



Parkway Milepost

Spring - Summer 2005 FREE



Wildflowers Along the High Meadow Trail (page 5)

INSIDE ... MISSING ARNOLD ❖ CHILDREN'S PAGE ❖ TRIBUTE TO WANDA HYLTON
MONITORING THE PARKWAY'S VITAL SIGNS ❖ THE OPOSSUM
THE BLUE RIDGE AND ITS EVOLVING MUSICAL TRADITION ❖ REVIEWS
PARKWAY INFORMATION& MORE



SWITZERLAND INN

CHALET RESTAURANT

A unique lodge and restaurant offering fine accommodations, superb dining, and one of the most spectacular views in the region.

Come visit the Switzerland Inn and enjoy these fine shoppes.

- The Trillium Gallery*
- The Elephant's Trunk*
- The Jazzy Giraffe*
- The Gem Shoppe*
- Hearthside Handmades*
- The Swiss Shoppe... sweets*
- Misty Mountain Realty*

Blue Ridge Parkway Milepost 334
Little Switzerland, NC

1-800-654-4026
828-765-2153

SILVER ARMADILLO

The Area's Showplace of North Carolina and World Wide Minerals & Fossils

- HAND-CRAFTED STERLING SILVER JEWELRY •
- LOCAL STAINED GLASS •
- UNUSUAL HOME DECOR & GIFTS •
- ROCKHOUND SUPPLIES & ROCK TUMBLERS

1000's of Beads

Kid's Mineral Mine

Local Mining Information

Visit a most unusual

Nature Oriented Store

Ask For Our **FREE** Mineral of the Day

▶▶ OPEN DAILY ◀◀

40 Westgate Parkway
Westgate Shopping Center
Asheville, NC 28808

(828) 253-3020

www.silverarmadillo.com

AN APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN EXPERIENCE



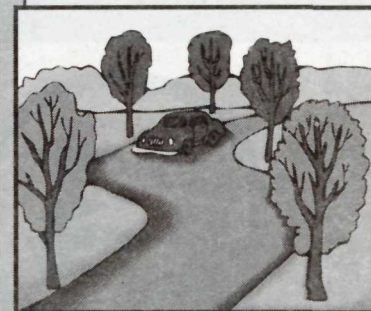
ORIGINAL MAST STORE • SINCE 1883

A national historic landmark, this authentic country store features traditional goods & apparel for all mountain seasons.

MAST GENERAL STORE SINCE 1883

Historic Valle Crucis • Downtown Boone, Waynesville,
Hendersonville, Asheville & Greenville, SC
MastGeneralStore.com • OPEN DAILY!

DRIVING TIP



Be Courteous...

Pull Over & Let Others Pass

The Parkway is designed for enjoying the scenery so, if you choose to drive under the speed limit, there are more than 250 overlooks that make ideal pullover spots to let others pass.



Lyle Wheeler



Sandy Adair



Benyo Pottery

The Craft Fair of the SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

July 21-24 & October 20-23
at the Asheville Civic Center

The Folk Art Center and Allanstand Craft Shop
Milepost 382 on the Blue Ridge Parkway
Asheville, NC

Guild Crafts
930 Tunnel Rd
Asheville, NC

Parkway Craft Center at the Moses Cone Manor
Milepost 294 on the Blue Ridge Parkway



information at www.southernhighlandguild.org or 828-298-7928

CONTENTS

4.....FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT -
Seventy Years of Change
2004 Hurricane Recovery

5.....ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS
RANGER'S CHOICE -
High Meadow Trail
by Larry Hultquist
Making a Difference

6.....APPALACHIAN PEOPLE -
Missing Arnold
by Will Foster

7.....The Opossum: Nature's Sanitation Engineer
Monitoring the Parkway's Vital Signs

8 & 9.....PARKWAY INFORMATION
Parkway Places & Map

10.....Tribute to Wanda Hylton
by Will Foster

11.....CHILDREN'S PAGE
For Goodness Snakes!

12.....The Banjo
by Peter Givens
The Blue Ridge and its Evolving Musical Traditions
by Peter Givens
Book Review - *Blue Ridge Music Trails*

13.....Preserving Tradition at the Blue Ridge Music Center
by Peter Givens
The Fiddle
by Peter Givens
Music Review - *The Art of Old-Time Mountain Music*

14.....Spring and Summer Wildflowers

15.....PARKWAY EVENTS



ON THE COVER

Arnold Spangler
Mountain Musician & Parkway Friend

Photograph by Will Foster

For a quarter century Arnold helped keep mountain music alive for Parkway visitors at Mabry Mill.
(See story on page 6)



Parkway Milepost

A public information service of
The Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service
Published as a courtesy to visitors by
Eastern National



Eastern National aids and promotes the historical, scientific and educational activities of the National Park Service. It also supports the research, interpretation and conservation programs of the Service. As a not-for-profit cooperating association recognized by Congress, it makes interpretive material available to park visitors and the general public.

Owner
Blue Ridge Parkway

Editorial Advisor
Peter Givens

Managing Editor
Jane Sutton

Graphics Assistance
Jo Northup

Parkway Milepost is an educational magazine dedicated to promoting the natural and cultural history of the Blue Ridge Parkway and its region. Through the advertising support of the business community along the Blue Ridge Parkway corridor, Parkway Milepost is distributed free to Parkway visitors.
Please thank the advertisers whenever you have the opportunity.

Subscriptions

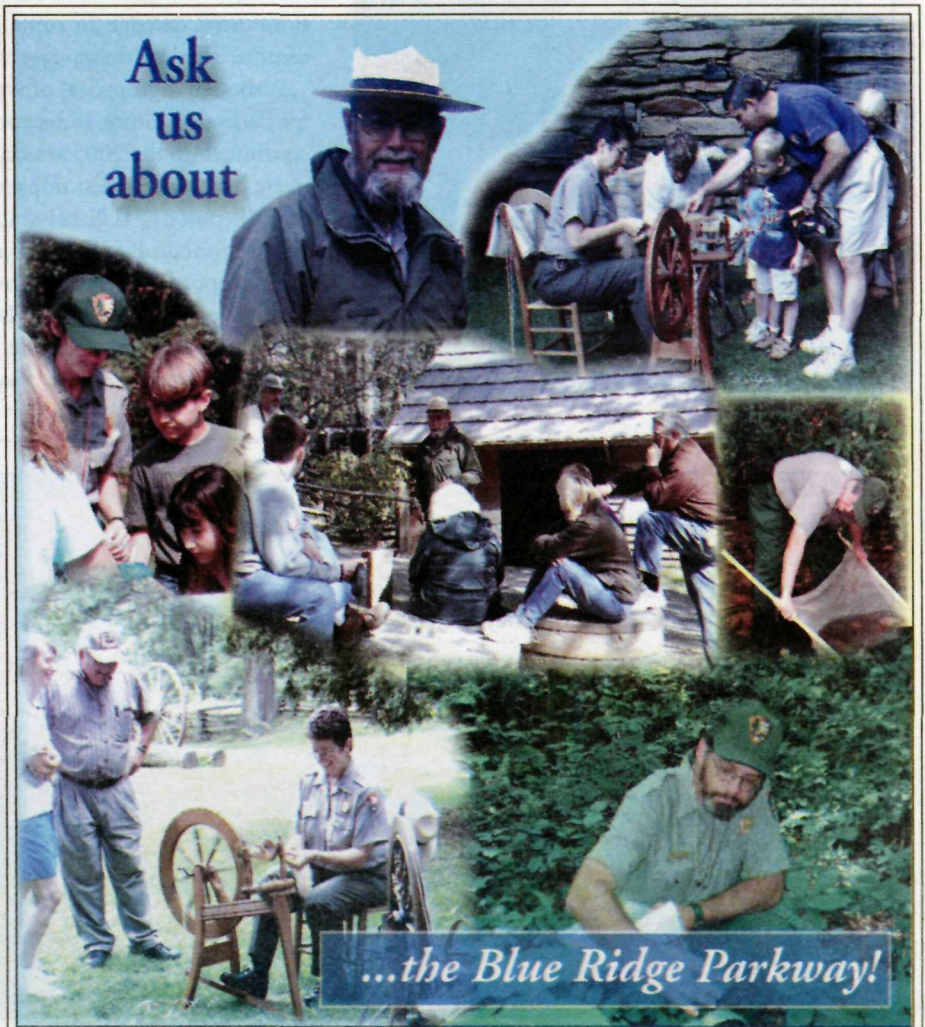
Subscriptions to Parkway Milepost are available for \$10.00 in the U.S. and \$15.00 outside the U.S.
Send your check or money order (payable to Parkway Milepost) to:
Parkway Milepost Subscriptions • P.O. Box 9452 • Asheville, NC 28815. •
Please note this issue's date. You will receive the next three consecutive issues.

Public comments, inquiries and suggestions are invited.

For questions, comments or suggestions concerning any aspect of your Parkway visit contact:
Daniel W. Brown, Superintendent • Blue Ridge Parkway • 199 Hemphill Knob Road • Asheville, NC 28803

Advertising and Editorial Office

Parkway Milepost is managed and produced through contract with
Quinn Publishing Co., Inc. Inquiries regarding stories and advertising may be made to:
Quinn Publishing Co., Inc. • P.O. Box 9452 • Asheville, NC 28815 • (828) 668-4622
jsutton@wnclink.com



Seventy Years of Change

Seventy years ago in September, a memorable event took place near Cumberland Knob in Alleghany County, North Carolina as the first shovel of dirt was turned for the new scenic highway connecting Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks. A construction company from Durham, North Carolina unveiled a new steam shovel, cranked it for the first time, and scooped up the initial load of dirt with little fanfare or celebration.

