

GROWTH RINGS

Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area News



Augie Carlino Comes for a Visit

Lukas Ray

As part of the development of our Management Plan, our consultants from Point Heritage Development are touring parts of our region to meet and speak with stakeholders, but largely to learn more about the region firsthand. Augie, one of our consultants, traveled with Lukas and Phyllis a few weeks ago throughout our northern counties.

Our group first toured downtown Buckhannon and Elkins, meeting local stakeholders and learning more about the local tourism efforts. Then we traveled to Seneca Rocks and spent some time learning about the historic Sties Homestead on the site. We traveled through Grant, Hardy, and Hampshire counties, stopping to tour downtown historic Petersburg, Moorefield, and Romney.



Crossing over into Maryland (Yes, we are in two Maryland counties! Allegany and Garrett) and stopping in historic Cumberland, we toured Canal Place Heritage Area and the downtown district. Augie and I spotted a few bikers headed west on the Historic National Road. The National Road is the first major improved highway built by the federal government and runs from Cumberland, MD to Vandalia, IL. The tour ended for the day in downtown Frostburg for the day. We stayed at the historic Gunter Hotel. The hotel is known as a stopping point for federal agents transporting prisoners from the Midwest to Washington, DC in the early 20th century. The basement jail is accessible to the public.



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Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area promotes and supports a network of partnerships based around our unique Forest Heritage. We work in 16 West Virginia counties and 2 counties in Western Maryland.

To learn more about us and the work we do, including our AmeriCorps program, visit afnha.org.



Augie Carlino Comes for a Visit (cont'd.)

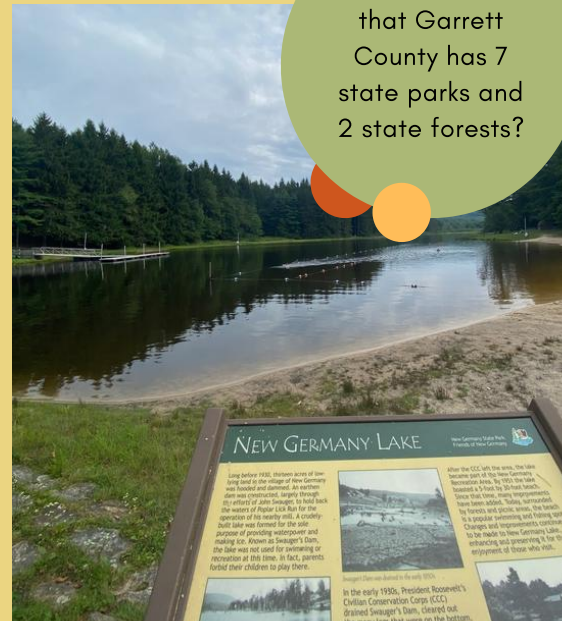
Lukas Ray

The next morning Augie, Phyllis and I set out to Garrett County, MD. We first stopped at the historic Casselman's Bridge and Spruce Forest Artisan Village. The bridge is a part of the National Road and carried road traffic from 1814 till 1953. We went into New Germany State Park afterwards and spoke about Deep Creek Lake and the white-water rafting in the area.

Heading back into West Virginia through Oakland, MD, we stopped in Rowlesburg in Preston County right on the Cheat River. Friends of the Cheat are planning a trail that will run right next to the river through most of Preston County! Passing through Kingwood, our last stop brought us to Arthurdale. Arthurdale was the nations first New Deal homestead subsistence project championed by Eleanor Roosevelt. We toured the historic district and then headed home to Elkins.

Our consultants from Point Heritage are thrilled to tour, explore, and meet all who call our region home. This process gives them more insight to help us establish our Management Plan. Our big question is: "What can a National Heritage Area do for you?" Our goal is to see as many communities as possible and meet as many stakeholders as we can.

Did you know that Garrett County has 7 state parks and 2 state forests?



Upcoming Events

8/22
SATURDAY
5 PM

Jason Hall on the Lawn, Beverly, WV

Receive a tour of Rich Mountain Battlefield from your friends at the Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation, and the Beverly Heritage Center. Reservations must be made in advance, call the BHC at (304) 637-7424

8/29
SATURDAY
2 PM

25th Anniversary Dedication of Highlands Trail Foundation, Virtual

Join Canaan Valley Resort in their edible plant hike! The hike will take about 2 hours. Learn about what you can eat by stepping outside your front door!

