

We're looking for volunteers!

## Volunteers needed at AFHA's Discovery Center!

AFHA is looking for volunteers to help staff our Discovery Center at the Darden Mill in Elkins. The center is open Thursday - Sunday, 9:30am-5:30pm. Duties include greeting visitors, providing heritage interpretation and staffing the gift shop. Artisans are invited to demonstrate their craft while volunteering. Please write to [info@appalachianforest.us](mailto:info@appalachianforest.us) if you are interested in signing up for four hour shifts.

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## ARTSPRING FESTIVAL: May 22nd -24th 2015:

The ArtSpring Festival, now in its fifth year, is a county-wide celebration to highlight the arts community of Tucker County and offer opportunities to explore its creative landscape during Memorial Day weekend. This "œtour of Tucker County" - through Thomas, Davis, Canaan Valley, and Parsons - brings together and celebrates the best of the arts community and includes fine art and craft demonstrations; gallery exhibits and art openings; live music at the Purple Fiddle, Mountain State Brew Pub, Diamondback Station and street musicians at dozens of outdoor locations; a traditional square dance; a series of photography walks in Canaan Valley and historic downtown Davis; kids crafting and outdoor painting; a culinary tent of artisanal foods and drinks; an outdoor farmer/artisan market; a silent



**Our next concert is  
Wednesday May 27th  
at 7:30pm featuring  
Yeller Dog (John  
Harrod & Tona  
Barkley with Anna  
Harrod) at the Darden  
Mill. For more info:  
<http://tinyurl.com/omz7reu>**



Experience the heritage of your area! *Sites of the Month* spotlights events and locations within the region, based on AFHA's four themes: forestry, history, culture, and nature.

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Opera House slated to return as an arts center and community hub once complete; and several fine art markets featuring local and regional artists.

For more information please visit

[www.artspringwv.com](http://www.artspringwv.com) or

<https://www.facebook.com/ArtSpringWV> or email

[artspringwv@gmail.com](mailto:artspringwv@gmail.com) or call 304.698.2869

## Discovering Red Spruce

By Victoria Woltz

AFHA AmeriCorps Conservation Team Member

Discover Nature Day took place on May 9th at Seneca Rocks Discovery Center. This event provided the public with a hands-on opportunity to help control invasive plants and to learn more about different habitats.

The morning started out with a hand pull of the non-native invasive garlic mustard. Volunteers who collected the most garlic mustard received prizes (some of which were cash!). This created a fun and competitive atmosphere for the volunteers while creating space for a more diverse and native plant population.

After a free lunch, complements of Seneca Caverns, there was an informational component to the day. This included presentations of snakes, birds and a multitude of educational booths about different ecosystems. I had the pleasure of putting together a booth for the Central Appalachian Spruce Restoration Initiative (CASRI) with my fellow AmeriCorps, Kristin Stockton and

The [Big Draft Wilderness Area](#) in Greenbrier County is made up of 5,144 acres at the southern tip of the Monongahela National Forest. Designated in 2009 by the [Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009](#), the wilderness protects the Anthony Creek watershed, a popular stream for fishing trout. Access to the stream can be had using the Anthony Creek Trail and there are 14 miles of trails available to hikers and equestrians (including the Blue Bend Trail on the National Register of Historic Places). In addition, the creek has class I-III whitewater and there are many swimming holes to be enjoyed along the creek. Elevations range from 3,121 feet to 1,800 feet where the creek meets the Greenbrier River.





*A child colors a brook trout while Ashley Akers and Victoria Woltz explain that trout love the cool, year-round shade the red spruce provides them.  
Photo by Anna Branduzzi*

We explained that red spruce forests have decreased by over 90% due to logging and forest fires. This is a problem because these forests provide many services to humans and are home to over 300 rare plants and animals. We had many kids come to our booth for the animal coloring pages. Some of the kids took their drawings home while others proudly hung their pictures up for others to see. Since the primary audience was kids, we made our booth interactive. Kristin Stockton created a display with real red spruce, ferns and other plants, which the kids enjoyed touching and smelling. They also liked seeing and feeling the different sizes and shapes of spruce, hemlock and pinecones.