I think often about how much has changed on the Parkway over those 70 years, but sometimes I'm reminded of how much about this special place remains the same.

Spring is always a reminder of nature's marvelous routine. Things that seemed lifeless and gray suddenly come alive with new growth and tender blossoms. After the cold, dark days of winter, mild temperatures are a welcomed relief. The mountains come to life beginning in late March at lower

elevations and slowly spring moves up the slopes of higher elevations over the next few months. For 70 springs, travelers to the Parkway have had the same experience as you will have this year.

I'm also reminded of the constant dedication of Parkway staff through those 70 years. Though equipment and responsibilities have changed over time, there is still a road to maintain, programs to provide to the public and the responsibility to protect visitors during their travels. Our goal is to provide that service as it has been done here since 1935.

Some things do change over the course of time, however. Last September, we may have experienced one of nature's unique events here in these mountains with the remnants of three hurricanes that washed away mountainsides and caused rivers to overflow in unprecedented fashion. The Linville Falls Visitor Center was filled with water and some entire sections of the

roadway washed down the mountainsides. Federal officials, park staff and private contractors have worked hard this winter to make repairs and some of those are completed. Others may take most of the summer. I doubt that those who broke ground at Cumberland Knob in 1935 anticipated those kinds of changes!

The original Parkway Master Plan called for lakes, lodges and campgrounds just north of the state line at the base of Fisher's Peak. Although these facilities were never built, a new "plan" comes to fruition this spring with the opening of the Blue Ridge Music Center. The cooperative work between the city of Galax, the National Council for the Traditional Arts and the National Park Service promises to make the Blue Ridge Music Center a premier stop for Parkway visitors. Weekly concerts, exhibits on the musical heritage of our region and demonstrations of instrument building will mean rich experiences for visitors.



Seventy years with lots of changes... some of them anticipated and recurring... while others were never dreamed of. But isn't that like a Parkway visit itself... predictable in a satisfying way, but with new surprises and new experiences around the next graceful curve?

Have a safe Parkway visit this spring enjoying the familiar... and discovering the changes!

-Daniel W. Brown



The Parkway Is Still Recovering from Hurricanes of 2004

Some Road Closures Remain in Effect

The September 2004 hurricane season turned many normally small creeks into raging rivers. Residents and businesses continue to feel effects of landslides and extensive flooding. For Parkway visitors the effects will be seen during the 2005 season.

Widespread heavy rains and associated freshwater flooding caused by Hurricanes Frances and Ivan had devastating results on the Parkway, including six major rock and mud slides, the loss of the roadway in four places and substantial damage to some campgrounds, trails, picnic areas and visitor centers. Total storm damage was estimated at \$9,975,000.

Although a great deal of work has been accomplished to provide services for Parkway visitors, some construction and closures in North Carolina will continue into the 2005 season. Road closures on the Parkway itself will most likely have the greatest impact on visitors. These areas include:

- Milepost 317 (US 221 at Linville Falls Community) to Milepost 325 (Bear Den Mountain Road), is projected to reopen mid to late summer.
- Milepost 344 (NC Highway 80) to Milepost 355 (Mt. Mitchell State Park), is expected to reopen Memorial Day. Mt. Mitchell State Park is open and accessible from Asheville.

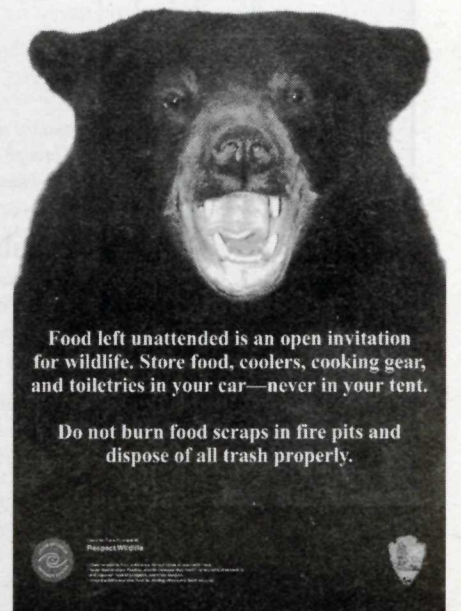
For updates on current road conditions and closures call (828) 298-0398.

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MISSION

...TO CONSERVE, UNIMPAIRED, THE NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES AND VALUES OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF THIS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

You Can Help the Parkway Fulfill this Mission. See page 5.

Surprise Guest.



Food left unattended is an open invitation for wildlife. Store food, coolers, cooking gear, and toiletries in your car—never in your tent.

Do not burn food scraps in fire pits and dispose of all trash properly.

Protect this living national treasure by cherishing and passing on your Parkway memories, by learning and teaching the Parkway message, and by giving to the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation.

share
the
journey

Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation

P.O. Box 10427
Winston-Salem, NC 27108
www.brpfoundation.org

High Meadow Trail

at the The Blue Ridge Music Center, milepost 213
The Parkway's newest trail will open this summer.



photo by Larry Hultquist

by Larry Hultquist

The mile-and-a-quarter long High Meadow Trail begins at the Blue Ridge Music Center trail head parking area located off State Route 621 area and ends at the main Music Center parking area. At its beginning, the trail ascends a meadow slope where a very old farmstead and barn once stood. The meadow is still under agricultural use as a hay field. Beyond the hay field the trail meanders in and out of the forest/meadow edge and parallels the field for some distance. The forest is beautiful with its variety of native trees and shrubs of wetland and dry forest varieties and is a place where white tail deer and wild turkey are frequently seen. The trail crosses two small creeks banked with alders, passes through the hay lease and then leaves the hay field and enters the Chestnut Creek forest edge and wildflower meadow. Once entering the forest, you almost immediately encounter a majestic rock outcrop that has formed a shallow cave area which could bring to mind a time when Native Americans may have used this jutting rock ledge as their only shelter against the elements. A rest on the bench here, offers quiet contemplation in the forest shade and a serene view of the meadows and creek.

Soon the trail descends the forest slope and enters the Chestnut Creek wildflower meadow where galax, bee balm, black-eyed

Susan, Joe Pye weed, asters, and a variety of other native wildflowers make austere spectacles of themselves at various times of year. The trail borders the delicate, wet meadow to offer full viewing without fully entering it. By design, visitors are directed so the delicate flower petals that make this field a fragile bouquet will be protected from foot traffic.

The trail crosses foot bridges over Chestnut Creek in two locations so that one can gain the appreciation of this glass clear Class One Trout stream. Chestnut Creek takes its origins from Fisher's Peak that watches over this site like a mountain sentinel. The stream passes through many meadows and fields in the area that are full with wildflower displays. The trail then ends at the new Visitor Center where exhibits, information, and perhaps a blue grass music concert can be enjoyed at the amphitheater.

Larry Hultquist is the Resident landscape Architect for the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Other loop trails that will climb the forested ridges above the Music Center are planned for connection to the High Meadow trail in the future.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is grateful to the volunteers who make up the Galax Chapter, of the Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway for constructing the entire trail and its foot bridges and making this wonderful nature walk possible.



You Can Be a Junior Ranger!

Junior Rangers learn many things about the Blue Ridge Parkway. They help preserve national parks so people will be able to enjoy them now and in the future.

Pick up your free Junior Ranger Activity Book at any PARKWAY VISITOR CENTER.

Learn about the Parkway and complete the activities for your age.

Then have it signed by the staff in any visitor center.

You will be an official

Junior Ranger and receive your Blue Ridge Parkway Junior Ranger Certificate.

Making a Difference on an Individual Basis

Concern for a healthy environment has become an everyday subject. Although many solutions may, on the surface, seem beyond our control, making a difference begins on an individual basis. The following Blue Ridge Parkway concerns can all be reduced as individuals practice respect.

Native Wildflower - Galax - Threatened by Harvesters

The large, round, shiny evergreen leaves of galax have been gathered commercially in the southern Appalachian Mountains for generations for decorative uses in floral arrangements. Now harvested on a much larger scale, they are being shipped to flower shops around the world.

Blue Ridge Parkway rangers confiscate thousands of leaves each year. All plants on the Blue Ridge Parkway are protected.

Staying on Designated Trails Protects Fragile Plant & Animal Habitats

The Blue Ridge Parkway has unique habitats that support rare and endangered plants and animals. Many of these plants are being threatened by foot traffic. This significant problem can be alleviated by the simple practice of staying on the Parkway's trails. There are several especially sensitive areas, including the Tanawha Trail around Grandfather Mountain, the Craggy Pinnacle Trail at Craggy Gardens and Devil's Courthouse.

Whether you suspect the presence of rare plants or not, it is good a practice to stay on the trail - if for no other reason - to protect all plants and to prevent erosion.

For Your Safety - Wild Animals Can Carry Rabies

Rabies can be transmitted by wild animals. Animals in the park should not be treated as pets or lured close enough to feed or touch. If a squirrel, chipmunk or other animal comes close without enticement, it could be a sign of serious illness. If you see an animal acting strangely, please tell a ranger.

