



Photo by Schuyler Richardson

## ***Friends of the Blue Ridge Mountains***



**Annual Report 2011-2012**

*"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."*

~ John Muir

## Letter from the President

As we complete our fifth year of activity it's time to pause and contemplate our accomplishments and to look forward to our next five years. Thanks to our nearly 100 members and an outstanding Board of Directors we have done much to implement our mission of "preserving, enhancing, and celebrating the Blue Ridge Mountains."



We are now recognized as a significant 501(c)(3), a non-partisan organization actively participating in our four County program area. Our annual "Friend of the Mountain Award" given each year to an individual or group which has contributed to our mission has become acknowledged as an important recognition. Our Bluemont office has provided a central place for meetings and activities. We have continued to offer our members an annual family picnic and participation in our ongoing Volunteer Day at the Blue Ridge Regional Park where we work twice a year to remove invasive species and recover the native beauty of the park. This year we have sponsored a Girl Scout Eagle Project to label trees and prepare a brochure describing the various species which will be available at the Park for all campers.

Our partnership with the National Wildlife Federation continues to be strong as we jointly pursue our Conservation Corridor initiative. For the second summer in succession we have financed a summer contractor to develop research about the unique features of the mountain (geological, historical, cultural, etc.) into reports on key subjects related to the mountains and an advocacy paper that describes the importance of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the public and includes recommendations to address ongoing threats. In 2013 we will convene a workshop for mountain property owners, county governments, and conservation organizations working in our program area to discuss and create an action plan.

We welcomed a new board member, Debbie Snyder, a Bluemont resident, who brings new skills and energy. We continue to look for ways to engage our membership to serve on committees and participate in membership events. If you would like to participate, please contact me or one of our Board members.

There are a number of significant events scheduled for the remainder of calendar year 2012. We will host an open house at our Bluemont office during the Bluemont Fair on September 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. We will co-host, with the National Wildlife Federation, a cocktail reception to introduce our Conservation Corridor initiative to potential supporters on September 29<sup>th</sup>. A volunteer day to take the next steps with our Blue Ridge Regional Park recovery effort will take place in October, and we will wrap up the year with our Annual Meeting at Bears Den on November 11<sup>th</sup>. All our members are invited to participate in these events.

Thanks go to all of you who have participated in our activities this year and supported the organization through your membership. Our future work depends on your support. If you are new to our organization please consider supporting our efforts with a membership or a gift to support our Blue Ridge Conservation Corridor project. And please join us in the hands-on process of advancing our mission: come to activities and experience the good energy and the good work!

Sincerely,

Alfred P. Van Huyck  
President  
phone; 540-338-3524  
email: [avanhuyck@aol.com](mailto:avanhuyck@aol.com)

**Mission:** To preserve, enhance, and celebrate the Blue Ridge Mountains as a valuable resource and treasured space for present and future generations.

**Vision:** The Blue Ridge Mountains stand secure as a national treasure for all time... ancient and sacred space that is maintained as a model of natural and cultural preservation – a free and accessible destination for recreation, discovery, and renewal that inspires others to join us.

## Major Accomplishments and Noteworthy Activities

We are proud to report major accomplishments by *Friends of the Blue Ridge Mountains* over the last year.

### Protecting and Enhancing our Mountains . . .

- ◆ Each year *Friends* awards a “Friend of the Mountain” plaque to an individual or group that has acted to preserve the Blue Ridge. The winner of this award for 2011 was the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship for preserving 900 acres through a conservation easement. The Blue Ridge Center also supports a demonstration farm, provides hiking and riding trails in the mountains, and runs an extensive nature program.
- ◆ Using data gathered by our summer intern in 2011, our 2012 summer contractor, Mark Hofberg, produced four technical papers and a summary article to tell the story of our mountains and to serve as a ready resource in conjunction with our outreach efforts.
- ◆ We have set in motion plans for a workshop of considerable scope to be held in the Fall of 2013 for the purpose of engaging like-minded conservation groups, Blue Ridge landholders, and public officials in an exploration of preservation needs, goals, and strategies. A second purpose of the workshop will be to lay the groundwork for the establishment of a coalition to advocate for the Blue Ridge and to coordinate local and regional conservation efforts related to the mountain.



*Friends’ picnic at Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship*

### Celebrating our Mountains . . .

- ◆ Our 2011 Family Picnic was held at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship. Sixty members and *Friends* attended the festivities which included a nature walk led by Joe Coleman and Phil Daley, both members of *Friends* who have extensive expertise on area plants and animals.
- ◆ *Friends* participated in the Bluemont Fair by inviting fairgoers to tour our new office, located in the heart of the village, where they could view an art exhibit of rural paintings and visit with members of the Board about our organization and our work. We have planned an even more robust presence at the Fair this season with additional displays strategically placed outdoors to attract more foot traffic into our space.
- ◆ Board members hosted a table featuring *Friends* information and paraphernalia at the Purcellville Heritage Day.

### Developing Partnerships . . .

- ◆ We partnered with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) to support the hire of a summer contractor to advance work with the data collected in the summer of 2011.
- ◆ We designed and planned a jointly-sponsored fundraising event with NWF for prospective landowners and donors. The evening, scheduled for late September, will feature a cocktail

reception hosted by former **Friends** Board member Jane Pratt and her husband, Jed Shilling at their lovely country home and will feature live bluegrass music and a presentation on the Conservation Corridor initiative.

