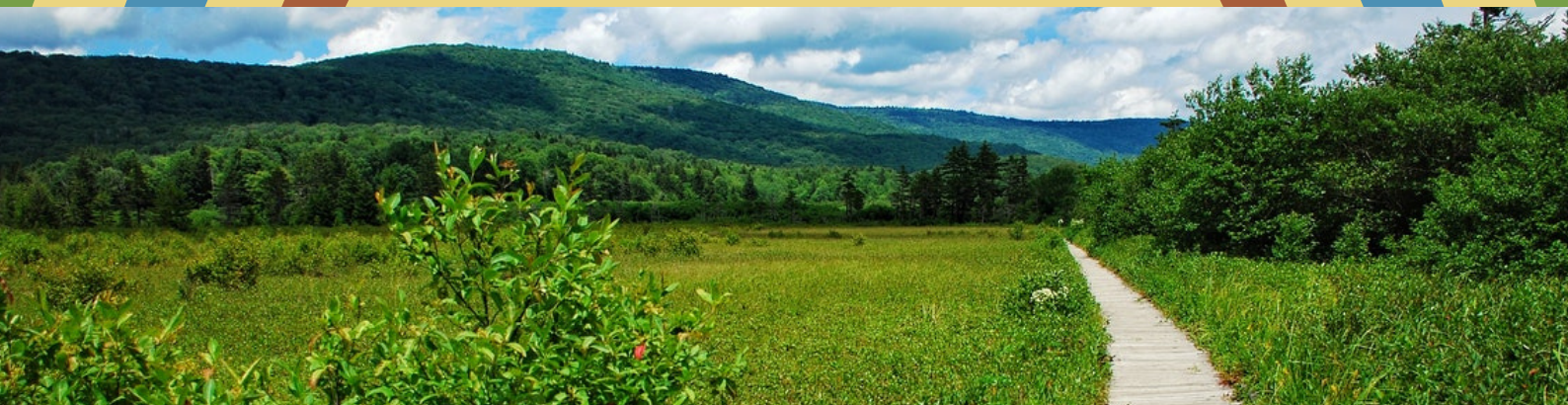


FEBRUARY 2021

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 Lukas Ray at lukas@afnha.org for more information



Management Planning Update

Management Planning continues to move forward with work in all three Task Groups:

- Organization Structure and Management:** The planning consultant team continues with one-on-one interviews with selected stakeholders that all represent a broad range of partners. These interviews are almost complete and then this group will move forward with next steps in the organizational structure process. The next meeting is TBD.
- Interpretation and Visitor Experience:** The planning consultant team continues to work with the interpretation themes with help from our National Park Service liaison and certain stakeholders. This effort is underway and we will have something to share and review with this group soon! The next meeting is TBD.
- Asset Stewardship and Enhancement:** This group continues to gather information for our Asset database. If you would like to get involved in this effort, email us at planning@afnha.org. This group had two sub-group who met this past month. The History, Culture, and Community subgroup met on January 13th. The Nature, Conservation, and Outdoor Recreation subgroup met on January 27th. Both had good conversation and set next steps for each group.



Email us at planning@afnha.org if you would like to get involved in any Task Group!



NEWS AND UPDATES

Beverly-Randolph Heritage Tourism

The Beverly Heritage Center welcomed AFNHA AmeriCorps Alumni Ben Duvall-Irwin as its new Marketing Director for the newly created Beverly-Randolph Heritage CVB. Welcome back Ben! Be sure to check out some of the new things this organization will be doing. Follow them on **Instagram**.

On **Saturday, February 20th at 1:00pm** the BHC will virtually host the program **New Route Along the Underground Railroad? Black Lives Along the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike**.

The Underground Railroad in West Virginia is still very much a mystery and this program tell new stories about the region during this time period.

Tune in to the Facebook livestream:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1592369>

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President's Volunteer Service Award

Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area is a Certifying Organization on behalf of the President's Volunteer Service Award Program. This program awards volunteers with national recognition for their community service efforts. AFNHA will also certify the volunteer service of it's partner sites under this program. We hope this will add value to your volunteer recruitment efforts and support increased volunteerism for your organization.

For more information on awards and award packages visit:

presidentalserviceawards.gov/

or contact Logan Smith at logan@afnha.org for more information.



Applications are now **OPEN** for Site sub-sponsors to host AmeriCorps members for the 2021-2022 program year



AmeriCorps



**CLICK ON THE
LOGO FOR MORE
INFORMATION**



Contact Chrissy Hall, Program Manager at **chrissyh@afnha.org** with any questions on how to apply.

Black History Month Highlights



Riverside School was a school for black students in the Elkins-Randolph County region. It was built between 1902 and 1905, as a one-story, rectangular red brick structure, measuring 56 feet, 6 inches, by 34 feet. Industry was doing well in the area, which attracted new immigration to Elkins, including an influx of black Americans. West Virginia segregation law required that Independent School Districts have thirty black children between the ages of six and twenty-one before a public school would be provided for blacks. A second story was added to the building in 1928, when it became a four-year high school. When schools were desegregated in Randolph County in 1954, it was said that the black students that attended Riverside were more advanced than their white counterparts.