For Deer - The Best Diet is a Natural Diet

Human food makes deer sick. Their digestive systems are equipped with microorganisms that only break down their natural food sources including twigs, bark, leaves, grasses and acorns. Deer and other wild animals like the taste of human food, but for their safety and health - do not feed any wild animal.

Be a Good Guest in Bear Country!



Seeing a bear is exciting and the highlight of any visit to a national park! However, while visitors to the Parkway come and go, bears and other wildlife live here. Your actions can have a direct and lasting impact on the behavior and health of these magnificent animals.

Despite "DO NOT FEED THE BEARS" signs, some visitors continue to lure bears closer for a quick photograph using scraps of food. Many more visitors unintentionally lure bears to campgrounds and picnic areas by storing their food improperly or by disposing of garbage improperly in trashcans or dumpsters.

Bears are creatures of habit. Once a bear receives human food, it learns that if it approaches people, it will get fed. A bear will quickly lose its natural fear of people when we crowd them or observe them too closely. Once a bear learns to forage near people, it is usually too late to discourage it. When it becomes too aggressive and threatens human safety, the offending bear must be killed.

Recently, Parkway staff had to make the difficult decision to euthanize a bear that had become habituated to human food and garbage and posed a serious threat to park visitors. This is an action we never ever want to have to take again.

You can help us keep our wild bears wild!

HUMAN FOOD AND GARBAGE KILLS BEARS!

Missing Arnold

by Will Foster

Fiddlers, like other musicians, come and go and with grateful hearts we celebrate them and their efforts and revel in the pleasure they bring to our lives. Though once in a great while there comes into our midst, albeit too briefly, one who is born to it – one who is uniquely in touch with a distant past and who plays, not for gain or glory but from the heart and for the simple joy of doing it. Such a fiddler was the late Arnold Spangler.

Becoming a legend in his own time, you might have seen Arnold on a Sunday afternoon as he and the Mabry Mill String

Band brought old-time mountain music to scores of visitors at Mabry Mill on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Spanning a quarter century, this group of dedicated volunteers for the National Park Service has done much to preserve a musical tradition that defines an important part of southern Appalachian culture.

Resembling the old brush arbors that were once a familiar sight in rural Appalachia, a primitive, open-sided molasses shed doubles today as a stage where the musicians play for a jubilant audience. In the shade of towering ash and hemlock, the grassy lawn becomes a mosaic of patchwork quilts and folding chairs – a rustic village green where children dance barefoot in the cool grass and leather-shod cloggers and flat-footers make wooden platforms resonate to the fast-paced mountain music.

Born in 1923 in the Laurel Fork Community of Carroll County, Virginia, and one of 18 children, Arnold knew from an early age that playing a fiddle was something he just had to do. He had an all-consuming passion for the haunting sounds that only a fiddle can produce and the lyrics of the ‘Sally Anns’ and ‘Down in the Willow Gardens.’ For a family the size of the Spanglers, life was more about work than playing fiddles and, while Arnold certainly did his share of it, his dream of playing the fiddle was never far from his



Photo by Will Foster

Arnold Spangler
1923 - 2004

thoughts. From an interview with Arnold shortly before his passing on July 10, 2004, he shared some of his experiences growing up and how his fiddle playing came to be.

Describing his boyhood days, Arnold says, “Mister Charlie Brascomb was a carpenter and he made some fiddles and played one himself and I’d go down there to hear him play. I was about 12 and he’d hand the fiddle over to me and I’d fiddle around on it some. One day he said, ‘I’ve got a fiddle started in yonder and I have a good notion to make that and give it to you.’ I said wouldn’t nothin’ please me no better. So he made the fiddle and gave it to me. It was a long fiddle and you had to hold your hand way out here but it done pretty good and I thought the world of it.”

Learning to play the new fiddle was something Arnold had to figure out for himself so he never turned down an opportunity to observe someone else playing. He tells about a sawmill nearby where one of the workers played a fiddle when the workday ended. “Boy that suited me,” said Arnold, “I’d go across over there and get right behind that fiddler and watch every move he made. There’d always be one tune that struck my mind better ‘n all the rest and I’d try to keep that on my mind until I could get to the house. We used to sit by the fireplace and I’d be sawing up a storm on that fiddle and didn’t a bit more have a tune than nuthin’.” Laughing, Arnold adds, “I can hear my Dad now. He said, ‘For gosh sake, go back there in one of them rooms and build you up a fire. You’re killin’ us with that thing.’ So I’d get that fiddle up and go in there by myself and hum and saw way up in the night.”

Arnold, determined to play the fiddle, stuck with his back room routine and eventually played well enough to join other musicians. Families used to gather on Saturday nights and make music and dance. It was on one of these occasions that Arnold recalls a fateful night which stands out painfully in his memory. “We went to play one night and it was in the winter time. We know’d it was raining but didn’t know that it had froze and I didn’t have no fiddle case. Sometimes,” says Arnold laughing, “You’d carry ‘em in a flour sack or something but

I didn’t have nothin’ on mine. I came out on the porch with that fiddle in my hand and hit that ice and my feet flew out from under me and right out in the yard went my fiddle and me on top of it. I busted it all to pieces and never hated nothin’ as bad in my life. I didn’t cry right then but I did the next day. I wasn’t but about 13.”

The busted fiddle incident could have been a major setback for Arnold except for a kindly neighbor who loaned him a fiddle. The dedicated practice continued and a definite style emerged – a style that harks back to those 19th-century fiddlers whose faded, tin-plate photographs have them posed, stern-faced, by hand-hewn, log houses. Arnold’s reputation grew as did the opportunities to play at various functions in and around the Laurel Fork area. He especially liked playing at dances and emphasized the importance of timing for both the fiddler and the dancers. “If you got some good dancers out there,” says Arnold, “And they’re keeping good time with the music it seems like you can play as good again. Most of ‘em dance with them heel taps on, and loud, and if there’s one that’s off, he’ll get you off so you have to blot him out and go to lookin’ somewhere else.”

To support himself, and eventually a wife and family, Arnold took a job at a local sawmill turning logs and from that he bought the fiddle that he played until the end. “That was over 50 years ago,” added Arnold somewhat wistfully, “I bought it secondhand in a store in Galax and gave 28 dollars for it and it suits me every way.” To the fiddle’s peghead, Arnold adorned a small, red tassel that reflects his unabashed fondness for the old Montgomery Ward instrument.

The old house where Arnold Spangler grew up is silent now. Cattle graze there around a doorstep that has long forgotten the sound of footsteps. Out of the silence, the imagination could become fanciful and, from somewhere in the empty chambers, you just might hear the faraway sound of a fiddle – some boy in faded overalls, sawing on a homemade fiddle that’s nearly too big for him – some boy who has parley with the fiddlers of another time.

Will Foster is an Interpretive Ranger in the Mabry Mill area of the Parkway.

Historic site

Mabry Grist Mill

Spend the night and grab a bite.

While you're visiting the Parkway's famous historic sites, stop and rest along the way. Enjoy comfortable lodging, historic cabins, unique gift shops and Parkway-favorite restaurants.

BlueRidgeResort.com

A FOREVER RESORT
Forever Resorts is an Authorized Concessioner of the National Park Service.

An Ancient Natural Wonder in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley

The Natural Bridge and Nature Park

For a breathtaking experience, descend into the ravine to Cedar Creek, pause 215 feet below the span of the Bridge. Wander past its shadow, along the trail into the 18th century, Monacan Indian Living History Village.

More Family Fun!

Journey through early America in the Wax Museum; tour deep Caverns, the Toy Museum, and the Haunted Monster Museum & Dark Maze. Golf, hike, canoe, horseback ride nearby:

www.naturalbridgeva.com/activities.html

Spend the Night On-Site
Stay, Play and Save with our hotel and attractions packages. For savings, visit www.naturalbridgeva.com.

American Indian Storytelling
June 4 - September 3
Saturdays 6pm

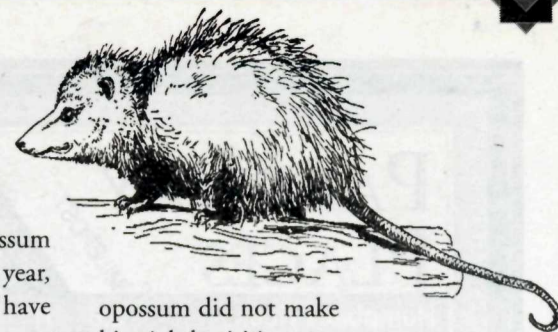
Civil War Encampment
June 25, 8am - 5pm
June 26, 8am - 3pm

(800) 533-1410
(540) 291-2121
www.naturalbridgeva.com
At U.S. 11 & 130. Off I-81, exits 175 & 180
Near I-64 & Blue Ridge Parkway

The NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA
NATURAL WONDER & HISTORIC LANDMARK



The Opossum: Nature's Sanitation Engineer



What animal goes on its honeymoon, and gives birth to babies only 13 days later? If you guessed the opossum, then you are right. The Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*) is America's only marsupial. Marsupials are mammals that rear their young in pouches, and most of the opossums' pouched cousins reside in Australia.

Breeding season varies by location, but opossums tend to breed in spring. Thirteen days later an average litter of about nine partially developed babies is born. Blind and hairless, they each weigh about as much as a dime and the only parts of their bodies that are well developed are their front legs and claws. Using their front legs to climb a couple of inches to the mother's pouch, the raisin-size babies, find their way in and choose a nipple. The nipple swells in the

infant's mouth, so that the baby stays firmly attached and cannot spit it out. For the next 60 days the baby opossum will get all the nutrition it needs from the mother's milk.

