



The Catoctin Forest Alliance Bulletin

Newsletter of the CFA

Vol. 10 No. 2 July 2020

www.catoctinforestalliance.org

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



Virtual Artist in Residence May 2020

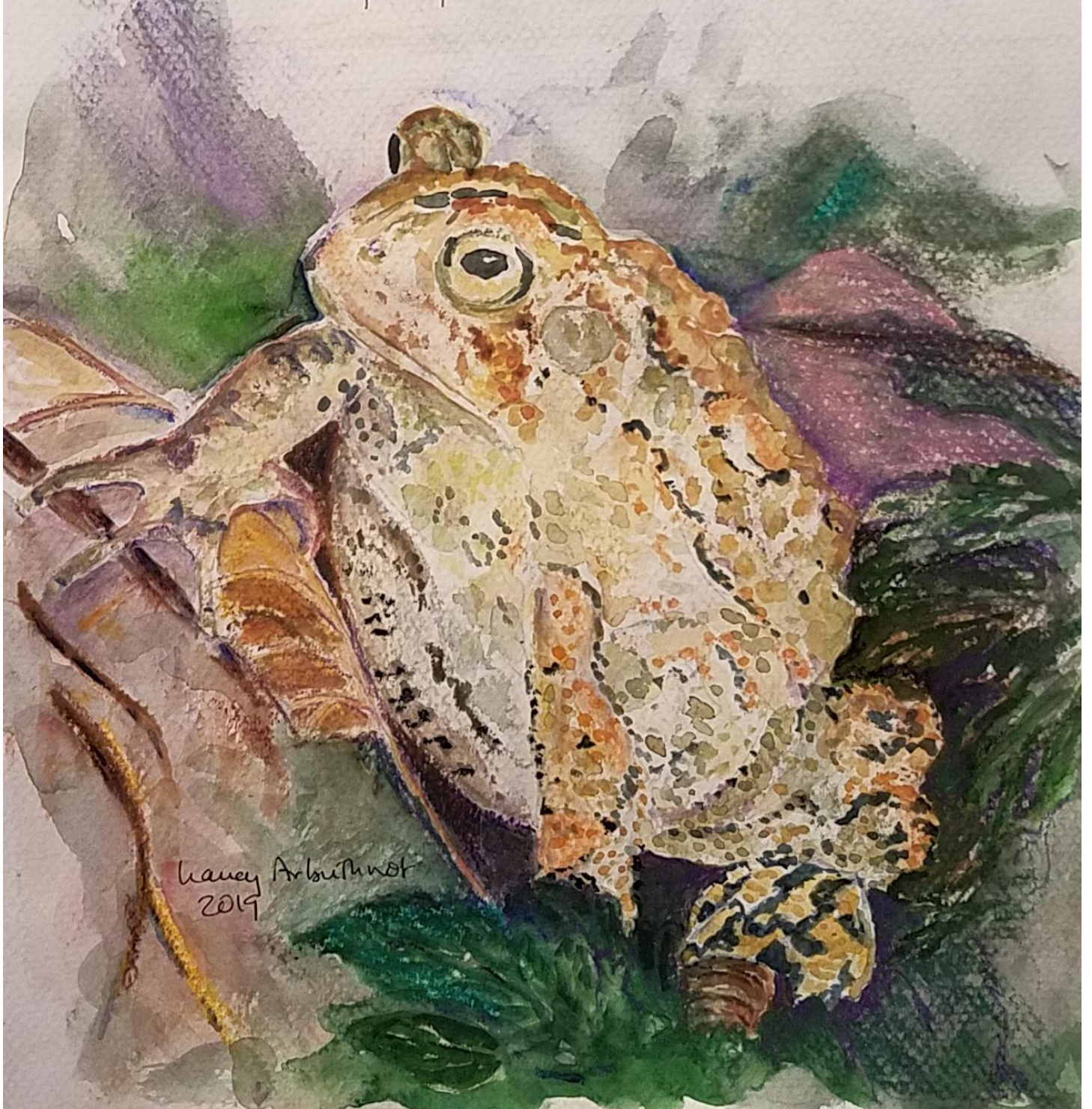
Nancy Arbuthnot, our Artist in Residence (AIR) for 2020 was unable to do her residency in the park due to COVID 19 and the park closure. Nancy was undaunted by the limitations of her residency and put together some virtual teaching materials to be used with school children. Because Nancy did not have the opportunity for a real AIR experience, we have invited her to come back in 2021 to complete her residency.. Consequently we will not be accepting AIR applications for 2021. We encourage prospective AIR applicants to stay turned and submit applications for 2022.

