



The Catoclin Forest Alliance Bulletin

www.catoclinforestalliance.org



Newsletter of the Catoclin Forest Alliance Vol. 16 No. 3 August 2026

Editor:

Newsletter of the CFA Vol. 16 No. 3 August 2026

Editor: Linda Sundergill

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

A Note from Our President

We have had some excitement in Cunningham Falls State Park in the last few weeks (see page 10 for details). Make sure that you are aware of your surroundings and have some understanding of the habits of animals that you might encounter in the Parks. If an animal is behaving in a strange manner make sure that you notify park personnel. It is always better to be safe and avoid issues later.

Bring lots of water or other liquids to drink for yourself and that hiker who might have forgotten to bring enough. Always check with the visitor center for updates on trails or the web site for the park you are hiking in. Always report any issues with the trail you are hiking to the Rangers so that it can be taken care of.

Our parks are wonderful areas to visit, view the vistas, see the wonders of the forest and enjoy the splendor of the surroundings. The parks are there for our enjoyment today and hopefully into the future. The parks need our help. With budget cuts, the parks need volunteers more now than ever. Have your group leader, business organization, or just a group of friends get in touch with a park and volunteer for a day or a weekend.

These parks are our state and national treasures and we need to protect and continue the work of the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) and the WPA (Work Progress Administration) from the 1930's. Let's put our time into the trails that need work, the bridges that cross streams, invasive plants that need to be taken care of, buildings that might need some TLC and many other things. Ask the parks what you can do for them.

Be respectful of the beauty and animals that you see as you visit their home. Hike the trails, take in the wonderful views, and take the time to see with your eyes. Please stay safe as you do all these things.

"Happy trails to you"

Jim Robbins, President

Catoclin Forest Alliance

Artist in Residence (AIR)

In September, CFA will welcome two artists to the Catoctin Mountain parks. Jerry Brown will be staying in Catoctin Mountain Park and Adrien Gehring will be doing her residency in Cunningham Falls State Park. See the flyers on the following pages for the artists' presentations. All are FREE to the public.

Meet Artist Jerry Brown

I am a generic version of humankind. More precisely, I am octogeneric, having witnessed 82 ½ orbits of Mother Earth around Brother Sun. I am an avid walker. Well, perhaps avid is a bit too strong a word, but I'm certainly committed, averaging 7 miles per day with the constant companionship of my loving wife, Gina, and our exuberant and somewhat deranged Border Collie, Gunny. A walker, I am. A serious hiker, backpacker, wilderness stalker, forest camper, I am not.

I tell people that I am a Christian by birth, a Church of the Brethren by marriage, and a Yogi by choice: a disciplined twice-a-day meditator for the past 55 years, dedicated to 'Yogastah Kuru Karmani' ('established in Yoga, perform action' or 'Fly United') as a way of life.

I am a watercolor artist by way of a late-life career change. Long story short: I was a travelling showman/variety entertainer for 52 years, then Covid came along and all of my venues got quashed. It was then, at the age of 76, that I first took up the brush, something I had always dreamed of doing, but never had the opportunity. I laugh that watercolor, for me, was like 'Deja-vu all over again' (Thank you, Yogi. Yogi??) Things got really good, really fast, and a highly respected and iconic gallery in Lancaster, PA picked up my work and now represents me.

This is the short version of a long history, and I share it so you might appreciate what I am bringing with me to Catoctin National Park for three weeks in September, where I will be Artist in Residence and life-as-I-know-it will be turned completely upside down.

I am coming to hiker's paradise, where I will be living alone in the woods with birdsong, and dappled light, and vistas, and history, and Milky Way at night. Alone. Absent my usual 'support team' and with the companionship of only the ghosts of the historic past and the overwhelming presence of The Woods. A major shift from my life in Lancaster, PA.

I intend to hike every mile of the trails in the park during my three-week residency, taking it all in, and reacting to what I see – by painting. I am used to painting in studio, where everything is 'given' and nothing changes. While at Catoctin, I will be working on location 'en plein air' where nothing is given and EVERYTHING changes (all the time, all at once), presenting me with a major challenge and a steep learning curve. I look forward to the challenge of painting vistas, capturing the depth and the stunning beauty that causes us to gasp when we first see them, but never quite capture that feeling with our camera. I look forward to capturing the magic and mystery of the dappled light in the deep forest, the historic landmarks of The Park, and, with any luck, the color changes of the season.