Now that the little opossums are about the size of house mice, they begin to open their eyes. After just a couple weeks, they begin to venture out of mommy's pouch for short bits of time. As they grow, they can no longer all fit in the pouch at one time, and they begin to ride on their mother's back occasionally. The young opossums stay with their mom continuously until they are about 100 days old, then they begin to go out on their own in search of food. Youngsters from the first litter are usually ready to take care of themselves sometime in May, and the mother is free to begin her second litter for the year. Young opossums are able to reproduce the next spring. In

warm areas of the United States, opossum mothers may have three litters in a year, however, in colder areas, they may have only one or two.

Opossums live all over the United States and Canada, and utilize a variety of habitats. They prefer living in forests, but almost any place that is hidden from view can qualify as an opossum den. This nocturnal creature will den in any place that is dry and safe, such as brush piles, hollow trees, fallen logs, cavities in rocks and even trash heaps. Opossums live in urban settings as well, and they sometimes borrow our barns or garages, much to our dismay. But before trying to evict an opossum, consider what it does for you.

The opossum is omnivorous – he will eat just about anything. In yards that includes many things that most of us don't want around. Fruit, especially if it is a bit over ripe, insects, snails, snakes, rodents, ground eggs, vegetables and carrion (dead things) make a tasty menu for an opossum, but for you and me, most of these are not so appetizing. The opossum's job in the environment is to clean things up. As nature's sanitation engineer, and he does his job quite nicely. Imagine our world if the

opossum did not make his nightly visit!

Unfortunately, the opossum feels obligated to clean up our roadsides as well, and this is the reason we see so many after having been involved in traffic accidents. Our tendency to throw out garbage, invites the opossum in for a snack. Slow moving and near-sighted opossums have great difficulty getting out of the way of cars speeding by. So, when you prepare to throw an apple core out the car window, remember, the opossum may be drawn to the roadside to eat it, causing his untimely demise.

In addition to the opossum's beneficial habits, it is also quite resistant to diseases including rabies. While the opossum's mouthful of 50 teeth may look dangerous, he is not aggressive. His usual method of defense is to growl and attempt intimidation by showing his mouthful of teeth. If the aggressor persists, the opossum will usually just play dead and wait until his attacker loses interest. Since the opossum is not dangerous, and rarely carries disease, he's not such a bad visitor to have waddling through your yard at night.

Taking Inventories & Monitoring Vital Signs Protects the Parkway's Health

Like most parks, the Blue Ridge Parkway's natural resources are affected by threats that originate outside its boundaries. Consider, for example, air and water pollution and invasive plants. Protecting and managing the Parkway's natural resources, therefore, requires a multi-agency approach.

A long-term monitoring program will identify changes that occur in the condition of the park's resources and identify links to the causes of those changes, thus providing early warnings of impending threats to the integrity of the park's ecosystems.

Numerous professionals with expertise in a variety of related fields have assisted in identifying and prioritizing a list of "vital signs" that will be monitored. These vital signs, which include water quality, weather patterns, animal and plant species at risk and soil erosion to name a few, are components and processes that represent ecosystem health.

Progress has been made in several areas. The University of Georgia is preparing detailed vegetation maps using aerial photographs and vegetation data is being

collected from ongoing field surveys.

A detailed geologic inventory of the North Carolina section of the Parkway began in 2003; the US Geologic Survey may begin mapping the Virginia section soon.

Work with the US Geological Survey is underway to identify outstanding waters as well as those with significant pollution and to design a long-term water quality monitoring program.

The Air Resources Division is helping to identify air quality problems and to design and implement additional air quality monitoring where it is needed.

Plant and animal inventories have resulted in some exciting finds. Many previously unknown plants species have been documented. A new population of a rare and threatened plant has been found in the park. One turtle species discovery on Parkway land represents a 100-mile range extension for the species and a new animal for the park.

A first step in protecting natural resources is knowing what is present. These inventories and monitoring the health of their ecosystems, will do much to ensure their presence and stability for future generations.

Did You Know the Blue Ridge Parkway has

... more than 81,000 acres of land that pass through a highland area of five degrees longitude and approximately three degrees latitude, making it the third largest unit of the National Park Service, in terms of area covered,

... 400 streams and 150 headwaters,

... 47 Natural Heritage Areas (areas that are set aside as national, regional or state examples of exemplary natural communities),

... an elevation range of 5,700 feet which provides suitable habitats for southern species at the lower elevations and northern species, like the familiar spruce - fir forests, on the mountaintops,

... some 1,250 vascular plant species (50 threatened or endangered),

... nearly 100 species of trees, about as many as are found all of Europe,

... 54 different mammals, more than 50 kinds of salamanders and 40 kinds of reptiles, and

... 150 different birds that nest here and dozens more that pass through during migrations?

It is no wonder that the Blue Ridge Parkway receives the highest annual visitation in the National Park System.

The Appalachian Highlands Inventory and Monitoring Network

The National Park Service has a dedicated staff who work in this Network to inventory and monitor five National Park Service units in North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky and Georgia. They are: the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (the southernmost one-third), Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Blue Ridge Parkway, Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Obed Wild and Scenic River.

Network offices are located in the Blue Ridge Parkway Headquarters.

PARKWAY PLACES

	MILEPOST	VISITOR CENTER	INFORMATION	EXHIBITS	PROGRAMS	REST ROOMS	TRAILS	CAMPING	PICNIC AREA	FISHING	LODGING	FOOD	GAS
Humpback Rocks	5.8	H	H	H	HP	H	HP	X					
Otter Creek	60.0				H	HP	X	HP	H		H		
James River	63.6	HP	HP	H		HP	X	HP	X	X			
Peaks of Otter	86	H	H	H	H	H	HP	HP	HP	X	H	H	H
BRP Visitor Center	115	H	H	H	H	H							
Roanoke Mt.	120.4				X	HP	X	HP					
Smart View	154.5					HP	X		H				
Rocky Knob	169	H	H	H	H	X	X	HP	HP	X	H		
Mabry Mill	176.1		HP	HP	HP	H	HP					H	
Ground Hog Mt.	189			X		HP	HP		H				
Cumberland Knob	217.5	H	H			H	HP		H				
Brinegar Cabin	238.5		X	X			X						
Doughton Park	241.1		H		X	HP	X	HP	HP		HP	HP	HP
NW Trading Post	258.6	H	H			H							
Jeffress Park	272					HP	X		H				
Cone Park	294.1	H	H	H	H	H	H			HP			
Price Park	297.1		HP		H	HP	HP	HP	H	H			
Linn Cove Viaduct	305	H	H	H	H	H	H						
Linville Falls	316.4	H	H		X	H	X	HP	H	X			
Minerals Museum	331	H	H	H		H	X						
Crabtree Meadows	339.5		H		HP	H	X	HP	H	X		HP	
Craggy Gardens	364.6	H	H	H		HPA	X		H				
Folk Art Center	382	H	H	H	H	H	X						
Mt. Pisgah	408		X		HP	H	X	HP	HP		H	H	H
Waterrock Knob	451.2	H	H	H	X	H	X						

*H = Wheelchair Accessible. *HP = Accessible with Assistance. *HPA Located in picnic area. *X Not accessible to the handicapped. To inquire about specific facilities please contact Park Headquarters (828) 271-4779.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

DRIVING THE PARKWAY

The Parkway is designed for leisure travel. A 45 mile-per-hour speed limit - a little less in a few places - will assure an opportunity to discover the subtlety as well as the grandeur of this special place.

Overlooks are strategically placed for stopping to enjoy the scenery. Parking is also permitted along road shoulders in places where you can pull your car completely off the road, taking precaution to not endanger yourself or others. Be alert for wildlife. Deer and other animals may dart in front of you.

Fog and rain events require extra caution. Slow down and turn on your headlights.

Motorcyclists should be especially alert. Helmets are required for both drivers and passengers. In North Carolina, the headlight must be on anytime a motorcycle is in motion.

If in an accident, try to prevent others from becoming involved by using reflective warning devices or flares, or

by positioning someone beside the road to flag oncoming vehicles. Notify a Park Ranger at a nearby visitor center or campground or call 1-800-727-5928.

All Plants, Animals and Other Parkway Resources Are Protected by Law. Please Help Preserve Them for Others to Enjoy.



Redbud



Sassafras



Dogwood



Bloodroot

PLANNING YOUR VISIT

Parkway brochures, with general Parkway information and the official Parkway map, are available at all Parkway locations. Site-specific trail maps and informational brochures are available at visitor centers. Accommodations directories, available at all Parkway locations, contain information about lodging, dining and other services along the Parkway.

PROGRAMS & SCHEDULES

Rangers and volunteers present a variety of interpretive programs June through October. These are given on weekends and occasionally on weekdays. Activities include campfire talks, music and history demonstrations, nature walks and slide presentations. Program types and subject matter vary from area to area and week to week. Schedules are posted at visitor centers, campground entrances and Parkway concessions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SPRING AND SUMMER VISITORS

Enjoy a variety of wildflowers all season. Catawba rhododendron blooms mid-May to early June in many places. The most spectacular display usually occurs in mid-June at Craggy Gardens, about 20 miles north of Asheville. Around Cumberland Knob (milepost 217-219) flame azalea usually reaches peak bloom in May. Redbud is abundant along the lower elevations of the James River Section in Virginia. Woodland and roadside wildflowers, such as ironweed, snakeroot and Virginia spiderwort, decorate many trails and fields throughout the summer.