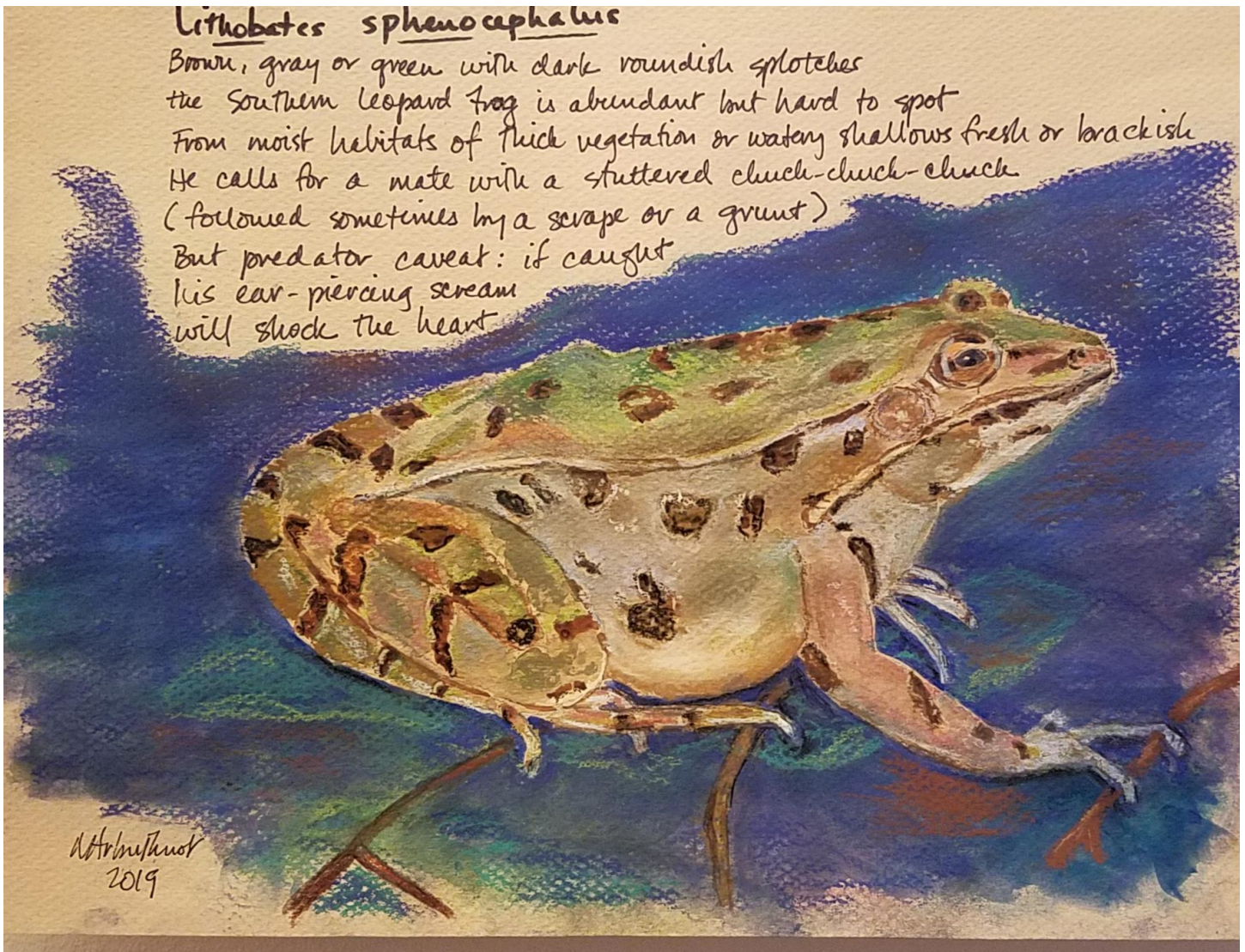
Nancy Arbuthnot is a poet, artist and teacher from Washington, DC, who enjoys creating work inspired by nature and teaching others how to convey their experiences with the natural world through art and poetry. She finds that her work as a citizen-scientist with the DC Department of the Environment is greatly enhanced by drawing and writing poems about the frogs and toads inhabiting the ponds in Rock Creek National Park, right outside her back door!