Seeing the kids becoming engaged by our booth was a rewarding experience. I am glad I got the opportunity to help educate the future environmental stewards. If you get the chance to bring your kids out to this fun filled, education packed event next year I would highly recommend it for some family fun!

Harper Barn beneath the [Lost River Artisans Cooperative](#) in Hardy County, has just opened a new exhibit, "Farming Families of Hardy County 1746-1930." Soliciting donations of old family photos and tools from local residents, the exhibit explores nearly 200 years of agricultural industry as practiced in the county. Scheduled activities for the spring and summer include in-character presentations of historic figures, sheep shearing, a bake-off, Appalachian tall tales and storytelling. The exhibit will be up for two years and will be updated over that period, so it is worth revisiting.



[Preston Community Arts Center](#) in Kingwood, Preston County, showcases, promotes, and teaches the arts through events and exhibitions. The gallery and store features juried

## An Exhibition of Memories

By Caitlin Meagher

AFHA AmeriCorps Conservation Team Member

When I started my part-time AFHA AmeriCorps position at the Beverly Heritage Center, I was introduced to a seemingly bottomless drawer of CDs labeled "oral history interviews," and I immediately recognized potent material for a museum exhibit. I was familiar with the term "oral history," but with a background in archaeology, I never learned the dynamics of conducting interviews, editing audio, or how to present recordings to an audience. With an examination of potential audio editing programs, my crash course in oral history exhibition began.

There are numerous sources that will give you a better introduction to oral history than I can afford to in a brief article, but in an attempt to convey the essence of oral history and its meaning, I challenge you to answer the following questions: Can you describe the feeling you had when you first held an Ipod in your hands? Was it a mix of awe, confusion, disbelief, or excitement?

If we were to conduct oral histories for this generation, some of the prompts might include questions about the first Ipod you ever owned, the first smart phone you ever saw, or how it felt to view someone's Facebook profile for the first time. Questions relating to personal experiences help relay what it was like to live during a specific point in time as a component of a distinct culture.

pottery, woodworking, textiles, CDs, books and more. They host the Laurel Mountain Coffeehouse concert series and sponsor a regular Tuesday open jam at Foxfire Coffee & Cafe next door. Other events include talks by authors and presentations by historic interpreters.



The [South Branch Wildlife Management Area](#), located in both Hampshire and Hardy counties, is managed by the [West Virginia Department of Natural Resources](#) and protects four tracts of public game lands along the South Branch of the Potomac River, including a six mile stretch known as the Trough. The [Trough](#) is a straight section of the river that forms a narrow canyon running between two ridges (with steep forest on both sides); this



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Interviewee quotes displayed beside related artifacts.  
Photo by Bree Wallace.

When assembling the exhibit entitled, *Beverly's™ Memories: Oral Accounts of Tygart Valley's™ Past*, I realized numerous interviewees'™ accounts helped fill in the gaps history books and documents missed. We may read in a history book that Model T's™ were first produced in 1908 and were the earliest cars accessible to the middle classes. After hearing an oral account, however, we better understand what it was like to see a Model T for the first time, or what it felt like to ride in one along a bumpy, unpaved road. In this way, oral accounts are important for forming connections with the past, thus instilling a sense of communal identity through history.

I've™ enjoyed creating the exhibit and learning

young surveyor in 1748, George Washington described it as: "[a] couple of ledges of Mountains, Impassable, running side by side for above 7 or 8 miles and ye River down between them." Including a total of 1,092 acres, the WMA also includes tracts containing bottom land fields, pasture lands, and mixed oak-hickory timber.

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Do you have a suggestion for *Sites of the Month*?

Email us at:

[info@appalachianforest.us](mailto:info@appalachianforest.us)

and let us know your favorite sites throughout AFHA!

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through which community members can hear accounts about how life in the Tygart Valley has changed. It has been enlightening to examine connections being made as visitors sit, listen, and visualize a day long ago in the Tygart Valley.

If you would like to contribute an oral history record, or know someone who would be a helpful resource, please contact the Beverly Heritage Center by calling 304-637-7424 or emailing [info@beverlyheritagecenter.org](mailto:info@beverlyheritagecenter.org).

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