Waterfalls are delightful. The best-known is Linville Falls (milepost 317). Fallingwater Cascades (milepost 83) is also popular. For directions to others ask at park visitor centers. Remember, as refreshing as waterfalls appear, do not wade in them or streams that feed them. Swift currents and slippery footing make this activity extremely dangerous.

Don't forget that weather in the mountains vary greatly daily, especially at higher elevations. Be prepared for occasional chilly days. Storms can blow in quickly. If you are caught outdoors in a thunderstorm, avoid the top of ridges, exposed rock outcroppings and tall trees. Don't become or stand under the tallest object around!

PLEASE REMEMBER

- **PETS** must be kept under physical control, either caged, carried or on a leash not longer than six feet.
- **ANIMALS AND PLANTS** are protected. Do not harm or harvest them.
- **WEAPONS** are prohibited, except that they may be transported in vehicles when they are unloaded and packed, stored or broken down to prevent their ready use.
- **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:** Possession of opened containers of alcoholic beverages is prohibited in the passenger compartment of cars and elsewhere along the Parkway EXCEPT: in campgrounds by registered campers and in designated picnic sites (until 9pm) and by persons registered to camp or others engaged in extended recreational activities in the backcountry.
- **PARKING YOUR CAR:** When leaving a car parked and unattended, it is a good idea to put valuables in the trunk. If you will be gone overnight, notify a local ranger station or visitor center.

ABOUT THE PARKWAY

PARKWAY "NORTH" - PARKWAY "SOUTH"

Directional signs at Parkway entrances indicate "north" or "south." North leads toward the Parkway's northern end and ultimately to milepost 0 and Shenandoah National Park. South, toward the Parkway's southern end, leads to milepost 469 and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Outstanding scenery and recreational opportunities make the Blue Ridge Parkway one of the most popular units of the National Park System. "America's Favorite Drive" winds its way 469 miles past elevations from approximately 600 feet to more than 6,000 feet through mountain meadows and seemingly endless vistas. Split-rail fences, old farmsteads and historic structures complement spectacular views of distant mountains and neighboring valleys.

Several developed areas, some exceeding 6,000 acres, offer a variety of recreational options. These parks within the Parkway have visitor centers, campgrounds, picnic areas, trails and, in some locations, concessioner-operated lodges, restaurants and other facilities.

Building the Parkway through mountainous terrain was a monumental labor. Authorized in the 1930s as a Depression-era public works project, the Parkway was more than a half-century in the making. It was the nation's first, and ultimately longest, rural parkway designed to connect Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina. Enduring standards for parkway engineering and design were pioneered here.

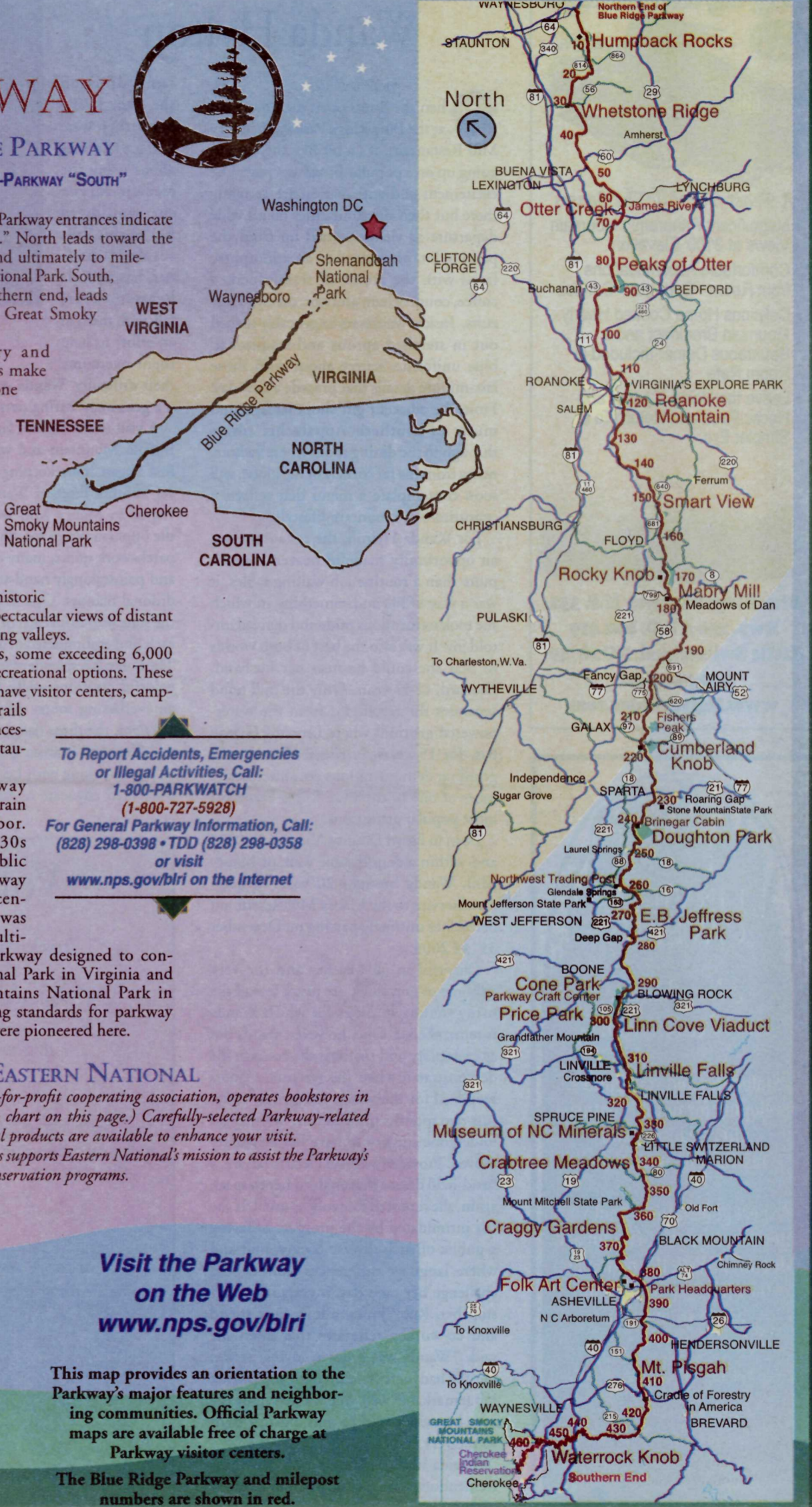
EASTERN NATIONAL

Eastern National, a not-for-profit cooperating association, operates bookstores in visitor centers (locations on chart on this page.) Carefully-selected Parkway-related books and other educational products are available to enhance your visit.

Your purchase at these sites supports Eastern National's mission to assist the Parkway's education, research and conservation programs.

Visit the Parkway on the Web
www.nps.gov/blri

This map provides an orientation to the Parkway's major features and neighboring communities. Official Parkway maps are available free of charge at Parkway visitor centers. The Blue Ridge Parkway and milepost numbers are shown in red.



HIKING

Several hundred miles of hiking trails, from short leg-stretches to those traversing steep mountainsides, are found along the Parkway. Whether you have a few minutes or a few days, there is ample opportunity to explore the Parkway's woods and meadows. Free trail maps are available at visitor centers and campgrounds.

Hiking Hints: Wear good hiking shoes or boots, take water and let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return. Do not shortcut at trail switchbacks. This causes erosion, disfigures the trail and makes it difficult for other hikers to recognize and follow the trail.

BICYCLING

Traveling the Parkway on bicycle requires more caution and planning than motoring. Bicycles must be equipped with reflectors. Helmets and high-visibility clothing are recommended. Be sure to ride single file and well to the right-hand side of the road. Bicyclists must obey the same traffic rules that apply to motor vehicles. They are not permitted on trails or walkways.

It is often a long distance between campgrounds and other facilities and services. Plan ahead and be sure to consider elevation changes that will require more time and more exertion.

PICNICKING

Fourteen designated picnic areas in the park have tables, fireplaces, drinking water and comfort stations. Unless otherwise posted, picnicking is permitted at other locations; so if you prefer, bring your blanket and choose your spot. Fires - including charcoal grills - are allowed only in designated picnic areas.

LODGING & DINING

Concession-operated lodges are located at Peaks of Otter, Doughton Park and Mount Pisgah. Housekeeping cabins are available at Rocky Knob. Restaurants and other facilities and services are also available at a number of locations. A few concessions are open year-round. Most open between mid April to May 1 and remain open through October. Nearby communities offer additional accommodations and services.

FISHING & SWIMMING

Streams, ponds and rivers give anglers the chance to try their luck for trout and, in some waters, bass and panfish. A state fishing license is required. Creel limits and other regulations vary. Inquire at visitor centers or ranger stations.

Swimming is prohibited. Several nearby state parks and national forests have developed swimming areas.

CAMPING

Many of the Parkway's nine campgrounds are at elevations of more than 2,500 feet, which means that temperatures usually are cooler than in surrounding areas. Even in summer a sweater is occasionally needed for comfort.

