't forget - gift memberships are tax deductible!

National News

National Initiative "Get Outdoors, It's Yours!" Launched

A new coordinated national campaign linking federal, state and local agencies aims to get more youth outdoors and engaging in nature. The goal of this interagency initiative is to encourage children and their families to spend more time participating in outdoor activities, whether through educational programs, simple recreation or stewardship activities.

A new website, called "Get Outdoors, It's Yours!" ([Click here](#) to view the website) is part of the effort. It's geared toward children and their families and has games, links to parks in your area, and webcam links to check out live action from America's Public Lands.



As part of the kick-off, the boy band, Jonas Brothers, and Secretary of Interior Dirk Kempthorne appear in a public service announcement encouraging everyone to...Get Outdoors, It's Yours!

FRIENDS has joined the No Child Left Inside Coalition and has been actively campaigning for Blue Ridge Parkway's Youth Volunteer in Parks Program which served over 6,000 Parkway visitors this year. FRIENDS' tree plantings to restore Parkway views have been designated as Junior Ranger events engaging hundreds of children/youth in activities on the Blue Ridge Parkway. FRIENDS is the partner nonprofit that engages children/youth for the Blue Ridge Parkway.

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FRIENDS Pursues Blue Ridge Parkway Specialty License Plate

The Blue Ridge Parkway Association is partnering with FRIENDS to sponsor a Blue Ridge Parkway specialty license plate in Virginia. Virginia has the largest number of specialty plates of any state and potential revenues are minor but FRIENDS hopes this license plate will bring attention to the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia. In addition, if this plate becomes a reality FRIENDS wishes to donate the income in 2009 and 2010 to the Blue Ridge Parkway's 75th Anniversary celebration.



To make this a reality, if you or anyone you know would like to purchase the specialty tag please contact staff@FriendsBRP.org or call 800-288Park(7275) to receive an application form!

Conservation Trust Buys Blue Ridge Parkway Land Called 'Too Pretty to Develop'

Another Blue Ridge Parkway view will be protected thanks to a businessman who discovered he owned property "that was too pretty to develop."

The Conservation Trust for North Carolina (CTNC) has purchased the 101-acre Jackson Knob Cove tract in McDowell County, on the Blue Ridge escarpment in the Catawba River Basin. The property, near milepost 326, is visible from Altapass Orchard and several overlooks along the Parkway north of Little Switzerland.

The property was owned by Augusta Developers, LLC, represented by Johnny Craver of Mooresville

and Fred Suther of Concord. They planned to subdivide it into 21 house lots. Instead, over time, Craver grew to love the beauty of the landscape and the scenery around it.

"It's just magnificent. It's so pretty that it's impossible not to have a good view anywhere you go on it," Craver said. "It's probably the only property I've ever seen in my life that was too pretty to develop."

The Jackson Knob Cove tract is one of several properties CTNC is working to protect along a five-mile stretch of the Blue Ridge Parkway near Altapass, just north of Little Switzerland. Each contains a section of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, which follows the route taken by Revolutionary War militiamen in 1780 to the critical Battle of Kings Mountain in South Carolina. The tract also contains nearly half a mile of pure headwaters streams, and a small portion of the Honeycutt Creek Significant Natural Heritage Area, as designated by the NC Natural Heritage Program.

"Jackson Knob Cove is a perfect example of how each piece of property we protect is part of a much larger network of critical natural and cultural treasures," CTNC executive director Reid Wilson said. "A property may contain the headwaters of a river that supplies clean drinking water to thousands of people downstream, or it may link miles of spectacular vistas along the Blue Ridge Parkway, or it may protect a historic trail that passes through five states and three centuries." To read more, [click here](#).