Pictures from C-Hope-WV



In December 1937, a Monongahela National Forest newsletter reported that painter Stevan Dohanos had recently visited Elkins to gather material for a mural to be painted in the vestibule of the recently completed U.S. Department of Agriculture and Forest Service building. Dohanos was employed by the Treasury Department to paint murals for federal buildings across the United States during the Great Depression. Two Dohanos murals, "Mining Village" and "Forestry Service" painted in 1939, still hang in the vestibule of the USDA Forest Service building on Sycamore Street in Elkins



Click on picture for link to story on the USDA-USFS Website



Black HISTORY HIGHLIGHT

Paul Cooley
Lewisburg, WV

Paul Cooley was born on October 25, 1920 to Azeal and Lawrence Cooley. Paul became a longstanding Lewisburg and Greenbrier County community activist. He was employed at White Sulphur Springs' Greenbrier Resort for over forty years. In 1970 Paul was elected as the first Lewisburg Black City Council member in 100 years. He served the city for over thirty years and is still the longest-running Lewisburg City Council member.

In an interview, Paul stated that one of his most proud accomplishments was the establishment of the Dorie Miller Park in Lewisburg. He died in January of 2003.



Black History Highlights from the Greenbrier Historical Society and North House Museum



Black HISTORY HIGHLIGHT

MAYOR Barbara Wooding
White Sulphur Springs, WV



Barbara Wooding was born in White Sulphur Springs and grew up in an integrated neighborhood. She attended the Bethune School in White Sulphur Springs and graduated from Bolling High School in Lewisburg.

After serving the city as both a City Council member and a street commissioner for many years, Barbara was elected as the first Black and woman mayor of White Sulphur Springs in 1993.



Black HISTORY HIGHLIGHT

MAYOR Beverly White
Lewisburg, WV



Beverly White was born and raised in Lewisburg. As a young student, she attended the segregated Bolling School and would later graduate from the consolidated Greenbrier East High School.

In 2003, Beverly became the first Black woman ever to serve on the Lewisburg City Council. She served on the Council for 16 years before being elected as Lewisburg's first Black Mayor in 2019.



Check out more great content for the Greenbrier Historical Society on Facebook and Instagram





WELCOME TO THE ELKINS DEPOT!

By: Morgan Glup, Serving with the Elkins Welcome Depot

I moved to Elkins at the end of August. Why would I, a recent college graduate from Minnesota, decide to move to Elkins, West Virginia? I was looking at post-graduation opportunities through AmeriCorps and came across positions with Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area that interested me. I am currently serving with the Elkins Depot Welcome Center. Still unsure of what exactly I wanted to go into, I recognized the opportunity to explore a potential career that AFNHA AmeriCorps provided. I had been interested in tourism since my semester abroad, which led me to write my thesis on how tourism can impact local populations. My position with the Welcome Center has given me the opportunity to see the important role and impact tourism can have on a community like Elkins. This year has looked very different for the Welcome Center due to COVID-19 and people refraining from traveling. While I may not be having the same experience previous AmeriCorps did, it has been a valuable and interesting experience none the less.

My day-to-day activities vary. The Welcome Center is currently operating out of a window in order to continue to provide service and information to visitors in a safe manner. Some days I am at the welcome window and providing visitor services. I am involved in virtual community development meetings where I learn about what is happening in the community and discuss potential projects to enhance our community and how to move these projects forward. I also write blogs for the website, work with my supervisors on marketing projects, and I get to explore the area to learn about area attractions. A big project I am currently working on is updating the Welcome Center's website, making sure all information is up-to date and modernizing its appearance.

Being an AFNHA AmeriCorps and serving with the Welcome Center has been a great experience and I look forward to the rest of my service! I have been in Elkins for over 4 months now and am still happy to be here! I thought I'd share some of my impressions of the area:

Beautiful setting and winding roads: Elkins is nestled in the mountains and everywhere you go is a scenic drive. While the tree-covered mountains are beautiful, especially in the autumn, at first it can feel somewhat closed in for someone accustomed to a landscape of lakes and flat, open farmland. The winding roads I expected. Miles aren't very helpful here, I have learned to ask how long it will take to get somewhere, not how far, then I enjoy the drive.

Busy for a "small" town: In my first couple weeks here, I learned that Elkins is a hub for Randolph County. As the largest town in the county and the county seat, it is full of activity. Elkins is also a perfect "base camp" for taking advantage of the nearby outdoor recreation.

Outdoor Recreation: Speaking of outdoor recreation, I enjoy hiking, canoeing, camping and generally being outside in pretty places. The Elkins' region provides endless opportunities for outdoor activities for all seasons. there is no shortage of hiking trails. Hiking isn't your thing? The area offers bike trails, train excursions, rock climbing, river rafting, skiing, hunting and fishing. You can't go wrong with any of them. It all depends on what type of experience you're looking for.

Friendly People: "Minnesota Nice" extends to West Virginia. One of the first things I noticed when I arrived was the friendliness of the people. People would ask where I was from and what brought me to Elkins. When I said I was moving here, they welcomed me to the area. I have since met more people through my service and it's the same story. It is a welcoming and friendly community.