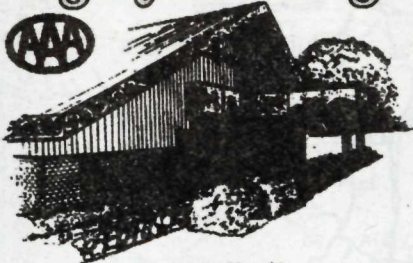
All Parkway campgrounds will be open by May 13. Winter camping is occasionally available, weather permitting. Operations will be announced in the fall.

The charge per night for each site is \$14.00. Stays are limited to 21 days between May and Oct. 31 in any one campground. Drinking water, comfort stations and RV dump stations are provided. Each campsite has a table and fireplace. There are no electric hook-ups and no showers or laundry facilities.

Camping is permitted only in designated campgrounds on a "first come, first served" basis except at Linville Falls, Price Park and Mt. Pisgah, where some sites are set aside for reservation. To make reservations call 1-877-444-6777 or visit www.reserveusa.com. Tent sites are rarely unavailable. Recreational vehicle sites do sometimes fill, especially on holiday weekends and at the Parkway's more popular campgrounds. For those concerned about site availability or wanting to avoid crowds, some lesser used campgrounds include Roanoke Mountain in Virginia and Crabtree Meadows in North Carolina.

Campground quiet hours are from 10 pm to 6 am. Remember that for many people quiet is as much a part of the park experience as spectacular scenery.

Big Lynn Lodge



A Feast For All The Senses

- Magnificent Panoramic Mountain Views at 3100' Elevation
- Comfortable Accommodations from Room - Cottages - Condos
- Delicious Home Cooked Hearty Mountain Breakfast and a Bounteous Dinner Included in Room Rate
- Leave the Noise, Clutter, and Hectic Pace and Return To a Simpler Era



Blue Ridge Parkway M.P. 332
Hwy. 226-A P.O. Box 459
Little Switzerland, NC 28749
800-654-5232
www.biglynnlodge.com

LINVILLE CAVERNS

*See Inside
a Mountain!*

Stalactites and stalagmites,
developing for untold centuries,
offer beautiful and
fascinating formations.

Expert guided tours lead you
into the recesses of Humpback
Mountain. Walk the path along
the underground stream
where trout swim.

On U.S. 221,
between Linville and Marion, NC.
Just 3 1/2 miles South of
the Blue Ridge Parkway.
Exit milepost 317.4 and go South.

Open daily: March - November
Weekends only: December - February

800-419-0540

Tribute to Wanda Hylton

by Will Foster

When the doors open each morning at the Blue Ridge Parkway's Mabry Mill Restaurant, it's a bit like the curtain going up on a popular Broadway play. The excitement and anticipation are certainly there but then the similarities take a wide departure as visitors, lined up from the parking lot, are treated to an atmosphere laced with the aroma of freshly perked coffee, country ham and hot, cat-head biscuits. Inside, waitresses impeccably turned out in starched aprons and traditional, blue uniforms, scurry about with those last-minute details that precede a new day. From the adjacent gift shop, background music of southern Appalachia filters through to the dining room where visitors, many from the far corners of the globe, will soon contemplate a menu that reflects a centuries-old, mountain lifestyle.

For Wanda Hylton, the restaurant was an opportunity made in heaven - much more than a routine job waiting tables, it was a way of life and something in which she took tremendous pride and derived untold joy. It was also the best of both worlds in that she could be near her husband, Leonard, of 51 years. Only the mill pond separates the restaurant from the water-powered gristmill where Leonard Hylton has, for 15 years, provided visitors with grinding demonstrations and interpretive tours of one of the Blue Ridge Parkway's most popular attractions.

Born in Floyd County, Virginia in 1938 and within a comfortable walk of Mabry Mill, Wanda brought 20 years of dedicated service to the Mabry Mill Restaurant before her untimely passing on December 31st of 2004.

Cheerful in all weather and the very epitome of efficiency, are just a few of the many sterling qualities for which Wanda is remembered. One, however, stands out as exemplary and that was the courage she demonstrated when the restaurant doors reopened for the season in April of 1996. Just two months prior to this, Wanda had undergone surgery to have her larynx removed. Provided with an electric larynx, a hand-held device that enabled her to speak again, she reported for work as usual. If she felt intimidated by the prospect of facing a public of such diverse background and where language differences alone would challenge her each day, it certainly didn't stop her. Ruby Jones, a long-time friend and co-worker, reiterates this when she said, "Wanda was a quiet, loving person but she had incredible strength and did her job remarkably well. She wanted to be the very best she could be and did this right to the very end."

Wanda was also known to have been a tremendous source of inspiration to many of the visitors to the restaurant and, particularly, those who were struggling with the

same affliction she had. If she knew they were self-conscious about using the electric larynx she would, in her quiet but resolute manner, have a little heart-to-heart talk with them in an effort to help them overcome their difficulty. Wanda was great that way - a genuinely, caring person.

A visit to the Hylton farm, back near the Buffalo Mountain and where the Hyltons first began housekeeping in 1953, reveals yet another facet of Wanda's life that the visitor to Mabry Mill wouldn't have had the opportunity to see. She made beautiful, patch-work quilts, many of her own design and painstakingly hand-stitched in the traditional manner. One in particular depicts the state bird from each of the 50 states with each bird embroidered in its own true colors. The home is resplendent in these unique and colorful creations while they also provide an everlasting source of pride and joy for Leonard, the three daughters, Ann, Donna and Sharon and seven grandchildren.

Wanda, along with Leonard, was always a devoted advocate of tradition especially



Wanda Hylton
1938-2004

when it served to bring the family together. This manifested in many ways but none probably more so than when the family gathered to make molasses and apple butter or can sausage. Calling on skills that were handed down from generation to generation, these activities were always done in a manner that harked back to a much earlier time. Wanda loved these gatherings and was never happier than when she could be right in the middle of it all.

For the family and friends and the staff of the Mabry Mill Restaurant, including those many visitors who have frequented the restaurant through the years, Wanda will be terribly missed. Her memory, however, lives on through the shining example she set by a life well lived.

Will Foster is an Interpretive Ranger in the Mabry Mill area of the Parkway.

Voices From the Past

Travelers have recorded their impressions of the Parkway and its region for hundreds of years.

While reasons for coming here have varied, reactions to, and appreciation for mountain views have wavered little - and are quite likely to mirror modern-day accounts.

... each night I face the setting sun that floods the peaks of these distant mountains with crimson grandeur, and with me is the song of the hills...

- from a letter written by a CCC enrollee camping in the Virginia mountains in the 1930s.

"... as far as the eyes can reach, a fine, undulating country is seen. The Peaks of Otter is the finest sight for mountain scenery."

- observations made in 1864 by Private Frank Smith of the 5th West Virginia Cavalry when marching across the mountains from Buchanan.

"... our mountains are not solitary and scattered confusedly over the face of the country ... but are disposed in ridges one behind another, running nearly parallel with the sea-coast..."

- Thomas Jefferson

For Goodness Snakes!

Yes. Really! Here is one of the best things, and lots more interesting facts.



They Control Rodents!

Snakes are the world's best natural rodent control. Imagine how many mice and rats there would be if there were no snakes to eat them. Because of snakes, there are fewer rodents to carry dangerous diseases.

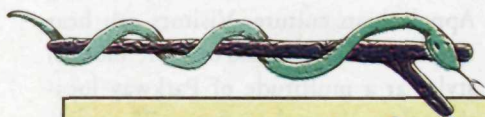
Some Interesting Facts -

Many people misunderstand snakes and believe superstitions, but superstitions are not always true. Let's look at some things about snakes that are true.

Snakes are reptiles, and they've been around for millions of years. They are long and thin, have no legs, no ears and no eye lids. Scales on snakes' bodies help keep them from losing moisture. They are dry - not slimy. (I know this for sure, because I've touched lots of snakes!)

How do Snakes Smell Things?

Their forked tongue flickers back and forth to pick up airborne particles. When it goes back in its mouth the tongue puts the particles in two holes called the Jacobson's organ. The snake's brain can identify different smells from the types of particles.



How do Snakes Stay Warm?

Since snakes are cold-blooded, their body temperature depends on their behavior. During the day's heat, snakes move to shady areas to stay cool and, on cool days they stay warm by sunning on warm rocks, in open areas or on paved roads. Snakes may go several weeks without needing to eat. In winter when there is no way to get warm, they find a den and hibernate.

How are Snakes Like People?

Snakes are vertebrates. Like us, they have backbones. Snake bones, though, are much more movable than ours. Their lower jaws are connected to their skull by a stretchy ligament so snakes can stretch their mouths open wide enough to swallow prey much larger than their head.

How Snake Babies are Born -

Snakes usually live in damp, dark, cool places where food is abundant. Some lay their eggs in damp, protected areas. Babies break out of the soft eggs by using a special egg tooth that they lose after they are born. Some other snakes, including copperheads, rattlesnakes and gartersnakes, hatch their eggs inside their body. These babies are born alive and can quickly find their own food and take care of themselves.

A Few Snakes are Poisonous -

Only two poisonous snakes live along the Blue Ridge Parkway, timber rattlesnakes and copperheads. These are called pit vipers because of little pits on each side of their heads. The pits are sensory organs that help them locate warm-bodied food, like mice. Non-poisonous snakes do not have pits.

Why do Snakes Act Mean, When They're Really Not?

When a snake scares you, it is usually because you scared it first. Seeing you - something so big moving close - is frightening. With no arms or legs to defend itself, the only thing a snake can do is open its mouth, coil up and strike or move toward you to try to scare you off. It would much rather - and it often does - just crawl away to safety.