There are some examples of Nancy's work on the following pages.

Anaxyrus americanus

This tubercled toad's long musical trill
is a dream of a song, melodious, thrilling,
luring us out to woodland and garden,
astonishing us, adjusting our minds
with beauty beyond the beholder's eyes





[Nature Haiku Virtual Workshop](#) by Nancy Arbuthnot

[Nature Haiku Guided Meditation](#) by Nancy Arbuthnot



CFA Art Exhibit at the Delaplaine

CFA has been approved to have an exhibit of the Artist in Residence art work at the Delaplaine Arts Center April 3-25, 2021 in the Hall Gallery and the New Gallery. The opening reception will be April 3rd from 3-5pm. A good portion of CFA's Artist in Residence artwork will be on exhibit and for sale.

A Note from CFA President-Jim Robbins

Wow, so many things have happened since our last newsletter. I sincerely hope that this newsletter from Catoctin Forest Alliance finds all well and staying as safe as possible.

To bring you up to speed on where we stand at the present time. The AMISH arrived on March 2, 2020 and did some wonderful work for the Catoctin Mountain Park. The work was at Green Top and dealt with roofs, floors, beam replacements and windows. Because of the issue with the virus and concerns for the safety of the AMISH it was agreed that they would leave a week early (March 21, 2020) by bus and not the train. The Parks, Cunningham Falls State Park and Catoctin Mountain Park were closed shortly after that.

The youth from SUCCESS stopped work on March 16, 2020 because of the virus and it was a sad day. They would have no opportunity to get the recognition that they deserved after 3 years of work. It was not the same, no end party, no handing out recognitions in person and no sense of closure. The youth had spent many hours working in the parks and doing some wonderful things, too many to mention over the 3 years. I wish to thank them, William Vale, Dakota Lovejoy, David Andrew and Jodi Haines-Coole for all the time and great work that you have done for the parks.

The trail, at the Thurmont Library, which the SUCCESS youth worked on, was not opened to the public as scheduled. We are hoping that it will in the near future. We have still continued to plant milkweed plants and improve on the pollinator gardens. The barred owl box has been placed high in a pine tree; we still have some mulch to spread and flowers to plant.

Our artist in residence program and artist were not in CMP this year, but that does not mean that we did not have an artist that did not do things. Our artist worked with CFA and Park personnel to do a virtual program. She has also agreed to return for next year for our program.

Our summer program for youth was also cancelled and the 4th grade field trips, from the schools, were cancelled as well. We hope that this program will still be available this coming year.

The Parks have now reopened for visitors, campers and volunteers (on a limited basis). If you wish to volunteer in the parks please call the visitor center at the parks (NOTE – the visitor center at the CMP is not open to the general public at the present time, but calls are being taken). The parks might have specific requirements for you at the present time for volunteering so please check with them.

The world has changed since our last newsletter but our desire to work with the Parks and our other programs has not changed. The formats might have changed but the objectives have not. The plants, animals and the streams still pull us to the wonderful healing power of our Parks.

Covid Concerns Cause Camp CATOCTIN Cancellation

By Debbie Mills, CFA Program Director

After considering possible conflicts with summer activities, the Camp CATOCTIN Staff began 2020 recruitment in February. On March 13, with 41 permission slips in hand, it appeared that the possibility of an overbooked camp was the most pressing concern.

With a successful 4 year history, Camp CATOCTIN was becoming a Carroll County Summer tradition. As parents and students told others how Camp CATOCTIN impacted their perceptions of the natural world, word spread throughout the Westminster Community. One positive reaction came in the form of a major financial contribution from the Carroll Children's Center. This contribution combined with a substantial donation from the Wagester Family of Woodsboro, Maryland, a grant from the Exelon Corporation, transportation funding from the Bridging the Watershed Program and product donations from multiple businesses fully funded projected camp expenses.

