

GROWTH RINGS

Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area News



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Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area is dedicated to the promotion of Forest Heritage within out 18 counties. Click the image below to visit our website for more information.



New Website!

AFNHA AmeriCorps and staff have been working together since this past fall to create a new AFNHA website. It went live on February 1st, 2020.

WHAT'S NEW?

Our domain has changed from a '.us' to a '.org'. Our domain has also changed from 'appalachianforest' to 'appalachianforestnha'; however, the old address (www.appalachianforest.us) will redirect you to our new website. Feel free to use either www.appalachianforestnha.org -or- www.afnha.org when promoting our website.

Our email addresses have also changed from '@appalachianforest.us' to '@afnha.org', but again, email sent to @appalachianforest.us will still be received by AFNHA AmeriCorps and staff members.

WHAT'S THE SAME?

A website visitors can still learn about who we are, what we do and what to do in our area; it's just a bit more intuitive than our old website. The Appalachian Forest Discover Center now has all of it's previous exhibits online, including content and panels. All AmeriCorps positions are listed and will be updated each year and through the hiring process.

QUESTIONS?

Be sure to check it out and let us know what you think at info@afnha.org. We are still working out the kinks, so if you notice anything funky, please contact us.

**CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE
HERE!!!**



Announcements!

AFNHA HOT Seeking Projects for 2020

AFNHA is seeking projects for our Hands on Team for Spring & Summer 2020. Projects must be within our 16-county mission area (at this time, we cannot provide HOT assistance to our Maryland counties because it is part of our AmeriCorps program through Volunteer WV). The project must be within the scope of our mission including (but not limited to): historic preservation, trail building and maintenance, tree plantings, non-native invasive species control, conservation stewardship, public lands improvement, etc..

The Hands on Team project must be supervised by a qualified project supervisor, and there is a cash-match requirement. Qualifying projects are awarded on a rolling basis until all program time is filled.



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW HANDS ON TEAM PROJECT APPLICATION](#)

Site Applications for 2020-2021 AmeriCorps Year Due April 5th



Applications are now open to host AFNHA AmeriCorps members for next term, to start in September 2020. Applications are due by April 5, 2020.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

AFNHA Seeking Communications Associate Staff Member

Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) is seeking a new Communications and Partnerships staff person to expand our core staff team. We are in the midst of a major planning effort, and this position will help conduct the management planning, expand our communications and partnership building, and support our AmeriCorps team.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)



TNC Seeking Volunteer Preserve Stewards

Looking for a way to show some love to your favorite preserves in 2020? The Nature Conservancy is in need of Volunteer Preserve Stewards at Brush Creek, Ice Mountain and Pike Knob.

Ideal candidates will be able to work independently and have prior experience with land management practices such as trail maintenance, non-native invasive species control, boundary marking, and supervision of other volunteers. These are unpaid positions. Basic training and orientation will be provided. Positions will be filled as qualified candidates are identified and not all applicants will be chosen for a Preserve Steward. If a candidate is not chosen for a Preserve Steward, he or she can still volunteer in other ways such as part of a crew, organized volunteer events, and other opportunities.

If you're interested, send resumes or letters of interest to karah.jaffe@tnc.org or patrick.hecht@tnc.org.

Snowshoeing at Snowshoe: Winter Ecology Classes

Moira Gasior

Rachel Rosenberg is an AmeriCorps serving with the USDA Forest Service in Marlinton, WV. Her service focuses on outreach, education and invasive species and pest management.

Rachel Rosenberg was an instructor at Experience Learning (located at Spruce Knob) through the fall (2018) and spring (2019); but they didn't have school programs in winter, so she spent her winter at Great Basin Outdoor School in Reno, NV. However, she really loved the idea of 'snow school' and wanted to find a way to make that happen in West Virginia.

Because the Forest Service already does educational outreach to schools, making the connections to public schools in the region were simple. Marlinton Middle School, Hillsboro Elementary School, and Green Bank Middle School are participating in these field trips, which will take place at Snowshoe Resort.

She crafted the curriculum using lessons from her time in Reno, adapted activities from Experience Learning, and online resources. Students will go snowshoeing, learn about wildlife tracking, take part in snow science experiments, and learn about red spruce trees. "Along with the winter ecology and snow science components, I decided to include some lessons on red spruce forests that had been developed by CASRI*. The red spruce fit in well because these are high-elevation ecosystems here and they experience longer and more intense winters than other parts of the state."



Left: The Nature Conservancy AmeriCorps Karah Jaffe wearing the flying squirrel costume.

Right: Forest Service AmeriCorps Megan Mason Dister and Kalee Paxton helping to make animal track casts.

The list of needed items for these classes includes: snowshoes, a flying squirrel costume, ice cream salt, essential spruce oil, materials to make plaster casts of animal tracks, and tons of craft supplies (kindly donated by Rachel's mother).

"I hope that the students have fun and that they gain a greater appreciation for how awesome the outdoors are even, or especially, in winter." Rachel is particularly excited because this may be the first time many of these kids try snowshoeing. She is hoping students will walk away with a deeper understanding of high-elevation red spruce ecosystems. "These are very special places we have around here, and we need young people to have an active and ongoing role in their conservation."

