



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

Carrollton Manor Makes NSDAR Conservation Award



Left to right: Donna Robison, Judy Thompson, Jim Humerick, Shelley Miller, Mark Spurrier, Jim Robbins, Linda Sundergill, Rick Slade and Ysabel Suarez.

On October 16, 2024, “Jim” Horace Robbins received the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) Conservation Award from Ysabel Suarez, Regent. The award was established to recognize adult volunteers with distinguished conservation records. The tributes of the evening matched the award criteria in (1) Jim’s ability to manage resources, (2) his youth leadership and (3) his production of conservation-related media and education.

The award asks for a minimum of two letters of recommendation. Jim had six. Excerpts of letters were read by five of the six writers and included the following:

- the Catoctin Forest Alliance, which is the Friends Group for the Catoctin Mountain Forest: Linda Sundergill, Board Member, and Shelley Miller, Volunteer
- the Town of Thurmont: Jim Humerick, Administrator, Town of Thurmont,
- and the Maryland Park Service: Mark Spurrier, Manager, Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks.
- Rick Slade, Superintendent, Catoctin Mountain Park

- Thurmont Public Library: Amy Whitney, Branch Administrator, Thurmont Regional Library (retired). Ms. Whitney could not be present. The excerpt from her letter was read by Donna Robison, who co-coordinated the nomination.
- Congratulations from Dr. George Grillon, a CFA Board member who could not be present, were read.

Also required are support materials in the form of newspaper and magazine articles, certificates and the like. A packet of the following support materials was submitted with the nomination:

- Frederick News Post: "A Trail for All" at the Thurmont Library
- Catoctin Forest Alliance Newsletter: Work at Thorpewood and Cunningham Falls State Park by the Amish
- Carrollton Manor Newsletter: Pollinator Garden Dedication Invitation
- Frederick News Post: "Success crew working to make a connection at Catoctin Furnace"
- Catoctin Mountain Park News Release: Jim Robbins Receives National Award for Volunteerism
- Francis Scott Key Boy Scouts newsletter: Jim Robbins receives the OMEGA Award and is knighted to the Order of Frontiersman.
- Frederick City Police: Volunteer of the Year
- US Representative Chris Van Hollen: Citation

The nomination was submitted March 9 and final national approval came on March 13. Along the way – Carrollton Manor regent, state conservation chair, state regent, and national conservation chair, remarked that Jim was an "amazing man"! Carrollton Manor is excited to make this award to a deserving citizen of Frederick County.

Judy I. Thompson
 Immediate Past Conservation Chair, Carrollton Manor Chapter
 Co-coordinator of the Robbins nomination

Capturing Art in the Parks by Linda Sundergill, AIR Chairperson



Art has been part of the history of national parks since the 1860's when Hudson River School painters captured the majestic Western landscapes that became our first iconic national parks. Their awe-inspiring works spurred Americans to preserve those lands for future generations. Artist George Catlin, during an 1832 trip to the Dakotas, was perhaps the first to suggest the idea of a national park. Catlin traveled extensively and noted that Indian civilization, wildlife and the wilderness were in danger unless they could be preserved "by some great protecting policy of government...in a magnificent park....a Nation's Park, containing man and beast, in all the wild[ness] and freshness of their nature's beauty!"

Today, there are Artist in Residence (AIR) programs in more than 50 National Park Service units which preserve the connection between arts and the parks. The CFA AIR program was established in 2010 by local artist Elizabeth Prongas and then Superintendent of Catoctin Mountain Park, Mel Poole. The intention was to bring a new and diverse voice and constituency to the parks and encourage appreciation and good stewardship of nature. Since the inception of the AIR program CFA has welcomed 34 artists to the Catoctin Mountains. They have come from California, Washington, DC, Kentucky, Tennessee, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, North Carolina and Virginia. The artists include painters, photographers, poets, a writer, a videographer, cast metal artist, a wool felter, a journaling artist and, a fabric artist/quilter. The artists stay in an historic cabin in Catoctin Mountain

Park or a campsite at Cunningham Falls State Park for two to three weeks and produce art influenced by the mountain setting. After the residency, each artist donates one piece of the art they created during their stay to the CFA AIR collection.

The Catoctin Forest Alliance (CFA) manages the local Artist in Residence program jointly with Catoctin Mountain Park and Cunningham Falls State Park. Artist selections for the program are made by a panel that includes local literary and art professionals. The criteria that are used to do the selection include: technique, originality, and creativity; essence of the work complements area and would draw visitors to nature; work is appropriate for adults and children; work supports CFA goals (enhance education and appreciation of nature) and candidate shows willingness to work with the public and share talents.

