



The Catoctin Forest Alliance Bulletin

www.catoctinforestalliance.org

Newsletter of the CFA

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Editor: Linda Sundergill

Our mission is to preserve and protect the Catoctin Mountain forest for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations

Memorial Bench Dedicated for Elizabeth Prongas

The beautiful fall afternoon of November 10, 2023 was the perfect backdrop for the dedication of a memorial bench at Harriett Chapel Church for Elizabeth Prongas, one of the founding members of CFA. Elizabeth was the spark that got CFA started and for many years after, she was actively involved in teaching, recruiting, planning and connecting people to help preserve our beautiful Catoctin Mountain forest.



Inscription of the memorial bench

personalized and thoughtful message. The bench was provided through memorial contributions in Elizabeth's name.

Elizabeth was an artist and an avid environmentalist. On the day of the bench dedication, Elizabeth's ashes were also buried at Harriett Chapel Church, her home church. Family and friends attended and Pastor Sally Joyner Giffin gave a very

If you are near Harriet Chapel Church, stop by and share a moment with Elizabeth on the Tree of Life bench. Many thanks to all who donated to Elizabeth's Memorial Fund and to Mel Poole who managed this project and brought it to completion. You can still make donations to the fund to plant trees in her name by going to www.catoctinforestalliance.org and clicking on the Donate icon at the bottom of the home page. Please make a note on the donation form that the money is for the Prongas Memorial Fund.

Improvements to The Artist's Cabin at Misty Mount

Thanks to an evaluation form filled out by our Spring 2023 Artist in Residence, Jeffrey Lockwood, there have been some improvements made to the Artist's Cabin at Misty Mount. Jeffrey said that some comfortable seating and some items to facilitate cooking would have been very much appreciated during his stay. In response to his suggestions, Catoctin Mountain Park purchased two lounge chairs, a small table and a lamp for the cabin. CFA purchased a two-burner induction cooktop, cooking pans, dishes, cups and flatware for use in the Artist's Cabin.



Artist in Residence 2024

We have received 13 applications for Artist in Residence this year. The jury committee will meet on March 6th to make the selection and chosen artists will be notified by March 15.



Note from our President—Jim Robbins

Winter is almost gone and Spring is on its way (March 19, 2024). The rebirth of the forest is a great time to watch this transformation of the forest. Fishermen and mushroom hunters are eagerly awaiting the beginning of the season and the animals of the forest are on the move once again. Take a hike (get the muscular system going), watch the sun come up with the dew sparkling on the leaves and trees or just enjoy the beauty of the change.

We, the Alliance, have received the applications from 13 artist for the Artist in Residence program and are in hopes of having two artists again this year (one for Cunningham Falls State Park and one for Catoctin Mountain Park).

With the road work on Rt. 77, it can be a challenge to get to the Parks at the beginning of the Spring. Please be careful and follow the signage for the detour to Cunningham Falls and Catoctin Mountain Park Visitor Center, which is open. The roads (detour routes) have many turns and in some cases are narrow. Drive with care.

The Amish will be arriving in the Parks for the 13th year on March 4th and leaving on the 29th. The Amish pay their way here, buy food at the local markets, their parents come by bus half way through their stay and pay for lodging at a local hotel. The male adults (10) give up a month's pay to come do "service". They do outstanding service for the Parks and the handy work can be see throughout the Parks.

The SUCCESS youth are in the middle of taking old picnic tables apart and refurbishing them. They completed the removal of old trail boxes from Catoctin Mountain Park areas and have been doing some trail maintenance and enjoying the wonderful sounds and sights of the beauty around them.

As always, we can use your support in time and/or dollars to help these and other programs continue in our Parks. Please think of us when making donations this year. If you have any questions about CFA, our programs or questions in general please visit our web site (www.catoctinforestalliance.org) or you can reach me Jim Robbins at jimrobbins@comcast.net of 301-693-9703).