***The Central Appalachian Spruce Restoration Initiative (CASRI) is a partnership of diverse interests with a common goal of restoring historic red spruce-northern hardwood ecosystems (pictured below) across the high elevation landscapes of Central Appalachia.**



Mardi Gras in a Mountain Town

Moira Gasior

*To learn more about the life and legacy of Eleanor Mailloux, check out "Born in a Ballroom". Click for more information.

Fasnacht is a pre-Lenten celebration brought to Randolph County by the immigrants who settled in Helvetia. It is well known as the West Virginia answer to Mardi Gras, and people travel from all corners of the United States to visit this small town for their larger-than-life celebration.

Early Helvetia residents were Swiss and German speaking immigrants. They came by way of New York City following the Civil War. Craftsmen, and professionals were the earliest settlers. Among them were carpenters, stonemasons, teachers, musicians, doctors, ministers, and cobblers. They learned to farm in WV and quickly became proficient.

Today in Helvetia, Appalachian traditions and Swiss-Germanic traditions are woven together. Much of the traditional food, music, and dance brought by these immigrants has survived in this WV rural community. But this wasn't always the case. During WWII, residents of Helvetia quieted their traditions because of growing anti-German sentiments across the American narrative. 55 years ago, Helvetia did not look like colorful town we recognize today.

We can thank Eleanor Mailloux* for the way Fasnacht is celebrated in Helvetia today. She moved to Helvetia as a little girl and grew up enjoying and participating in the unique culture there. Upon visiting her hometown as an adult, she noticed certain aspects were lacking: the delicious fried foods being made and shared by the community, local celebrations based in European tradition. In 1968, Fasnacht was reborn in Eleanor's vision, but with some new twists; the masks and costumes, and the burning of old man winter. Eleanor and her friend Delores Baggerly opened up their own restaurant, the Hütte, which is operated by the Mailloux family today.

Join Helvetia and celebrate Fasnacht. Wear a mask, square dance, enjoy live music and be sure to swing by the Hütte to grab a sampler plate.

Creating Culture: Ethnic Groups in the AFNHA (2019)

Last year, Appalachian Forest Discovery Center AmeriCorps member Sarah Rosenkrans frequently visited Helvetia. She was researching the immigrant groups that passed through and planted roots in the 18 counties that make up our National Heritage Area. For Fasnacht 2019, she helped to make the fried rosettes the day before the big event.

See photos from Helvetia's past and present on the next page. On our new website, you can view Sarah's exhibit featuring Helvetia, as well as past Discovery Center exhibits.

[VIEW ONLINE EXHIBITS](#)

FASNACHT 2020

Saturday, February 22nd

3 - 8 PM

Open Mic at the Helvetia Star Band Hall

7:30 - 8 PM

Kid's mask judging at the Helvetia Community Hall

8 - 8:15 PM

Lampion Parade from Helvetia Star Band Hall to Helvetia Community Hall

8:15 - 11 PM

Mask judging and masquerade ball at the Helvetia Community Hall

11 - 11:30 PM

Burning of Old Man Winter





Pic. 1



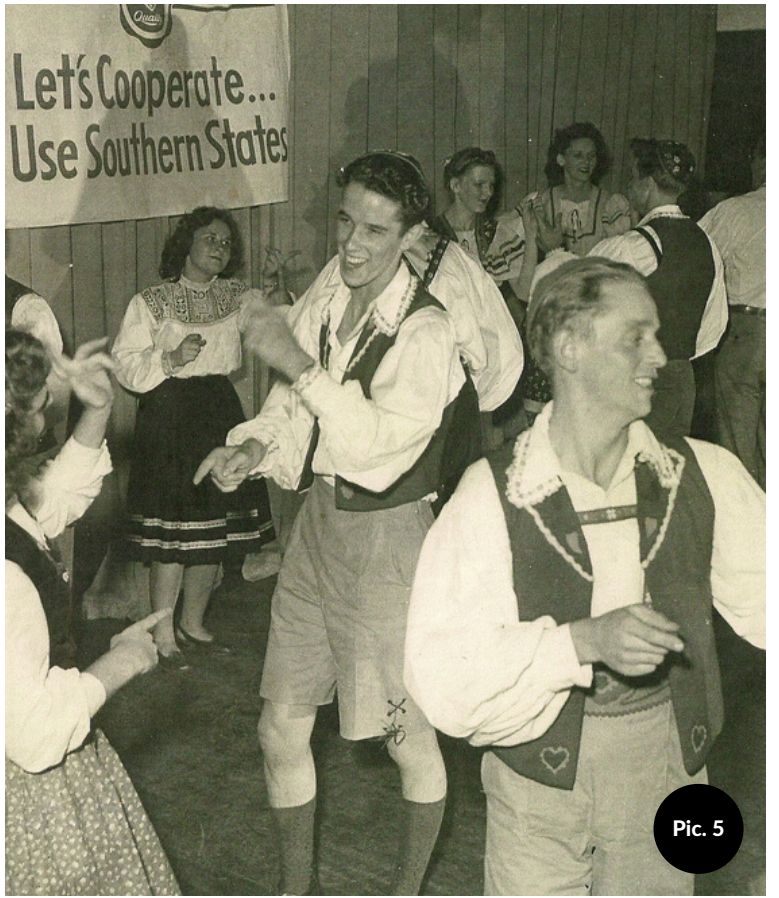
Pic. 2



Pic. 3



Pic. 4



Pic. 5

Pic. 1: Helvetia Fair in 1910

Pic. 2: Young folk dancers at the Helvetia Fair, date unknown.