The AIR art collection has been on exhibit at the Delaplaine Arts Center in Frederick, the Thurmont Library, the Emmitsburg Library and the Visitor Center in the Manor Area of Cunningham Falls State Park. The collection is permanently housed in Catoctin Mountain Park.

The Artist in Residence program not only strengthens the bond between nature, art and the outdoors but the sale of the art produces funds to bring children to the parks for outdoor learning experiences.

This fall we were privileged to have two artists doing residencies in our parks—Rachel Wojnar and Reagan Herndon.

Rachel Wojnar is a multimedia artist and educator from Cumberland, Md. Rachel’s practice is focused on themes of ecological entanglement, biology and naturalism as they relate to human experiences of community, transformation, and healing. Using both traditional media and raw natural material, Rachel highlights ecological anecdotes as tools for understanding- specifically recognizing parallels between systemic abuse of the environment and of women, trans and queer bodies. Rachel holds an BA in Art and Art History from McDaniel College and an Interdisciplinary MFA from Hartford Art School. Rachel has studied art and ecology through place-based experiences across the US, Mexico and Ireland, and has exhibited in the US and Ireland.

While in residency in Cunningham Falls State Park in September, Rachel presented a program at the park— “Hand-Bound Nature Books”. Each participant made a nature journal book, hand-sewed the binding and decorated the cover with pictures cut from magazine or hand drawn artwork.

Reagan Herndon is a visual artist currently living in Raleigh, NC. She works mainly with acrylic paint, but enjoys exploring other mediums such as wood, mixed media, and digital techniques. After graduating from East Carolina University in Greenville, NC with a BFA in painting and drawing, she started working as a concept artist designing environments for previously unheard-of worlds. This passion has continued in her personal works as she focuses on themes of life and nature and blends them with surreal imagination. She takes the realistic natural elements around us and exaggerates their color and shape to create fascinating compositions to give the audience new but familiar worlds to explore. She uses her work to get the viewers’ attention and inspire them to look at the unique life and landscapes we have all around us in a new way.

During her residency at Catoctin Mountain Park, Reagan presented a program at the Thurmont Regional Library—Visual Storytelling: An Exploration of Color”. The participants did a short nature walk

around the library. They then used elements that they had seen on the walk to tell a story with a drawing and explore the ways that color can help to relay the message of the story.

During their residencies, Rachel and Reagan co-presented a program at The Delaplaine Arts Center.



The program lasted about an hour with 20+ people in attendance. Both artists did a slide presentation and spoke about their practice and what inspires their work.

Rachel Wojnar (left) and Reagan Herndon at the Delaplaine Arts Center.

CFA Artist in Residence 2023, **Cindy Stockton Moore**, returned to Cunningham Falls State Park exactly one year after she completed her residency and presented a free outdoor screening of short videos by international artists working with a wide range of animation techniques and exploring the complexities of our relationship to nature. The video included her work that was inspired by her residency. Here is her "[short video](#)". The color wheels were created using ink made from invasive and native plants while she was here in 2023. In the words of Claudia Padilla, Lead Park Ranger at Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks, "Cindy's art reminds me of the beauty of the world and this park."

CFA Artist in Residence 2020/2021, **Nancy Arbuthnot**, presented an exhibit entitled *Maryland: From the Mountains to the Sea* at the Hood College Hodson Gallery August 19 through September 13. The exhibit included the works that were inspired by her residency at Catoctin Mountain Park as well as those inspired by Annapolis, where she was a professor of English at the US Naval Academy. Nancy is a poet and a watercolor artist. During her residency she produced an A Catoctin Mountain Alphabet with haiku poems and watercolor painting for each letter of the alphabet. You can view/purchase the book [HERE](#).

AIR Program Spotlighted in *Frederick Magazine*

Our CFA Artist in Residence Program was spotlighted in the October issue of *Frederick Magazine*. It is on pages 74 and 75 or you can view it [HERE](#).

For more information on CFA and the AIR program, please visit www.catoctinforestalliance.org.



A Note from our President, Jim Robbins

Fall has hit the mountains and hiking is still a great experience. Remember to be careful of all the leaves on the trails. The leaves can hide stones, holes and animals trying to stay warm. With winter coming, remember to review what you should be taking with you on your hike(s). Better to review and make changes than to be on the short end of things. Come hike the trails, take in the wonderful views, experience the changes, take in the smells of the forest and visit the vistas. Make suggestions for changes that you would like to see in the present trails. Check with the visitor center for information on new trails or future ones. Please stay safe as you do all these things.