8/27
SATURDAY
2 PM

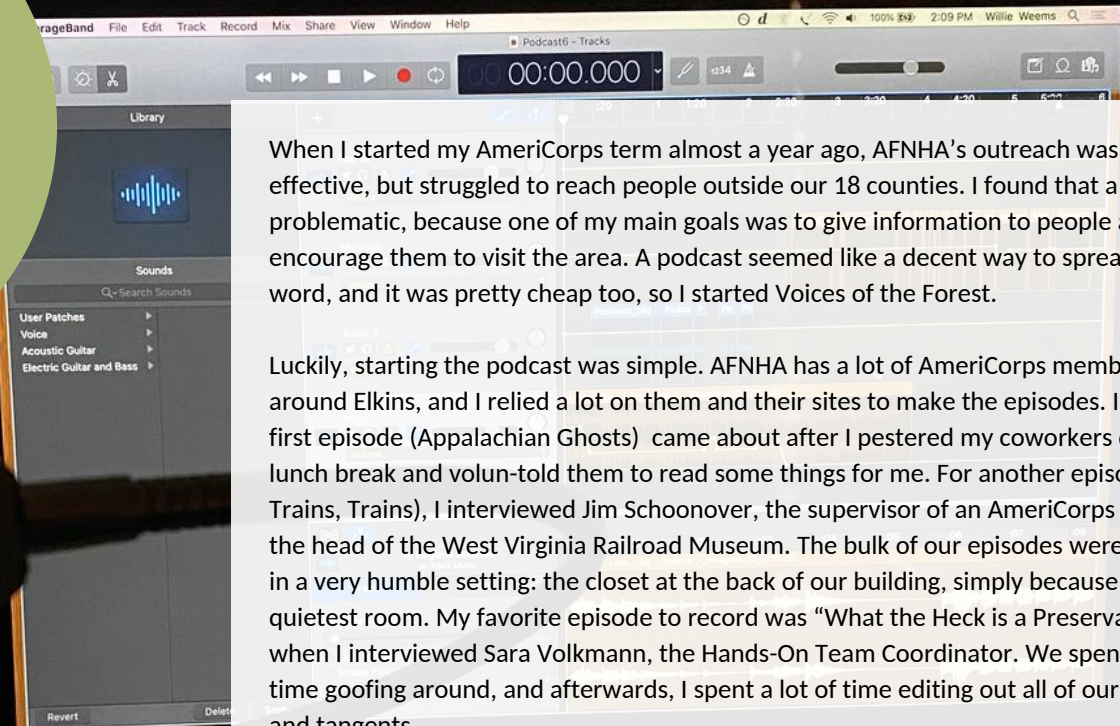
No-Till Farming & Soil Health, Virtual

Presented by the Beverly Heritage Center, learn about the technology, triumphs, and struggles associated with Civil War era doctoring! This presentation is also available July 19th, at 1PM! Co-sponsored by the Randolph County Historical Society.

Voices of the Forest Podcast

Willie Weems

Willie Weems is an AmeriCorps member serving directly with AFNHA. His projects concentrate on tourism through outreach, GIS StoryMaps, our Pollinator Initiative, and Voices of the Forest.



When I started my AmeriCorps term almost a year ago, AFNHA's outreach was really effective, but struggled to reach people outside our 18 counties. I found that a little problematic, because one of my main goals was to give information to people and encourage them to visit the area. A podcast seemed like a decent way to spread the word, and it was pretty cheap too, so I started Voices of the Forest.

Luckily, starting the podcast was simple. AFNHA has a lot of AmeriCorps members in and around Elkins, and I relied a lot on them and their sites to make the episodes. In fact, the first episode (Appalachian Ghosts) came about after I pestered my coworkers during their lunch break and volun-told them to read some things for me. For another episode (Trains, Trains, Trains), I interviewed Jim Schoonover, the supervisor of an AmeriCorps site and the head of the West Virginia Railroad Museum. The bulk of our episodes were recorded in a very humble setting: the closet at the back of our building, simply because it was the quietest room. My favorite episode to record was "What the Heck is a Preservationist?" when I interviewed Sara Volkmann, the Hands-On Team Coordinator. We spent a lot of time goofing around, and afterwards, I spent a lot of time editing out all of our laughter and tangents.

For how well everything the podcast is going, there are some things that I wish I had done better. Of course with COVID, things slowed way down, and all of my plans and back-up plans fell through. I was doing a pretty good job of releasing a new episode every month or so before that. Other than that, I'd say I definitely spent too much time in the Elkins area. Our region is pretty darn big, and I didn't do a particularly great job going to other parts of it. One episode I really wanted to do, but didn't get around to was a followup to the "Trains, Trains, Trains" episode. I had wanted to go and interview some of the people who keep the scenic trains running, but it just didn't work out.

I'm really happy with how *Voices of the Forest* has gone. It's been a really effective tool to reach out to people outside the region, and even across the world. We have listeners on every inhabited continent, and a very loyal following in California, Minnesota, and Ukraine. You can listen on our website or just about anywhere you can find a podcast.

CHECK OUT SOME EPISODES

Despite complications from COVID-19, Willie was able to record a ton of interesting content for the podcast. You can listen on our website, or really anywhere you listen to podcasts. Click the image below to visit our website!



2019 - 2020 AmeriCorps Term Conclusion

Each year, AFNHA places AmeriCorps members at partner sites to support partner projects, goals, and initiatives. Most of our 2019-2020 cohort of AmeriCorps members are finishing out their year this month. We thank them for their dedication, service, and patience this year. COVID-19 was an unforeseen and ever present roadblock, but our AmeriCorps team pulled through and adaptively met the challenges laid before them. *Note: most of these photos are pre-pandemic.*

Check out some photos below of our 2019-2020 AmeriCorps members! We will miss you all! To hear more about their exciting projects, check out the AmeriCorps Stories section of our website, or give the newest episode of *Voices of the Forest* episode (titled 'Getting Things Done') a listen!







Thank you for your service! We will miss you!