

DECEMBER 2021

GROWTH RINGS

APPALACHIAN FOREST NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA NEWSLETTER



Management Planning Update



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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 or contact Lukas Ray at lukas@afnha.org for more information



The update remains the same from last month! Thank you all so much for the last two years! From participating in any or all planning meetings, task group meetings, to our exchange camp, we heard all your voices and opinions! Our consultant team now has the task to construct the actual Management Plan.

But the job isn't done just yet..... when the plan is fully written we will seek more public comment and feedback before the final draft is sent to the NPS. Be on the lookout for that. But thank you! We couldn't have gotten this far without YOU!

Remember, you can always contact us at **planning@afnha.org** with any questions on upcoming meetings and steps.



AFNHA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT GRANT



AFNHA announced this week a new Tourism Development Grant available to governmental or non-profit organizations to enhance or create new tourist experience opportunities, network visitor opportunities together to create a larger attraction, and/or address challenges, such as from the COVID-19 pandemic, accessibility, or increasing the diversity of the stories told and/or the audience.



Grant requests can be from \$1000 up to \$5000. Recipients are expected to provide a local match (cash or in-kind) equal to 50% of the amount received. **Applications are due by March 1, 2022.**

[**Click Here for Info!**](#)

Please follow the link to our website for the grant application and more information on how to apply. Email us at afnha@afnha.org with questions.

Marginalized Identities Series

By: Claire Tryon



Arthur Dale Heritage has a number of ongoing projects to accompany the traveling Smithsonian exhibit *Crossroads: Change in Rural America*. The exhibit examines our understanding of rural places and their history. Arthur Dale and the other sites in the state hosting the exhibit will be thinking about topics like mental health, labor, and community memory. They will also be discussing the representations of their communities and West Virginia. Often is portrayed as a state that is stuck in the past. That West Virginia is an isolated place, where people exclude and hurt others. With this in mind *Crossroads* asks a variety of questions like why should we revitalize rural places, why do rural communities matter, what can we do for the people who remain there, why do people leave, and what is our vision for the state's future?



Jeff Mann, from WV Public Radio



Photos from Library of Congress



[Click HERE](#) to read the rest of Claire's work with Arthur Dale!



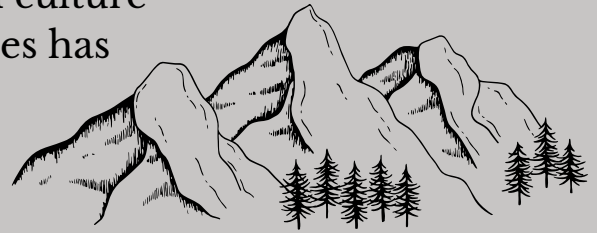
Re-discovering the Heritage and Culture of WV

By: Maria Bray

When I found myself looking to make a change but not ready to retire, I decided to hit the pause button and do something different. Signing up with the AmeriCorps program to serve a year as a Heritage Tourism specialist was my way of giving back to the community while transitioning into the phase of my life. In return, devoting time to learning about the history and culture in West Virginia and discovering historical places has become a rewarding adventure.



Click [HERE](#) to read more of Maria's story!

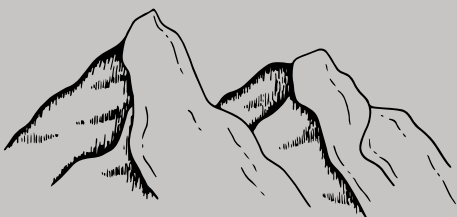


Crossroads and Witnessing Change in Rural America

By: Kendyl Bostic

As a lifelong West Virginian, the story I seemed to hear growing up was that we here in the Mountain State had been left behind. Before I was old enough to understand it, I learned about the “Brain Drain” and how all the people who could leave the state were going out to get better jobs in other places. From outside sources, I learned the stereotypes about West Virginia and the idea that people here were simply stuck in the past. Progress was happening somewhere in the world - but not here.

Click [HERE](#) to read more of Kendyl's story!





We still have OPEN slots for the 2021-2022 AmeriCorps Term!



AmeriCorps
West Virginia



AFNHA AmeriCorps has been awarded a competitive AmeriCorps grant for 34 members for the 2021-2022 term, plus an additional 8 positions just awarded from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. In addition, the ARPA funding will raise member stipends to \$16,000 a year. This gives us a total program of 42 member positions, our largest ever. Because these additional funds were just awarded, we are still recruiting for a number of positions. While the new term starts September 8, we will continue recruiting through the fall until all positions are filled.

Contact Chrissy Hall, Program Manager at chrissyh@afnha.org with any questions on our AmeriCorps program.



Happy
Holidays

Happy Holidays and
New Year from
AFNHA! Thank you
for a great 2021!



Happy
New
Year



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