“Happy trails to you”

SUCCESS

We have 5 young men with us this year along with their coach Jodie Coole. We have been cleaning up the Manor Area Shop to make room for additional parking, gathering leaves for the turtles, working on trails and exploring trails. Starting this year, we spend Monday at ThorpeWood taking care of the barn animals, horses, goats, cows and chickens. A major project for Cunningham Falls State Park will be clearing brush at the furnace area and in the winter doing picnic tables. We will have the list from Catoctin Mountain Park very soon. Whenever you see the crew say hi to them.

Amish

We had a group of five adult couples that spent November 5-9, 2024 working on a project at Gambrill State Park. They replaced beams and spindles at one end and replaced all the seating in one pavilion. While the men were working, the ladies toured many stores and quilting areas in Hagerstown, Waynesboro, Gettysburg and other areas. We had a wonderful dinner at Bonnies at the Red Byrd in Keedysville on Wednesday night (all you can eat fried chicken on Wednesday nights), The Farmhouse Restaurant in Gettysburg (great buffet) and final dinner at the Robbins house. We talked about future projects on the Charcoal Trail and will get with the people at Catoctin Mountain Park about these. The couples are all friends of many on and off the CFA Board: David & Linda Miller, Earl & Kathy Slabaugh, Wayne & Irine Borkholder, Dale & Kathryn Hochstetler, Steve & Ruth Helmuth and Bob Brown their driver. We are grateful for their service to our Parks.

Our group of Amish for March, 2025 will be arriving on the March 10, 2025 and will stay through April 4, 2025 at ThorpeWood. More to come regarding this visit.

A Fall Note from Shelley

CFA Fundraising Chairperson, Shelley Miller

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. Please check out the new CFA website, www.catocinforestalliance.org, to join or renew. You may also send the filled-out newsletter 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 Catocin 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:

Gathering at Springfield Winery Saturday August 24

Thank you to all who came out for a wonderful afternoon at Springfield Manor. It was a beautiful day with wonderful friends. Thank you to all who helped sell raffle tickets that day also (Kathy, Liz, Patrick). A fun time was had by all!

Front: Jim S., Linda S., Candy P., Mel P. second row: Troy A., Carrie A., Lily A., Shelley M., Scott B., Liz (in way back), Bud (in way back)
Photo by Patrick A.



Carrie A. and Shelley M.



Troy A., Lily A., Patrick A., Carrie A., and Scott B.



Candy P., Troy A., Lily A., Carrie A., Scott B. and Mel P.



Michele S.



Patrick A., Kathy B., Rick L. (standing), Troy A. Lily A., Carrie A., Don S., and Mel P.



Jim and Linda S.

The Crab/Seafood Raffle



Labor Day Drawing: Shelley M., Debbie M., Jim and Linda S.

Thank you to all who made the raffle a big success!

I want to share a great story with you. Hopefully this will be a smile maker. After the Labor Day drawing, which took place in the beautiful Cunningham Falls State Park where several of our members gathered, I called the winner of the first draw-- a Bushel of Crabs from Liberty Road Seafood! The winner was Mike Boyle from Chantilly Va. He and his wife were celebrating their fifth anniversary at Springfield Manor Winery on Saturday August 24th (the day CFA had their gathering there!) after a day of hiking in the Catoctin Mountains.

Mike bought the tickets from the CFA friend volunteers (Liz and Patrick) going around that day. Thank you, Liz and Patrick!! Liz and Patrick noticed someone had turned in the wrong part of his ticket stubs. They went looking for him. But they could not find him. He had apparently already left. But, as luck would have it, when he got to his car, he said he realized he had turned in the wrong part of the ticket stubs. He walked back to turn in the right part of the stubs with his contact information on it. We were all talking about how we were thankful he noticed because our volunteers could not find him to tell him. AND (on Labor Day-Guess what?!) HE WON the draw! That individual was Mike! 😂😄 Congratulations Mike!

Mike said he and his wife loved Springfield winery, the area, and what CFA was doing. They had a wonderful time that day hiking and then at the patio event. I just had to share how far reaching some of the joys go. I hope you have a smile on your face and thank you again for all the support each of you show CFA. Mike said he has friends in the area and he is sure to be back!



Diane Walbrecker being presented gift cards by Shelley.

Dianne Walbrecker (a long time CFA supporter!) won the second draw, Dutch's Daughter gift cards totaling \$100. Congratulations Dianne!

Terry Cramer (also a volunteer with CFA!) won the third draw, an Avery's \$50 gift card. Congratulations Terry!

The raffle was a wonderful fund raiser bringing in over \$800 toward CFA educational programs!