I share all of this by way of invitation, hoping that you and your family will join me on this adventure. During my time in Catoctin, I will be posting regularly on both my website (www.3BWatercolorStudio.com) and my Instagram account (@3BWatercolorStudio), sharing paintings and comments. I will also be presenting three public events which are free of charge and open to the public. I hope you and your family can participate in any or all.

See my flyers on the following pages for invitations to my free presentations. I am very excited to have this opportunity, and would love to share it with you. I look forward to meeting you. Please come.



Open Studio Live Painting

Watch a painting unfold in real-time! Stop by to check on the progress, chat, and ask questions as Artist-In-Residence, Jerry Brown, sets up his gear to paint at the historic Catoctin Visitors Center live.

When: Saturday, September 12,

10:00 a.m. –12:00 noon



'Notan' Watercolor Sketchbook Workshop

WHEN: Saturday, September 19 | 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

WHERE: Apples Church, 7908 Apples Church Rd, Thurmont, MD

WHAT: Learn the Japanese art form of Notan (dark and light) to train your eye to isolate light and see values clearly. We will paint (or draw) the historic Apples Church or use a provided source photo.

WHAT TO BRING: A watercolor sketchbook, watercolor brushes, a water container, and a palette with deep value colors (Neutral Tint, Payne's Grey, or Sepia), or just bring paper and pencil.



Meet and Greet Artist Talk and Showcase



WHEN: Saturday, September 26 | 2:00 PM

WHERE: Thurmont Regional Library, 76 E. Moser Rd,
Thurmont, MD

WHAT: A final look back at a transformative three weeks. Come view the notebooks, field sketchbooks, and completed watercolor paintings created during the residency, followed by an open Q&A session.

Adrien Gehring Artist in Residence Cunningham Falls State Park

OPEN TO NATURE: WE ARE WOVEN TOGETHER

Making art is an experience of removing barriers to openness and communion with the world. I practice embracing vulnerability, curiosity, and connection to my senses and really experience the world around me. Then, the art I make emerges from my open mind, heart, and energy. I let go of pre-existing expectations or judgments.

Nature is a location where I feel open and feel at home. Maybe you feel this way, too? The opportunity to spend two weeks as an artist in residence, immersed in the Catoctin Mountains is a gift that I'm so excited to explore. I look forward to waking up with the birds, wandering the woods each day, and allowing the wisdom of the mountains to shape my creative energy over my residency at Cunningham Falls State Park.

I have been experimenting with natural plant fibers over the past year, weaving and printing with the textures and shapes of leaves. I am excited to immerse myself in the ecosystem of the mountains and let the late summer season inspire me with her patterns, colors, and textures. I want to explore how we are all connected, woven together and interdependent with each other. I believe that nature is our greatest teacher of this truth.

As part of my residency, I will be observing a daily schedule of yoga, meditation, and walks to support my creative practice. Rituals help me still my mind, open my heart, and commune with nature. I invite anyone to join me on Wednesday evenings for a creative meditation walk, September 16 and 23, 6pm-7pm (sundown). On Saturday, Sept. 19th at the William Houck Area Concessions Building and Sept. 26th at the Apples Church Pavillion, I will offer a demonstration and invitation to make your own eco-print.

I look forward to seeing you in the woods!

Adrien Gehring



Artist in Residence

Adrien Gehring

Wednesdays, Sept. 16 & 23 @ 5-7pm

Meditative Walk & Creative Reflection

Falls Trailhead @ William Houck Area, 1 mile round trip
14274 William Houck Dr., Thurmont, MD 21788

Saturday, September 19 @ 10am

Eco-Printing Fiber Art Demonstration

Concessions Pavillion @ William Houck Area
14274 William Houck Dr., Thurmont, MD 21788

Saturday, September 26 @ 10am

Eco-Printing "Make & Take"

Apples Church
7908 Apples Church Rd. Thurmont, MD 21788

William Houck Area Entrance Cost: \$3/car, in state, \$5/car, out of state
Questions? contact the artist 443-865-4938, Adrien.Gehring@gmail.com



Catoctin Mountain Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



National Junior Ranger Day 2026



Join Catoctin Mountain Park for our celebration of National Junior Ranger Day to kick off National Park Week! We will have crafts, a photo booth, track casting, a Junior Ranger room, a guided hike, a BINGO game, and more for Junior Rangers of all ages!

Saturday, August 22nd from 11am to 3pm
at the Catoctin Mountain Park Visitor Center

Catoctin Mountain

Park
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Help Beautify Blue Blazes!

September 26, 2026 | 10 AM - 2 PM

14707 Park Central Road, Thurmont, MD

Come celebrate National
Public Lands Day with us
by repairing fencing around
the Blue Blazes Whiskey
Still and trail!