Pic. 3: Stretching hosablatz (must be able to read the newspaper through them) for Fasnacht

Pic. 4: Making rosettes for Fasnacht

Pic. 5: Nelson Sutton folk dancing, date unknown.

Photos provided by the Helvetia History Project.

Upcoming Events

- 2/15**
SATURDAY
10 AM - 4 PM
Downtown Oakland Winterfest, Oakland, MD
Activities for kids and adults; lots to do for everyone including, horse drawn carriages, kids activities, ice sculptures, and our popular Wine Walk! Winter farmers market, live music, face painting, etc..
- 2/16**
SATURDAY
3 PM
Tales of Freedom: Stories of Beverly's Black Community, Beverly, WV
Join the Beverly Heritage Center for a lecture about untold and recently discovered stories about the African-American Community of Beverly, WV. They aim to tell stories focusing on the quest for freedom, equality, and justice local to the Beverly area from the 1700's to more recent times.
- 2/22**
SATURDAY
3 PM
Fasnacht 2020, Helvetia, WV
Celebrate Fasnacht with Helvetia! Live music, a mask parade, square dancing and great food. Entry into the dance hall is \$5. Check out the events Facebook page for housing options for the night.
- 2/29**
SATURDAY
6 - 9 PM
Local Painters of the Past Opening Reception, Thomas, WV
The next exhibit at the ArtSpring Gallery at Cottrill's Opera House will feature the work of late painters Ernest Hertig and Pauline Mullenax. Most of the displayed works are being graciously loaned for the exhibit from private and community collections. The exhibit will be hung on February 20th. Exhibit Coordinator and ArtSpring Board Member Linda Reeves will give a brief lecture about the artists and their work.
- 2/29**
SATURDAY
6 - 9 PM
ArtsBank Auction, Elkins, WV
The 23rd Annual ArtsBank Auction Fundraiser benefiting arts education in Randolph County Schools will be held Saturday, February 29th at The Elks Lodge in Elkins, West Virginia. Doors open at 6:00 PM with the program beginning at 7:00 PM and the grand auction at 8:00 PM. Tickets are \$30 and are available at the door. Ticket purchase includes refreshments and light hors d'oeuvres.
- 3/1**
SUNDAY
10 AM - 12 PM
Snowshoe Discovery Tour (At White Grass)
More details to be announced on the Facebook event page; AmeriCorps member serving with USFWS at the Canaan Valley Wildlife Refuge will give an interpretive tour of Canaan in the winter.
- 3/3**
TUESDAY
10 AM
Trout Unlimited Tree Planting, Franklin, WV
The Potomac Headwaters Home Rivers Initiative works to protect, restore, and reconnect fragmented brook trout habitat. They need your help! Join them for a tree planting! Contact their AmeriCorps, Morgan Agee at morgan.agee@tu.org. Lunch will be provided! Participants are meeting at the Subway in Franklin.
- 3/7**
SATURDAY
Exhibit Opening on African American History, Lewisburg, WV
The North House Museum is opening a new exhibit on African-American history in Greenbrier County. There will be more details to come on the Greenbrier Historical Society website.
- 3/7**
SATURDAY
11 AM - 6 PM
Rich Mountain Battlefield and Tygart Valley LIONS Club Rifle Rally, Elkins, WV
Get your tickets early! Each year this massive fundraiser for the Rich Mountain Battlefield sells out. Taking place at the Phil Gainer Recreation Center in Elkins. Check out the Facebook event page for more information.
- 3/9**
MONDAY
6 - 8 PM
Museum Monday Square Dance, Lewisburg, WV
The Greenbrier Historical Society presents its first Museum Monday of 2020 with a Square Dance! So put on your dancing shoes and learn this historic dance form that dates back to the 1600s! Dance held at Hill and Holler in Lewisburg. Admission is free, donations are welcome.
- 3/14**
SATURDAY
6 - 9 PM
Thomas Art Walk & Local Painters of the Past Closing Reception
closing reception for exhibit during the Thomas Art Walk, which features multiple new exhibit openings throughout town. Closing reception is at Cottrill's Opera House.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR...

April 22nd, 2020: Tree Planting at Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge

April 30th - May 2nd, 2020: PAWV Conference

May 2020: AFNHA Stakeholder Meeting(s)

May 22 - 24th, 2020: ArtSpring Festival