Keep a look out for the next raffle!!

***Upcoming Opportunities*:**

Gift Wrapping service/fund raiser

As many of you know we have served as gift wrappers at retail locations in past years. CFA is now preparing to hopefully participate in a gift wrapping event. Keep on the lookout for details to come.

CFA Holiday Gathering

Once again CFA invites you to join us at a table at the **2024 Thorpewood Holiday Open House on December 8**. The Thorpewood Holiday Open House event takes place from 2:30–6:30 pm at Thorpewood Inc., located at 13002 Mink Farm Rd., Thurmont. The event will feature Steven Gellman and Margaret Wolfe. Award-winning songwriter Steven Gellman is a quintessential Americana/Folk singer. CFA folks will plan to meet there at 3:00 to enjoy the festivities and some social time together. Please come and join us! The event is free but it is requested that each guest bring one-two dozen cookies to share on the cookie buffet table! It is such fun! If you have never been to Thorpewood this is a beautiful time to see it in its glory as it is decorated for the Holidays. Hope to see you there!

Want to volunteer for the EKO fourth grade field trips?

You hear me say this quite often and I will continue to say it! CFA's support of the Every Kid Outdoors (EKO) program at Catoctin Mountain Park has been a long standing one. Anyone interested in volunteering with the EKO fourth grade fieldtrips please contact Carrie Andresen-Strawn (Carrie.Andresen@nps.gov).

CFA remains a vital group of caring individuals who are making a difference in our community. Please consider being an active part of this incredible service-oriented environmentally conscientious organization. Please consider joining or renewing your membership today! Visit catoctinforestalliance.com

CFA Website Updated

Thanks to the efforts of Maxine Troxell and the CFA Board, our website has been updated. There is information and lots of photos about all of our programs. Be sure to check it out.

www.catoctinforestalliance.org





INVASIVE WEED PULLS & NATIVE PLANTING/SEED COLLECTION



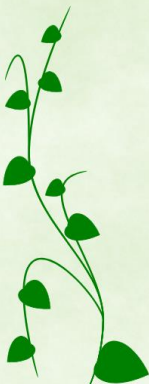
Volunteer for Cunningham Falls & Gambrill State Parks.
Combat invasive plants! No plant knowledge needed, just a
willingness to work and get wet/dirty.

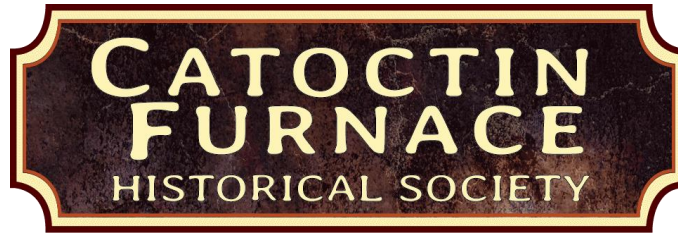
Come on out and help if you can.

Thank you!

Sunday, November 24th from 10am-12pm
@ Cunningham Falls Houck Nature Center
14274 William Houck Dr, Thurmont MD

Events are shine only.
Contact claudia.padilla@maryland.gov
for questions.





Presents
2024 Traditional Village Christmas
Saturday, December 7th
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Please join us on December 7th for our thirteenth annual Traditional Village Christmas event! Traditional Village Christmas is an outdoor, European style Holiday market. Decorate a fresh wreath with bows, balls, bells, pinecones, holly, icicles and ornaments or let our volunteers do it for you! Select unique handmade gifts for the holidays. Watch a blacksmith at work!

Enjoy hot apple cider and heirloom-recipe baked goods. Children can make a craft and enjoy a visit with Belsnickel. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Christmas in Catoctin Furnace included a visit from Belsnickel to the homes of German immigrants. During this visit, which took place two weeks before Christmas, Belsnickel rewarded good children with treats but carried a switch to punish naughty ones.

Please bring your homemade specialty for the Traditional Village Christmas bake sale. Our bake sale table is a highlight of every festival in Catoctin Furnace with delicious cookies, cupcakes, brownies, cakes, pies, and other delicious treats. Please drop off your bake sale items anytime on Friday, December 6th (we will be inside decorating but please give us a call if you intend to drop off items on Friday) or anytime on Saturday, December 7th (we have a commercial refrigerator for storage).

Thank you in advance for contributing your baked treat specialties!

Any questions, want to volunteer? Just call 240-288-7396. We hope to see you there!

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.**

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

Kathy Byrne *New members will receive a CFA patch*
CFA Treasurer
123 Ironmaster Dr.
Thurmont, MD 21788



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