

APRIL 2022

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 or contact us at afnha@afnha.org for more information

Management Planning Update

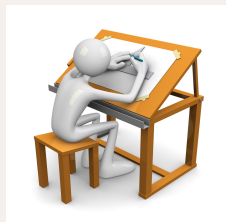
The first draft of the AFNHA Management Plan is written and available for review by partners. Contact planning@afnha.org to get a link to view the draft.

Please let us know your comments, or if you find things in the text that should be corrected or added. We are also asking partners to send letters supporting the plan, telling how your organization plans to participate, or offering comments.

What's next? Soon the plan will go to layout, with photos and more information to be added for an official version. That should be released in May for an official 30-day review period, including a zoom public meeting presenting the plan. We'll continue to encourage comments and letters through this period, until formal submission to the National Park Service at the end of that review.

Feel free to email phyllisb@afnha.org with any questions and your comments.

We want to hear from you!

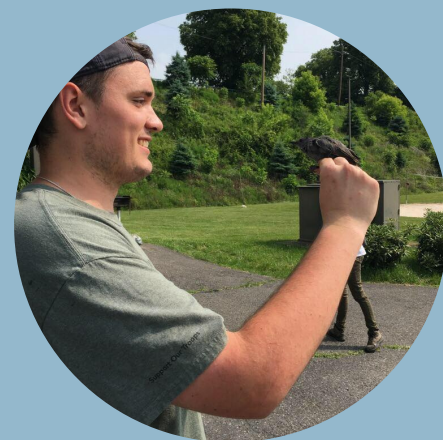




Homes for Bluebirds

By: Joe Medica

This past weekend, on March 19th, the Green Bank Observatory and Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area hosted an event with the Deer Creek Defenders 4-H club in Green Bank to build bird boxes for the local bluebird and tree swallow population. These boxes were built to replace old boxes initially deployed by Dave Curry, the founder and main proponent of the citizen science program involving these boxes here on the Observatory grounds. The boxes that were replaced were either those deteriorated by the elements or knocked down by predators that got a little too greedy. The lumber used to build these boxes was pre-cut by the GBO Works Area, and the pieces were labeled and drilled to make the boxes simpler to construct. Even the youngest bluebird enthusiasts that came to help out had no problems putting the boxes together! As they completed each box they left a little welcome message for the birds or signed their names on the boxes. Dave Curry helped us improve our design by cutting in little steps, or kerfs, on the inside of the boxes to make it easier for the baby birds to climb up to the entrance hole once they are ready to fly. After the 20 bird boxes were completed, the GBO provided lunch by grilling up some hot dogs and once the volunteers had all eaten their fill, Dave Curry gave a presentation on the importance of cavity nesters, like bluebirds, tree swallows, and wrens, as well as how building these boxes helps the health of these populations. The presentation ended with a description of citizen science, and how using online data compilation programs like NestWatch (<https://nestwatch.org/>) can help researchers access data on bird populations of a variety of species across the country and track how our songbirds are doing.



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

AFNHA seeks a new Communication Manager and Operations Manager!



AFNHA is Hiring!

AFNHA is hiring for two staff positions. We are taking applications now, until the positions are filled.

With Lukas moving on to a new job, our Communications Manager position is open. Responsibilities include this newsletter, social media, and partner outreach, including helping with the Creative Economy program.

The other position is for a new Operations Manager. This person will provide administrative support for our programs, including implementation of some of the management plan recommendations.

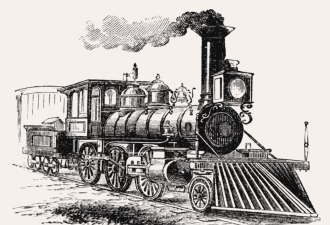
See www.appalachianforestnha.org/employment for job descriptions and how to apply.

Museum Announcement

The West Virginia Railroad Museum in Elkins, West Virginia, is opening for another season! This year, our exhibit is called "Coal-Hauling Railroads of West Virginia" and talks about the history of the relationship between railroads and coal in the Mountain State. It also features a guest exhibit from the Friends of Blackwater in Thomas, West Virginia, about the history of the coal, coke, and railroad industrial complex built by Henry Gassaway Davis.

Come and join us when we open on April 30th.

We are open from 9:30 to 4:30, Thursdays through Sundays.





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



AFNHA AmeriCorps is still recruiting for some positions for the current term. These will mostly be 6 month positions, to start as soon as feasible.

Now Recruiting for New AmeriCorps Term!

AFNHA AmeriCorps is NOW recruiting for new positions for the new 2022-2023 term. These positions will start in September, for a full-year. We are accepting applications and starting interviews now. Details of the available positions will be posted to our website in May.

Watch www.appalachianforestnha.org/ameri-corps-positions for more details.

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

Host Site Applications

AmeriCorps sub-sponsor site assignments for 2022-2023 are being reviewed now. Any West Virginia non-profit or government partner who is interested in hosting a member but missed applying, please contact Chrissy to see if slots may still be available.



Follow AFNHA on Facebook and Instagram!





AFNHA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT GRANT AWARDS

Highlands Creative Economy tourism development grants were awarded to 18 projects this month. Funding for these grants comes from Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and National Park Service funding to AFNHA.

Each organization will provide match to complete their project.

The grants were highly competitive, and a number of worthy projects were not able to be included this time.

Awarded projects are:

- Adaland Mansion -- Adaland Mansion Quilt Show and Antique Bed Turning
- Allegany County Tourism – LaVale Toll Gate House Tours
- Allegany Museum – Allegany Museum Creative Center
- Arthurdale Heritage – Revitalizing a Historic Outdoor Event Space
- Belington Revitalization Committee (Woodlands DG) – The Golden Rule Marketplace
- Beverly Heritage Center – 21st Century Web Site for an 18th-19th Century Town
- Canal Place Authority – Heritage Area Tourism & Management Plan
- Elkins Depot Welcome Center – West Virginia’s Christmas Community
- Evergreen Heritage Center – Signage for Self-guided Tours
- Frankfort District Historical Society – Restroom Facility for Stewarts Tavern
- Greenbrier River Trail Foundation – Caldwell Trailhead: Diversifying the User Experience
- Greenbrier Valley Theater – Mountain Home Christmas
- Hampshire County CVB – Potomac Highlands Outdoor Show
- Highland Trails Foundation – Allegheny Highlands Trail Kiosk Refresh
- Lost River Trails Coalition – Beginner Trail in Lost River State Park
- Mineral County CVB – Civil War Interpretive Signs
- Mineral County Historical Society - Historic Sites in Mineral County
- WV Division of Forestry – Cooper’s Rock State Forest Interpretive Trail