[DONATE](#)

Stories of Interest Along the Parkway

On Nov 4, 2008, musician, Timothy Seaman wrote:

"I've been meaning to pass on a neat moment at Shenandoah National Park during that following weekend: As I was setting up to do one of my concerts there, a couple walked up and said they had bought the Cleansing Fountain CD at a site near Asheville on the Parkway this summer and had played it as they drove, remarking that it was the perfect music for the Parkway --- then, when they arrived at home, they had gone to my website and found out when I would be performing. They had driven to Big Meadows from Kempsville, Maryland to hear me! This doesn't happen too often just like this ... but it was encouraging! I know some who come to Colonial Williamsburg periodically and time their visits to include events I perform at, and that's nice.

Many blessings on your fall and winter!"

Cleansing Fountain CD is an acoustic instrumental journey down the Blue Ridge Parkway featuring new interpretations of Appalachian folk hymn tunes." [Click here](#) to purchase the CD from FRIENDS.





469-Mile Award Winner Story ***Thanksgiving Morning, 2008***

When FRIENDS' Director of Membership Services, Virginia Ehrich, asked me to write a few words about my 23 roundtrip rides on the Blue Ridge Parkway, and 45 half-trips to Fancy Gap, over the last 15 years, the sights, sounds, smells and lateral G's I have pulled all came back in an overpowering smile.

I thought of my favorite moment of Zen that occurs during each trip late in the second day, usually, of the 4-day trip. It happens on a straightaway and I don't know for a moment or two if I am going up a gentle hill or down a gentle hill. I know I'm not on level ground, but my spatial orientation has been interrupted. Happens every trip, as does the big grin that goes along with the feeling.

I remembered thunderstorms I had been caught in, at over 5,000 feet, that blow in so fast you couldn't escape their fury. I thought about lightning exploding around me, and how the hair begins to stand up on your arms as the electric field builds around you while parked at an overlook, since it's raining so hard you cannot see to ride. In this situation, I am usually trying to decide if I should get under a big tree for shelter or stand in the open. I typically end up doing my best impression of Paul Newman in "Cool Hand Luke," refusing to get into the prison truck, challenging "The Old Man" to let me know if he's out there or not.

Thanks Blue Ridge Parkway for giving me some of the finest memories of my life.

May the four winds blow you safely home.

Allen Affeldt

Trail News From NC Mountains to the Sea

We're halfway there!

This year, FMST (From the NC Mountains to the Sea Trail) volunteers have already built fifteen new miles of trail at the Falls Lake and on the **Blue Ridge Parkway**. This new construction brings the total MST trail miles to 500 - half way toward the final estimated mileage of 1000. Join us for a future workday to help extend the trail further still. [Click here](#) to read more.

Archeologist approves final trail routing on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Over the last few years, a National Park Service archeologist has been walking the proposed route for the trail along the **Blue Ridge Parkway** to ensure that it does not disturb important archeological sites. Volunteers have enjoyed walking and learning from him. He completed the final 3.5 mile stretch this month - clearing our way to complete construction of the trail between Blowing Rock and NC 16.

Facebook

FRIENDS is on Facebook!

FRIENDS is now on Facebook! Set up your own account and set up FRIENDS as your charity of choice. Let your friends know that they can join Facebook and share pictures, anecdotes and more. [Click here](#) to go to FRIENDS' Facebook Page.

2008 Photo Contest Winners!

FRIENDS' Third Annual Photo Contest was a huge success! We received over 45 submissions this year. Selecting our winners was quite a difficult task for our judges. All the entries were beautiful and inspiring! (Though we here at FRIENDS don't believe one can take a bad photo of our beloved Parkway!) After such a wonderful response, we're looking forward to next year, so keep your cameras handy! The winners were chosen from all the entries for 1st through 3rd Place and three Honorable Mention Winners.

A huge thank you to everyone who submitted a photograph this year! And a special congratulations to our honorees! Take a look at their works of art ([click here](#)) and we think you'll understand why these photos earned top honors!



Winter Hiking Safety Tips

The following tips are compliments of **Friends of the Smokies'** volunteers and Park V.I.P.s Jim & Ellie Burbank- who are also avid hikers!