As we left school that bright and sunny day, we believed that schools were closing for an extended spring break as a virus spread throughout the country. Who could have guessed that this Friday the Thirteenth would be the last day of school, or that Camp CATOCTIN would be cancelled as a result?

As time progressed and closures continued, it became obvious that there was no way to safely hold camp this summer. The Catoctin Forest Alliance and the Camp CATOCTIN Staff remain committed to getting children outdoors and are exploring alternative activities that may take place as conditions improve. These include: a day at the park later this summer with transportation and supervision provided by parents, camp days during the fall on days when there is no school, 2 camps in 2021, 1 for upcoming 4th graders and an additional camp for 6th graders who planned on attending camp this year.



Camp Catoctin 2019

Community Foundation of Frederick County Grant Contributes to Manor Area Educational Project

By Mark Spurrier, CFSP Manager

Cunningham Falls State Park (CFSP) offers visitors many opportunities to experience nature in many fun and exciting ways. From swimming in the summer, gathering around a campfire, hiking to the waterfalls to attending a school field trip. Yes, field trips. Thanks to an outstanding partnership with the Catoctin Forest Alliance and a generous support from the Community Foundation of Frederick County Impact Grant Fund, park staff has been developing educational opportunities for students of all ages.

It is a goal of the Maryland Park Service to provide places for children to feel safe and connect with nature and history. We cannot do this without the support of the community partners. As a CFSP Partner, the Catoctin Forest Alliance is assisting with the effort to help transform the Manor Area of the park into a prime location for easily accessible field trips for the students of Frederick County and beyond. A successful application to the Community Foundation of Frederick County Impact Grant Fund allowed the project to move from the planning to

execution phase in 2020 with funds used to purchase two portable education stations and supporting materials. These carts, along with other features of the park, will allow teachers flexibility in lesson planning and meeting educational standards.



Portable Education Station

CFA has titled the overall project, “Educational Adaptations – Transforming Recreational Areas into Hands-on Learning Centers”. This title describes the concept of using the Manor Area as a field trip location for schools and as a place for recreation and education. As families realize this potential through self-guided, self-paced activities, it is a goal to make this area of the park a destination of its own and offer visitors alternative activities to reduce the impact on lake area resources. Currently, Cunningham Falls State Park

sees over 350,000 visitors a year with most of those individuals choosing to go the lake and beaches. Often the lake area will fill to capacity during summer weekends. We want to make an area where students can visit on a school day and then bring their family back to show what they have learned on the weekend and a place that someone who has traveled some distance can go and still enjoy the park in a different and unexpected way.

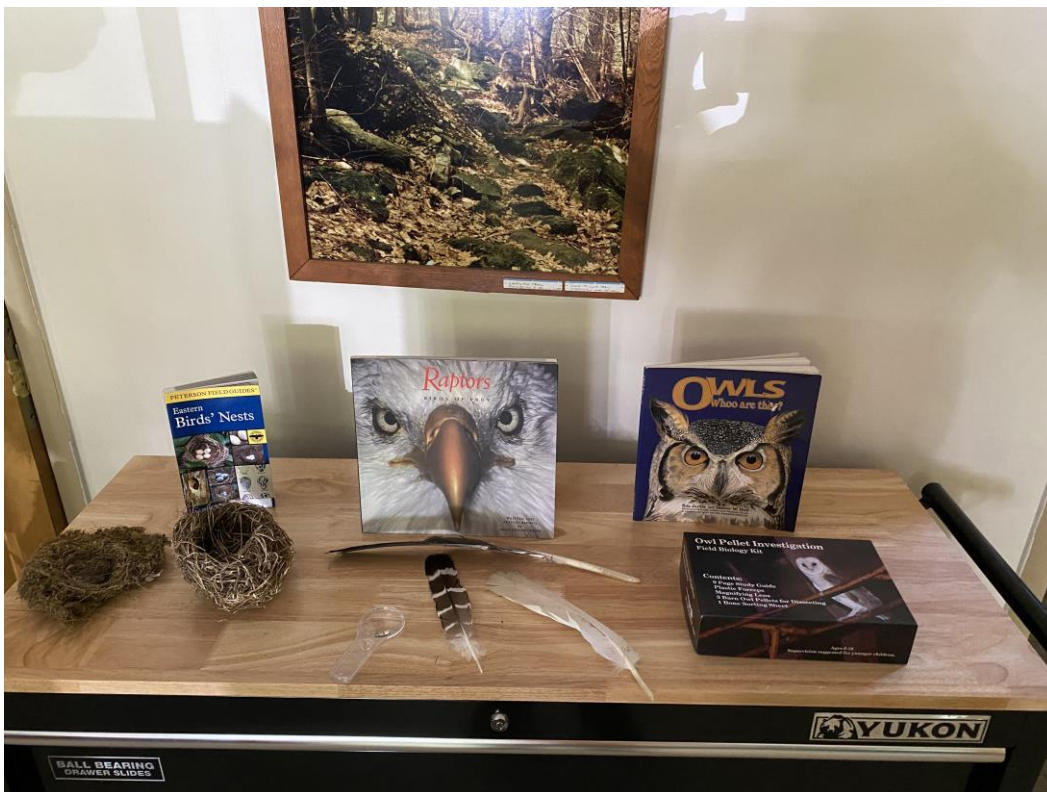
Like many projects planned for 2020, the Manor Area Project has been impacted by extended school closures and the Coronavirus pandemic. With necessary precautions in place to control the spread of Covid-19 and the promotion of social distancing, many interpretive programs had to be cancelled, including the debut field trip for Middletown Middle School. The Visitor Center and Aviary still remain closed to the general public. However, planning for the educational resources to be made available to families and organized groups and school programs, continues. The unexpected cancellation of Camp CATOCTIN, a summer outreach of the CFA, has resulted in a windfall for the Manor Area project as an additional grant from the Exelon Corporation has been redirected to this project.

