

JANUARY 2024

GROWTH RINGS

APPALACHIAN FOREST NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA NEWSLETTER

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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.



Happy New Year!

We hope that you all had a joyous and restful holiday season. We have been hard at work planning for our projects and activities in the year to come. More details TBA!

AFNHA 2024 at a glance:

- January - "Passing the Torch" party (see page 2)
- January - MLK Day of Service (see page 4)
- Early Spring - Applications open for NVUM surveyors. Job description coming soon.
- Spring - 2024-25 program year AmeriCorps site applications due
- May - Appalachian Forest Discovery Center opens for the season
- May - annual Stakeholder Meeting
- Spring/Summer - Appalachian Forest Grant applications open for new round of funding
- Early Summer - 2024-25 program year AmeriCorps member applications open
- Summer through Fall - "Indigenous Voices in Appalachia" project will host public events featuring Indigenous presenters, artists, and performers
- August - annual Tourism Summit
- November - Appalachian Forest Discovery Center closes for winter
- Ongoing - America250 in the Appalachian Forest
- Ongoing - Highlands Creative Economy meetings every month

Passing the Torch

Since our designation as a National Heritage Area in 2019, our organization has grown from a small staff of three to a strong team of seven. Our Management Plan was approved in August 2023, providing direction for the future. Now, we are preparing for another big change. Our longtime leader, Phyllis Baxter, will step down in 2024, and Logan Smith will step up to become our new Executive Director.

Help us recognize these accomplishments and welcome this new era at our upcoming celebration: Friday, January 26, 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. at the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center (101 Railroad Ave, Elkins). Come and go as you please. Presentation at 5:30.

Light refreshments will be served.

Virtual attendance will be available 5:30 - 6:30 ([zoom link](#))



AmeriCorps Story

WV Governor's Cup Race History

By Kristin Winebrenner

"Over the years, the WV Governor's Cup Ski Race has played an important role in the ski history of Tucker County, WV. Considered the longest running race throughout the southeast, Alpine Festival, Inc. will be presenting its 64th race in 2024. Racers will have a chance to win some amazing prizes and only a select few will get their names placed on the famous WV Governor's Cup Trophy."

Read more about the history of the Governor's Cup and skiing in Canaan Valley [HERE!](#)



Winter Service Projects

Happy MLK Day!

Each winter, our AmeriCorps members coordinate community service projects to celebrate the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service. This year's projects have included book drives, a food drive, and this perennial favorite:

Dardenfest

Concert to benefit Arts Bank Inc. and the Nourished Feasts & Farmacy project
Saturday, January 20th, 6:00pm
Darden Mill (101 Railroad Ave, Elkins)

Featuring performances by: Fair Play, Gerry Milnes, Born Old, Val Mindel & Mike Miller, and The Flying Kimura Brothers (Josh Wanstreet & Chris Lovejoy).

Tickets are limited and can be purchased ahead of time in person at the AFHNA Main Office (6, 2nd. St, Elkins, WV). Tickets are \$20 for general admission, \$10 for students and AmeriCorps members, and \$5 for children 5 & under. Sales are available in cash or credit Mon-Fri. 9:30am-4:30pm; except holidays. For questions regarding tickets, contact maria@afnha.org or call 304-997-5110. DardenFest will also host a raffle featuring art pieces and donations from local businesses.



Events

Appalachian Forest Grants event

Jan 17 | [Woodland Heritage Lecture Series](#) | Kump Education Center

Regional Events

Jan 17 | [Maryland Manufacturing '24](#) | Garrett College

Jan 20 | [Winter Wellness Festival](#) | Berkeley Springs

Feb 2 | [Groundhog Day Celebration](#) | Cumberland

Feb 3 | [Figure Skating Performance](#) | Canaan Valley Resort

Feb 4 | [Winter Tree ID Walk](#) | Yew Mountain Center

Feb 10 | [Live Music & Square Dance](#) | Arthurdale Heritage

Feb 10 | [Special Olympics WV Polar Plunge](#) | Buckhannon

Feb 10 | [Fasnacht](#) | Helvetia

Feb 12 | [Small Business Solutions for Barbour County](#) | Molly's Ice Cream

Feb 17 | [Mountain State Maple Days](#) | Statewide



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