1. Don't go alone! Always tell someone which trail(s) you are taking, when you leave, and when you expect to be back.
2. Maintain a safe body temperature. Wear a hat, gloves or mittens, and good socks.
3. Layering is important. Wear garments of synthetic fabric - NOT COTTON which holds moisture and can make you very cold. Don't restrict your movement or weigh yourself down, but remember, it is chillier at higher elevations, and hiking may make you perspire. Strike a balance to stay warm & dry!
4. Rocks and streams can be icy in winter. Use cramp-ons for your shoes to help keep your traction over treacherous icy terrain. Find them at your favorite outdoor retailer!
5. In cold OR hot weather - take plenty of water!

Chapter News

Asheville Chapter



ASHEVILLE, N.C. - Local resident and business owner Jeff Goss made a \$1,000 contribution to FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, a nonprofit volunteer organization whose mission is to preserve, promote, and enhance the Blue Ridge Parkway. Goss is President of The Goss Agency, an award-winning, national marketing and advertising firm based in Asheville. He grew up in Ashe County, N.C., and has fond memories of his experiences on the Parkway. These experiences fueled his desire to donate and help preserve this national treasure for future generations.

"I recall going on picnics with my family on the parkway, riding motorcycles, going on dates in my first car, drives with my family and stopping for a milkshake and hamburger," said Goss. "I have a lot of fond memories of the Parkway and believe that it's a national treasure. Thankfully, for us all, the FDR administration created something iconic out of a national depression that lives on. It is equally a national tragedy that our federal government through the years has neglected this treasure in budgets, along with many other national parks so critical to America. So, until we have a federal government that recognizes and protects the value of the Blue Ridge Parkway and its experience for all Americans - organizations like FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway need to be appreciated and supported so we can retain this precious treasure."

The Goss Agency, founded in 1998, has won more than 90 regional, national, and international awards. The Agency specializes in

brand positioning, creative print campaigns, television and radio commercials, direct marketing, public relations, media buying, multimedia strategy, strategic marketing plans, and marketing communications strategy. Visit www.thegossagency.com for more information.

Rocky Knob Chapter

The Rotary Club Meeting

In late November, Marcia Ardissonne, Kerry and Gloria Hilton went to Martinsville and made the FRIENDS' presentation at a Rotary Club Meeting. The 27 rotarians at the meeting were very receptive to the presenters, asked questions and took home membership forms. We hope to welcome new members from the Martinsville Rotary Club. While there, the presenters were invited to come back two weeks later to speak to the Kiwanis Club.

Rocky Knob participates in Adopt-a-Highway Program

Rocky Knob Chapter of FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway would like to invite members and friends to participate in Adopt-A-Highway clean up program. If you live near the Parkway, it would be great to adopt a road that connects to the Parkway. If you live elsewhere, adopt any 1 or 2 mile stretch in your community. The DOT (Department of Transportation) requests that you pick up litter at least four times a year on your route. DOT will furnish pick up bags or you may use your own bags. The great part of this project is that you can ask for signs to be placed on your route that say "FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Please don't litter." (Or anything else that you want to say up to 48 characters). This will be great advertisement for FRIENDS, cost you nothing but your time, allow you to exercise and clean up our surrounding areas.

If you are interested in this project, call your local DOT office and request the Adopt-A-Highway package. [Click here](#) to go to the Virginia DOT site. Complete the required information and return it to the DOT. It may take a couple of months before the signage will be erected.

If you are interested in participating in any upcoming projects, please contact Gloria Hilton at: gjhilton1@yahoo.com or by phone at (540) 593-3081.

Roanoke Valley Chapter

Scout troop 221 from Cave Spring Methodist Church hiked the loop road on Roanoke Mountain on Sunday, December 14th, to pick up trash along the road and at the overlooks. The 9 scouts and 8 adults collected 10 bags of trash and found about 20 old tires.

They plan to head back up for a cleanup in May after the road opens in the spring

If you are interested in participating in any upcoming projects, please [click here](#) to contact the FRIENDS office.

Fisher Peak Chapter

If you are interested in helping the Fisher Peak Chapter, Please contact Dottie Bramley at pdbramley@valink.com.



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