- ◆ We also worked closely with the Virginia Native Plant Society and the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy to continue the work of restoring the Blue Ridge Regional Park. In 2011 we organized two Volunteer Days to remove invasive species from the park. This was our third year on this project and we expect to continue the work in 2012.
- ◆ We provided financial support to Amelia Gavurin, a Girl Scout who achieved her Gold Badge by labeling 22 tree species in the Blue Ridge Park and writing a brochure describing the trees. This project will benefit all of the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts who camp out in the park. A special thanks is due to Bryant Bays, our State Forester, for assisting with this project and to Karl Mohle, the park ranger, who has supported our Volunteer Day work over the last three years.

### **Building Our Organization and Our Presence . . .**

- ◆ This year our membership reached a new high of 90 persons (which we hope reflects a growing awareness that the Blue Ridge Mountains are a unique and important resource for present and future generations).
- ◆ We added a new member to our Board of Directors: Deborah Snyder is a resident of Bluemont, Virginia, who brings many organizational talents to the Board as well as her love of hiking and long-distance trekking.
- ◆ We have engaged several non-Board members to serve on various committees and/or provide roles that support the core work of the organization.
- ◆ We have entered into a leasing arrangement with one of our members to use part of our space in conjunction with being able to represent **Friends** during regular business hours.
- ◆ As part of our development effort, we applied for several grants targeted for the kind of conservation work **Friends** mission represents.
- ◆ We continue to meet with public officials in all four counties in our program area.
- ◆ We have produced a Power Point show that uses data collected over the last two summers to highlight our organization, our mission, and our research. We debuted our presentation with the Jefferson County Blue Ridge Watershed Coalition.
- ◆ Our president, Al Van Huyck, also chairs the Loudoun County Preservation and Environmental Coalition, which offers a platform for sharing information about the **Friends of the Blue Ridge Mountains**.

### **Plans for 2013**

The **Friends of the Blue Ridge Mountains** anticipates an active year as we finish out 2012 and enter 2013. Here are some of the highlights of our plans for the coming year:

- In Fall 2013 we will convene a workshop for mountain property owners, county governments, and conservation organizations working in our program area to discuss and create an action plan to advance the Conservation Corridor initiative.

- We will continue to host celebrations during the year, including an open house during the Bluemont Fair and our Annual Meeting. This fall our Annual meeting will be held at the Bear's Den on November 11, and we invite all members and those interested in learning more to join us.
- A volunteer day to take the next steps with our Blue Ridge Regional Park recovery effort will take place on October 12, 2012, and another will be planned in Spring 2013.



Photo by Schuyler Richardson

## Please Join Us!

### ***Friends of the Blue Ridge Mountains***

is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

<http://www.blueridgemountains-friends.org>

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Taxpayer Identification Number: 22-3970963



***Friends of the Blue Ridge Mountains***  
**Annual Income Statements**  
**9/1/2011 Through 8/31/2012**



	<b>12 mo ending 8/31/2011</b>	<b>12 mo ending 8/31/2012</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Charitable Contributions	5,250	10,750
In Kind Donations	-	4,494
Membership Fees	2,175	2,079
Rental Income	-	900
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>7,425.00</b>	<b>18,223.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Charitable Donations	50	1,200
Fundraising Expenses	2,427	824
In Kind Donation Expense	-	4,494
Administration	287	380
Program Services	764	398
Intern Expenses	5,800	5,100
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>9,328.00</b>	<b>12,397.00</b>
<b>Income Less Expenses</b>	<b>(1,903.00)</b>	<b>5,826.00</b>

## **List of Donors**

***Friends of the Blue Ridge Mountains*** is grateful for the financial contributions of all members.

We wish to offer special recognition to the following individuals for their generous support between September 1, 2011 and August 31, 2012.

**Alfred Van Huyck  
Peter Weeks**

**Jane Pratt Shilling  
Carole Napolitano  
Casey Corin Smith  
Marie Uehling  
Milton Herd  
Schuyler Richardson**



Board members meet to discuss upcoming *Friends* events.  
Pictured from left: Marie Uehling, Carole Napolitano, Al Van Huyck, Suellen Beverly, and Debbie Snyder.

### **Board of Directors Members as of August 31, 2012**

Alfred P. Van Huyck, President  
Carole Napolitano, Vice President and Chair of the Celebrations Committee  
Suellen Beverly, Secretary  
Katie Conaway, Treasurer  
Austin Kane, Chair of the Land Use Committee  
Marie Uehling, Chair of the Development Committee  
Mike Alter  
Peter Weeks  
Deborah Snyder



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Committed to preserving, enhancing and celebrating the

***Blue Ridge Mountains***

**Membership Form**

**YES! I (we) support the mission and vision of the**

***Friends of the Blue Ridge Mountains***

\_\_\_\_\_ \$35 (individual) \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 (family)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ I would like to make special gift to the Blue Ridge Conservation Corridor

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-MAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

***Mail to:***

P.O. Box 1002

Purcellville, VA 20134



Blueridgemountain@earthlink.net

www.blueridgemountains-friends.org



*FBRM Member and wildlife expert Phil Daley lead a nature hike at the annual **Friends** picnic*



*Bob and Dee Leggett accept the 2012 **Friends** Annual Award on behalf of the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship*



*A young volunteer*



*President Al Van Huyck and summer contractor Mark Hofberg visit the Snickersville Academy restoration project in the village of Bluemont*



*Members tackle invasive bamboo on Volunteer Day at Blue Ridge Regional Park*