Register here on
volunteer.gov:



Celebrating 110 Years of the National Park Service



This August, parks across the country are celebrating a milestone: the National Park Service turns 110 years old on August 25th, which coincides with National Park Week (August 22-30) this year. From ranger-led programs to community celebrations, sites nationwide are marking the occasion and reflecting on more than a century of protecting our shared public lands. The best part is that all national parks are fee-free on the 25th!

National Park Trust is proud to continue our work to protect at-risk land and open doors for the next generation of park visitors. Your support helps ensure these places and the stories they hold are here for the next 110 years.

To support National Park Trust and learn more about them, click [HERE](#).

Cunningham Falls & Gambrill State Parks



DNR Closes Additional Areas of Cunningham Falls State Park Following Second Beaver Attack

August 5, 2026



Update 4:25 p.m. Aug. 6: The Maryland Department of Health has confirmed the second beaver collected from Cunningham Falls State Park tested positive for the rabies virus.

Original release: The Maryland Department of Natural Resources is closing additional areas of Cunningham Falls State Park around Hunting Creek Lake after a fisherman reported that he was bitten on the leg by a beaver in the South Beach Day Use area of the park at about 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, August 5.

In response to the second incident, the Maryland Park Service has closed the Houck Day Use Area, the adjacent boat ramp, and Big Hunting Creek above the lake while the DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service continues to investigate a possible rabies outbreak within the local beaver population. Swimming, fishing, boating, and all water access are prohibited until the area can be confirmed safe for visitors. Other areas of the park, including the campground, remain open.

To see the full press release, click [HERE](#)



A Note from Shelley Submitted by Shelley Miller, Membership and Fundraising Chairman

Hello CFA Family! I hope you are enjoying the summer by keeping busy with wonderful things. If you have already renewed your membership with CFA, thank you sincerely! Membership enrollment has a huge positive impact on many levels supporting the programs of CFA, and especially the maintenance of these programs. This is such a critical part of our efforts. CFA is not a one and done organization. We strive for sustainability. Joining or renewing your membership makes this possible and is easy. Please check out the CFA website, www.catoclinforestalliance.org. You may also send the completed (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.

If you are feeling the desire to make a larger scale impact, please consider an addition one time donation or an estate planning donation. CFA is happy to help you with that. Contact me, Shelley, or Jim Robbins. As always, we hope you will share CFA membership information with anyone interested in preserving the Catoclin Mountain forest for present and future generations. This summer CFA has been busy (often behind the scenes) preparing for a spectacular Fall. Please be a part of the upcoming adventures!

In retrospect:

The Crab/Seafood Raffle

You may have noticed the crab raffle initiative was put on hold this summer. That was intentional. Yet, know that the initiative is not gone. You will see that opportunity again!

CFA expresses a sincere thank you to Liberty Road Seafood and to Dutch's Daughter for their continued support of the educational efforts of the Catoclin Forest Alliance to preserve and protect the Catoclin Mountain forest for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations

Upcoming Opportunities

Want to volunteer for the EKO fourth grade field trips?

CFA's support of Every Kid Outdoors (EKO) program, at Catoclin Mountain Park, is long standing. Anyone interested in volunteering with the EKO fourth grade fieldtrips please contact Carrie Andresen-Strawn (Carrie_Andresen@nps.gov). You do not need any special skills. They will utilize the talents you already have. This is an exciting way to remain connected with young people helping them to enjoy, value, and respect the environment.

Are you interested in seasonal work opportunities in addition to

volunteer opportunities? Don't forget we live close to many amazing parks, including the Catoclin Mountain Park (Federal) and Cunningham Falls & Gambrill State Park. If you are interested in seeking seasonal work opportunities, be sure to check out the Catoclin Mountain Park website (nps.gov) and Cunningham Falls & Gambrill State Park (www.dnr.maryland.gov) to see if something interests you.

Are you good with animals and interested in volunteering at the

Cunningham Falls State Park aviary? If so, please contact Claudia.Padialla@Maryland.gov. Claudia has many ways she is able to utilize the unique talents of volunteers. This is such a fulfilling way to spend time in the park and know that you are making a positive impact on the natural resources that surround us.

Additional CFA opportunities will be coming soon. Keep your eyes open for any (and all!) that may interest you. Hope to see you soon!

CFA is a group of caring individuals who are making a difference in our community.

Please consider being an active part of this service-oriented organization.

Please join or renew your
membership today!

Visit www.catoctinforestalliance.com

Consider Donation 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 |

Donation 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
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