While the possibility of school field trips is uncertain for the near future, family visitation to parks and natural areas is increasing. Cunningham Falls State Park and the Catoctin Forest Alliance will continue the development of the Manor Area as a place where students and their families can get outdoors and learn about the natural world.

Do you have time or talents to contribute to this developing educational project? If so, please contact CFSP Park Manager Mark Spurrier at 301-271-7574 for further information.



Additional views of the portable education stations made possible by a grant from the Community Foundation of Frederick County Impact Grant Fund



News from Catoctin Mountain Park

By Peggy Gaul, Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services

While COVID-19 has changed the way all of us lead our lives, we are encouraged to see new visitors at Catoctin Mountain Park. People are discovering the park to satisfy a need for the outdoors. Throughout the pandemic we never closed the hiking trails which have given visitors an opportunity to get exercise and explore nature. While the visitor center remains closed, we are staffing a contact station on the front porch of the building Thursday-Monday. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays trail maps and brochures are still available from self-serve brochure boxes. Our visitor center parking lots are filling up early on weekend days and we are encouraging visitors to explore the west side of the park. Owens Creek Campground and Historic Camp Misty Mount reopened to the public in mid-June, and public restrooms were made available at Hog Rock Parking area, Owens Creek Picnic Area and Chestnut Picnic Area. It's exciting to see so many people seeking respite in the outdoors.



Outdoor visitor contact station on the front porch of Catoctin Mountain Park Visitor Center

Education and Interpretive programs were cancelled in the spring and summer, but we have been active behind the scenes in a variety of ways. Although most of the 4th graders were not able to visit the park in person, we were able to connect the students to the special adaptations of our plants and animals with a virtual field trip by working with local educators to create a google slides program. Now the rangers are working to create video programming that will provide a deeper level of understanding for this fall. We are also partnering with the Frederick County Library system to create virtual preschool programs. One was shared recently, and another will be posted on the Frederick County Library Facebook page soon. We look forward to sharing more virtual programs in the future. They will be found on our website, our Facebook page and on partner websites. We are grateful for this opportunity to stay connected with visitors – in person at a social distance and virtually.

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 Catocin 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 **Catocin Forest Alliance** to the address below. **The yearly membership dues are \$20 per person or \$30 per couple for the period December 31, 2020 to December 31, 2021. However, you can join now for that same rate and get 5 months of free membership. Your membership will be good until December 31, 2021.**

**CFA, C/O Linda Sundergill
Membership Chairman
7015 Sunday's Lane
Frederick, MD 21702**

New members will receive a CFA patch



Anyone joining a committee will receive a CFA vest

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.catocinforestalliance.org