A Note from Shelley

Submitted by Shelley Miller, Membership and Fundraising Chair

Hello CFA Family... If you have already renewed your membership with CFA, thank you! Membership enrollment has a positive impact on many levels supporting the programs of CFA. Joining or membership renewal is easy. You may go to the CFA website, www.catoctinforestalliance.org, to join or renew. Or, you may send the filled-out newsletter membership page to the CFA PO Box with a check made out to CFA. Or you may contact me directly (Shellbio@aol.com) for assistance. As always, please share CFA membership information with anyone interested in preserving the Catoctin Mountain forest for present and future generations. Many exciting things continue to happen in CFA and we hope you will be a part of them!

In retrospect:

CFA once again participated in the Boscov's holiday gift wrapping service. Thank you to all of the volunteers who served at the gift wrapping table. Although the table was a bit further out of sight this year, CFA was still able to bring in some funds to help our educational programs. The time volunteering also serves as a wonderful opportunity to share the news of CFA.

The CFA Holiday Gathering this year took place at Thorpewood during its Holiday Open House. Although the annual Pre-Valentine's Day Groundhog Day event did not take place this year, we are setting our sights on next year. Stay tuned! We are in the process of entertaining ideas for these...Look for more to come!

Present Opportunities (Want to get involved NOW?)

Volunteer for the EKO fourth grade field trips? CFA's support of the Every Kid Outdoors (EKO) program at Catoctin Mountain Park has been a long standing one. Do you like being outdoors, in the fresh air, getting some exercise in a fun learning environment? Anyone interested in volunteering with the EKO fourth grade field trips please contact Ranger Carrie Andresen-Strawn (Carrie_Andresen@nps.gov) at Catoctin Mountain Park. This is a wonderful time sharing the beautiful park with the students, teachers, and chaperones. As Carrie says, "It's always a great day to be in the park!" As I volunteer I find joy in sharing information with others and I always learn from others too! Hope to see you at the EKIP field trips!

Upcoming Events- Keep and eye out for...

The Second Annual CFA Family Funfest at the Gambrill State Park Tea Room

The second annual CFA Family Funfest will take place at the Gambrill State Park Tea Room on Wednesday May 8 from 4-8:30. This is the Wednesday before Mother's Day! Artwork from the Artists in Residence programs will be on display for all to enjoy and purchase (Hint: The art pieces would make great Mother's Day presents). There will be fun activities for visitors to create Mother's Day crafts to take home. And, of course, there will be lots of delicious refreshments. Come for a little while or come for the whole event and enjoy the beautiful sunset from the top of Gambrill Mountain. Rumor has it there may even be an awesome raffle for a bushel of crabs! Mark your calendars now to "**save the May 8th date**". Hope to see you there!

CFA remains a vital group of caring individuals who are making a positive impact in our community. Please consider being an active part of this incredible service organization by joining or renewing your membership today! Remember, you may go to the CFA website, www.catoctinforestalliance.org, to join or renew. Or, you may send the filled-out newsletter membership page to the CFA PO Box (CFA PO Box 411 Thurmont, MD 21788) with a check made out to CFA.



News from Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Park

Submitted by Mark Spurrier, State
Park Ranger Manager



Turtle Races for Edmund April 20, 2024 – 12 pm -2 pm

Edmund, the snapping turtle, needs a new home! Help the Friends of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks, Inc. build one. Edmund is one of the animal ambassadors from the Scales & Tales program at the aviary at Cunningham Falls State Park. He has grown and needs a new space. You can make a positive difference in a fun way by sponsoring a rubber turtle at the first ever "Turtle Races for Edmund". Proceeds from the races go directly to the construction of Edmund's new enclosure and the long-term care of the animals housed in the aviary. Scan the QR code for more details and to join in on the fun!



Turtle Races for Edmund
runsignup.com



cunninghamgambrill.org

Robert Brown Obituary for one of CATO's seasonal rangers after a long career with MD DNR. Submitted by Mel Poole

Robert L. Brown, 83, of Fairfield, PA, passed away on January 1, 2024. Born in Sabillasville, MD on March 2, 1940, he was the son of the late Jesse Royer Brown and Emma Virginia (Wetzel) Brown.