What to Do if You See a Snake -

There is no need to scare it if you see it first, so don't get too close. On the Parkway, like in all National Parks, all animals are protected, so it is best to let it alone to live as usual in its own natural environment.

- by Jane Sutton

Snake Word Find

a	x	r	d	e	d	o	o	l	b	d	l	o	c	t	c
m	p	o	c	t	n	e	m	n	o	r	i	v	n	e	o
v	i	p	u	h	j	k	k	i	j	q	w	e	e	k	p
w	t	u	n	n	o	a	o	h	k	e	d	o	l	r	p
t	v	q	x	w	p	n	x	i	x	o	c	g	t	r	e
u	i	u	r	a	t	s	o	b	r	k	g	i	t	e	r
o	p	z	c	n	v	m	k	e	g	s	s	k	m	p	h
q	e	a	l	i	o	v	e	r	t	e	b	r	a	t	e
f	r	a	t	t	l	e	s	n	a	k	e	f	w	i	a
g	a	r	t	e	r	s	n	a	k	e	o	i	m	l	d
a	e	h	i	o	c	j	h	t	o	o	t	g	g	e	l
g	g	l	t	t	i	o	n	e	m	w	q	d	f	s	i

- environment
- snake
- rodent
- reptiles
- cold-blooded
- hibernate
- vertebrate
- egg tooth
- pit viper
- mice
- rats
- rattlesnake
- garter snake
- copperhead

There's a Lot More to Learn About Snakes. Read, Read, Read!

EXPERIENCE

NORTH CAROLINA BOONE
Stay with us in any season.

Play Golf,
Go Rafting or Gem Mining,
Hike, Fish or Relax, You Choose!

Boone is in the heart of the beauty, activities, music, shopping and attractions of the High Country.
3333 feet closer to heaven, the air is clearer, drier and 10 degrees cooler. The views are longer and life is slower.

LOWER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE!
Call Boone Convention & Visitors Bureau at **1-800-264-8084** or visit www.visitBooneNC.com

Look At This! Box Shakers & Bones

You can play music without even playing a tune. Play one of these percussion instruments and you can play with the best musicians. Bones have been played for thousands of years and have been made of many different materials. The first ones were probably really made of bones. These bones are made of wood and when held properly, and with a little instruction and practice, produce a clicking and clacking rhythm that will go along with most any kind of music - especially the sounds of the Old-Time music that you are likely to hear along the Parkway.



Box Shaker

Bones

Box shakers came to America from England in the late 19th century. This wooden box shaker fits in the palm of your hand. Just hold it and shake it in rhythm to accompany the music. Both instruments produce a simple rhythm or, for the more practiced player, complex movements and trills can be accomplished. Each comes with information about the history of the instrument and instructions on how to play. For all ages!

Bones and Box Shakers are available at many Parkway visitor centers. The chart on the centerfold lists visitor center locations. Direct mail orders to: Eastern National, 210 Riceville Road, Asheville, NC 28805. For telephone orders: (828) 299-3507. For e-mail orders: karens@easternnational.org

Discover nature on a whole different level.

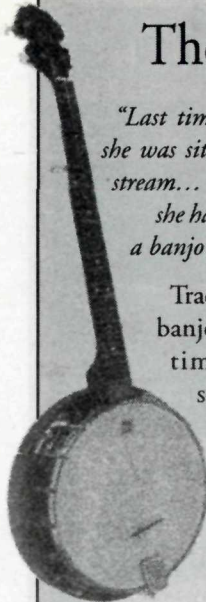
Be inspired by views from the Mile High Swinging Bridge, laugh at bear cubs and otters in natural habitats, and escape into a globally recognized nature preserve with 12 miles of the South's best alpine hiking trails. Open all year.

GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN®
US 221 & Blue Ridge Parkway • Linville, NC • 800-468-7325 • www.grandfather.com

The Banjo

"Last time I saw little Maggie, she was sitting on the banks of a stream...

she had a .44 around her and a banjo on her knee."



Tracing the origin of the banjo in America can be time-consuming and somewhat maddening. There is little doubt, however, that the idea for the instrument was brought to America in some form by African slaves. References to the "banjar", "bangie," "banjer" or "banza" are documented in many regions of colonial America. These early forms were wooden or gourd instruments with heads made of tanned skins.

Until perhaps 1800, the banjo could be found mostly in the hands of slaves, but with the enjoyment of music and dance in all elements of society, it was not long after the turn of the century that the instrument became popular among white society. Combined with the fiddle, the first ensemble of American music was well established.

By the 1840s, and continuing through the rest of the 19th century, American minstrel shows were wildly popular and the banjo increased in popularity as well. There are also records that indicate banjo contests at hotels and bars in northeastern US cities, especially New York. Better quality instruments were available through stores and catalogue sales, although the fretless, wooden versions with skin heads remained popular in many southern mountain communities.

By the early decades of the 20th century, North Carolina Piedmont styles of picking with two or three strings, as opposed to strumming styles became well known and well copied. The popularity of the radio in the 1920s-1940s meant that thousands of banjo players could attempt the new bluegrass style of picking that they were hearing on regular, weekly broadcasts from a number of "clear channel" stations across the country. The folk revival of the 1960s also popularized the instrument and its music. Whether the style is claw hammer, drop thumb or a lightening fast Scruggs-style forward roll, the banjo is keeping its treasured place in Blue Ridge musical history.

- Peter Givens

The Blue Ridge and Its Evolving Musical Traditions

by Peter Givens

Music seems to be a natural part of these mountains – practically inseparable from those who call this special place home. For as long as Europeans have populated the Southern Highlands, they have enjoyed the music that is so much a part of their heritage.

A stop at any Parkway developed area may bring an encounter with the music that is preserved and enjoyed here. Sometimes the melodies are very close to the way they were played in the Irish or German surroundings where they originated. It is a mistake, however, to think that the music of these mountains has been stagnant and unchanging for all of the years people have lived here playing and listening to it. It was brought to the mountains with the early settlers but in many cases, became uniquely American, with a blended style resulting from varied influences.

The Appalachian music of the early 19th century was always dominated by the fiddle and banjo. English, Irish and Germans brought fiddles with them as they settled the mountains. Fiddle tunes sometimes imitated the sound of Scottish bagpipes or, at other times, the jigs, reels, hornpipes,

or old European ballads. The other primary instrument, the banjo, has roots sinking deep into African culture. Banjos were the instruments of choice among plantation slaves.

The "marriage" of these two instruments across the new American culture was the ensemble from which many musical forms trace their roots.

Appalachian bands began creating and recording parlor and dance tunes with the fiddle and banjo during the 1920s. Henry Whitter from Grayson County, VA was one of

the earliest. Bascom Lamar Lunsford from Buncombe County, North Carolina was also an early collector and recorder of traditional music. National recording labels began to take notice of the talent coming from these mountains, and in 1927, RCA records staged an audition in a Bristol, Tennessee warehouse. Their reward was the "discovery" of the Carter family, called by one writer "the single most significant musical group to come out of the southern mountains."

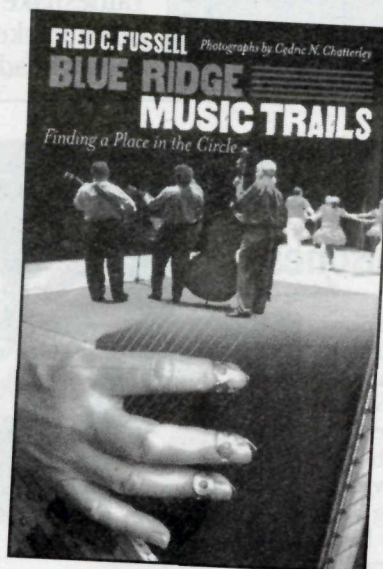
The sounds were also influenced by a variety of clear channel radio stations and programs in the 1930s including the WLS "Barn Dance" in Chicago and WSM's

The Appalachian music of the early nineteenth century was always dominated by the fiddle and banjo.

Birth Announcements

- EARLY MAY - Box turtles mate through October
- EARLY MAY - Peak hatch for wood ducks
- EARLY MAY - Grouse nesting peaks
- EARLY MAY - Raccoon births peak
- MID MAY - Second peak of turkey gobbling
- MID MAY - Bog turtles lay eggs through June
- MID MAY - Tent caterpillars making nests
- LATE MAY - Saw-whet owls fledging
- LATE MAY - Grouse hatch peak

Book Review



Blue Ridge Music Trails
Finding a Place in the Circle
by Fred Fussell
photographs by Cedric N. Chatterley
University of North Carolina Press

Blue Ridge Music Trails is a comprehensive traveler's guide to finding and enjoying old-time and bluegrass music and dance within 25 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Information is included about bluegrass and string band music, ballad singing, shape-note singing, fiddling, gospel music, clogging and more.

More than 160 music events and venues listed by county are complete with driving directions and maps. Many performers are highlighted along with information about performance styles. The reader can gain an overview here of Blue Ridge music history while enjoying the many color photographs and illustrations depicting various aspects of the music.