Bob graduated from Thurmont High School in 1958 and furthered his education at Hagerstown Junior College. Serving his country, he was a proud member of the U.S. Air Force from 1962 to 1966. In 1964, he married Rebecca Chrismer, and together they had two children, Jennifer and Michael.

In 1972, Bob began his career with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources at Baltimore's Cub Hill Ranger Station in Fire Control. The following year, he transitioned to a Game Warden for DNR and moved to Southern Maryland. In 1975, he returned to Thurmont, MD where he continued his career as a Game Warden until his retirement in 1994. This journey led him to some remarkable experiences, most notably the joy of fly fishing with President Jimmy Carter on Big Hunting Creek.

Post-retirement, Bob worked for the National Park Service at Catocin, Yellowstone, and the Grand Tetons—his favorite National Park. He traversed all 50 states, casting his fly line into countless streams along the way. After retiring, his adventures continued with companion Susan Sanders until her passing in 2018. Together, they explored both national and international destinations, seeking out bingo games wherever they could find them.

Bob is survived by his sister Charlotte Nusbaum, daughter Jennifer Buchheister and husband Raymond, son Michael Brown, and grandchildren Becca Corbell, Elizabeth, Matthias, and Luke Buchheister. Additionally, he is survived by his ex-wife Becky (Chrismer), with whom he maintained a close friendship until his passing.

He will also be fondly remembered by Sue's daughters, Denise Valentine and Allyson Rohrbaugh, and Parker Rohrbaugh, his fly-fishing "grandson."

A memorial service at the Germantown Church of God in Cascade, MD, where his father and uncles contributed their craftsmanship to the masonry stonework of the church and rectory, was held Friday, February 23, at 11 AM.



Many Thanks to our Donors



Mighty Oak Level

- Carroll Children's Center
- Wagester Family of Woodsboro, Md.

Sapling Level

- Community Foundation of Frederick
- Exelon Corporation

Consider Donating to CFA

To help CFA continue its programs to preserve and protect the Catoctin Mountain forest, please consider, making a donation. CFA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization so your donations will be tax deductible.

Any donation over \$20 will include a one-year CFA membership. Here is what your donation could do.

- \$50 will buy notebooks or clipboards for 40 children at the week-long day camp.
- \$120 will cover the cost for one child to attend the week-long day camp
- \$125 will provide food for 40 children for one day of day camp.
- \$200 helps sponsor the Artist in Residence program
- \$364 will buy protective equipment for a SUCCESS program youth.
- \$400 will buy bus transportation for 40 children to day camp for one day.
- \$1300 will fund the SUCCESS program for one year.



Giving Levels

- **Acorn** up to \$99
- **Seedling** \$100- 499.99
- **Sapling** \$500-999.99
- **Mighty Oak** \$1000 and over

Donations checks can be made out to CFA and sent to Catoctin Forest Alliance, PO Box 411, Thurmont, MD 21788

Join or Renew your Membership to CFA

We'd love to have you join us in our mission to protect the Catoctin Mountain forest. Your support would be a great benefit to us and the forest.

To join CFA or renew your membership, please send the membership application form and a check made out to **Catoctin Forest Alliance** with notation "**Membership**" to the address below. The yearly membership dues are \$20 per person or \$30 per couple for the period December 31, 2023 to December 31, 2024.

You can also join online at <http://www.catoctinforestalliance.org/index.php/join>.

Kathy Byrne
CFA Treasurer
123 Ironmaster Dr.
Thurmont, MD 21788

New members will receive a CFA patch



Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email address: _____

Committee Interest

Strategic Planning ____	Membership ____	Conservation/Education ____
Fundraising ____	Artist in Residence ____	Marketing/Publicity ____
Information Technology ____	Finance ____	

Visit our website at www.catoctinforestalliance.org