Blue Ridge Music Trails is available at Parkway visitor centers. See chart in centerfold for locations. For telephone orders: (828) 299-3507. Direct mail orders to: Eastern National, 210 Riceville Road, Asheville, NC 28805. For e-mail orders: karens@easternnational.org

Preserving Tradition at the Blue Ridge Music Center

by Peter Givens

The final phase of a 20-year dream will become a reality early this summer with the grand opening of the Blue Ridge Music Center at Milepost 213 near the North Carolina / Virginia border. This facility will serve as a central place to tell the story of mountain music, demonstrate the art of instrument building and host national and regional performances. In addition, the site will provide an informal gathering place for visitors and musicians to play and enjoy their music. The Blue Ridge Music Center is destined to become one of the prime destination sites for Parkway travelers.

Blue Ridge Parkway staff began working in the mid 1980s with local community leaders and performing artists to produce a concept paper addressing the need to recognize the musical heritage of the region at some point along the Parkway. Galax, Virginia, with its rich tradition of mountain music and a successful annual fiddlers' convention, is often identified as the capital of Blue Ridge musical heritage. The city agreed to donate a large tract of land at Fisher's Peak for a proposed music center. Parkway managers quickly identified this as the most logical location for the new Blue Ridge Music Center.

Other important factors besides the generosity of the Galax community made Fisher's Peak the obvious choice. The

Virginia counties of Grayson, Patrick and Carroll, along with Surry County, North Carolina form the heart of a region that is nationally recognized as a major center of Blue Ridge traditional folk music. There are several established fiddlers' conventions in the region, and Fisher's Peak, sitting in the center, is an excellent location for the interpretation of this unique cultural resource. Virtually any list of important figures in American folk music or southern Appalachian music will include scores of individuals, families or musical groups from this area.

For the past three summers, concerts at the amphitheater and informal gatherings of local musicians have made this a popular weekend gathering place. The newly finished visitor center will consist of exhibits, a sales area, a listening library and a small auditorium designed for recording performances. The initial exhibit, "Hometown Stars: Southwest Virginia's Recording Legacy 1923-1943," is on loan from the Blue Ridge Institute at Ferrum College and will tell the rich story of many of the region's recording legends. The Fisher's Peak area also boasts numerous individuals still producing world class instruments, so a small luthiers' shop will be part of the main complex. Here, the craftsman may demonstrate the selection of wood, the tools and the care that goes into a quality, hand-made acoustic instrument.

Parkway officials see the Blue Ridge Music Center as a great place for amateur musicians from a wide variety of backgrounds to strike up friendships by playing music and sharing songs. These visitors will find themselves experiencing the music in a way that has been done for centuries. The site is designed to entice folks to stay for a while. Plenty of seating offers the opportunity to look out across Chestnut Creek basin, listen to music or browse through publications. All of the facilities are designed with an architectural style that blends with existing Parkway buildings. Stonework, raised seam tin roofs and rustic siding will immediately make the Blue Ridge Music Center seem a natural part of the designed look of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

This inseparable part of Blue Ridge heritage – its music – has a much better chance of survival with the construction of the Blue Ridge Music Center. From the earliest stages of Parkway design, planners were advised to "be constantly alert" for the opportunities to preserve the southern Appalachian culture and folk life. From Ireland, Scotland, Germany and Africa, the roots of this music reflect the people who populated the region. In the Fisher's Peak area, we find a continuing record of community-based performing arts – particularly music – stretching from the colonial period to the present. These rich traditions of music, so much a part of these mountains and their history, will surely continue at the Blue Ridge Music Center.

Peter Givens is the Interpretive Specialist for the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The Fiddle

"I'll tune up my fiddle and rosin my bow... I'll make myself welcomed wherever I go."

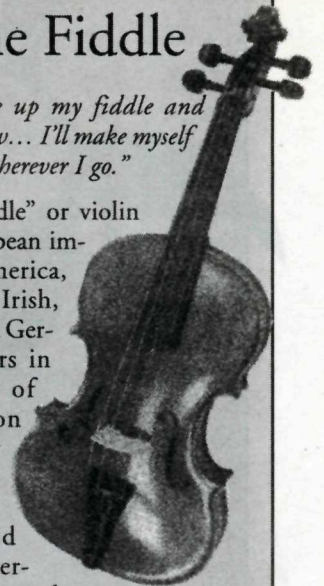
The "fiddle" or violin was a European import to America, carried by Irish, English and German settlers in the waves of immigration to the new world. Light-weight and portable, versatile in its styles and moods and perfected by the master violin makers of Italy, this was the preferred instrument for many new Americans. In settlements along the great wagon road through the Shenandoah Valley, one expert suggests, only partially in jest, that "fiddles were as common as brooms."

Before 1750, fiddling contests in Virginia offered fine, Italian violins as first prize. Slaves or white indentured servants who "fiddled" were often the center of attention at parties or balls in Colonial America. The frolicking and dancing that accompanied a fast-paced fiddle tune led some of the more strict and demure observers to call it "the devil's box."

In 1760, a red-haired young man carrying a violin case stopped at a home in Hanover County, Virginia for the evening on his way to enroll in the College of William and Mary. The home owner asked for an after dinner Irish tune and the youth obliged so expertly that the host began an impromptu dance. The young man was Thomas Jefferson and the host, Patrick Henry. Over the years, among his vast pursuits and interests, Jefferson was, above all, an outstanding violinist. The collection of Jefferson family music at the University of Virginia includes the widest range of tunes, from classical to popular to many songs played in fiddling circles today such as Black Eyed Susan and The Cuckoo. Jefferson is said to have practiced three hours a day for many years, and entertained students, faculty and guests during his college days in Williamsburg. Some historians have called him "America's first great amateur violinist."

The fiddle and its music still reverberate through the Blue Ridge, sometimes continuing to reflect the style of some long ago master of the instrument. The music will not be lost as young and old sit next to one another swapping styles and straining to pick up every note and variation of the technique.

- Peter Givens



❖ ❖ ❖ Music Review ❖ ❖ ❖

The Art of Old-Time Mountain Music Rounder Records

Showcasing 28 songs – and considerably more musicians – this CD, *The Art of Old-Time Mountain Music*, is a treasure chest for old-time music enthusiasts.

For newcomers to the world of old-time music, this compilation offers a cross-section of old-time musical styles, highlighting its diversity, in instruments, playing styles and voices.

Largely representing musicians from the region of southern Appalachia, many who have long since passed, the CD includes others who still perform their distinctive styles at music festivals and gatherings. The accompanying booklet gives glimpses into the musicians' lives who each hold a significant place in keeping alive a renewed interest in this unique home-made music.

The Art of Old-Time Mountain Music is released by Rounder Records as a part of their 30-album Heritage Series.



The Art of Old-Time Mountain Music is available at Parkway visitor centers. See chart in centerfold for locations. For telephone orders: (828) 299-3507. Direct mail orders to: Eastern National, 210 Riceville Road, Asheville, NC 28805. For e-mail orders: karens@easternnational.org

Some wonderful
things to observe:
the mountains, the trees,
the flowers,



the curves, the traffic,
and the 45 mph speed limit.



The Blue Ridge Parkway

It's beautiful but potentially dangerous. Each year Rangers respond to 450 serious accidents with injuries. Don't ruin a wonderful drive. Enjoy the views, but watch the road.



Parkway Wildflowers

Many wildflowers have blooming periods which last only a week or two. Others may bloom longer. Since cooler, high-elevation temperatures delay flowering, the Parkway offers an extended viewing time for wildflowers.

**Unique Lodging,
Exceptional Dining,
Extraordinary Vistas!**



Enjoy our quiet mountain retreat on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Call for lodge rates.

Each room has its own secluded balcony/terrace with spectacular view. The Peaks Restaurant features the area's premiere Friday night seafood buffet, as well as our Sunday Country Buffet; every day menu items for the whole family too.

If it's been a while, come back to discover what you always loved about The Peaks.

OPEN
YEAR-ROUND

Peaks of Otter
RESTAURANT & LODGE

Milepost 86 on the Blue Ridge Parkway
P.O. Box 489, Bedford, VA 24523
540-586-1081 • 1-800-542-5927
www.peaksofotter.com

An authorized concessioner of the National Park Service.

**Let the Museum
Inspire You**

The Frontier Culture Museum features four historic, reconstructed working farms from Germany, Northern Ireland, England and Botetourt County, Virginia.



**FRONTIER
CULTURE
MUSEUM**

Bringing the Past to Life

Open daily: 9am to 5pm

Winter Hours: Dec. 1 - Mid March, 10 am - 4 pm

540.332.7850

www.frontier.virginia.gov

Located adjacent to the intersection of I-81 and I-64.

From I-64, take exit 87 to I-81 North.

Exit 222 to Route 250 West.

Museum entrance is 1/2 mile on left.



Parkway Events

Saturday & Sunday, May 14 & 15
Fiber Weekend

FOLK ART CENTER, MILEPOST 382.

Saturday 10a.m. - 4p.m.

Fiber artists demonstrate spinning, weaving, dyeing, basketry and more.

Live sheep shearing demonstrations and hands-on learning.

Handmade Wearables Fashion Show

Sunday 1p.m. & 3p.m.

Fashion shows featuring clothing and accessories designed and handmade by members of the Southern Highland Craft Guild.

For more information (828) 298-7928.

2nd & 4th Sunday Afternoons - June, July & August
Family Fiddlin'

HUMPSBACK ROCKS, MILEPOST 5.8.

Learn to fiddle in an hour.

Party games (frolic) from early 20th century farm life. Free

For more information (540) 943-4716.

Saturday, May 28

Settin' Up for the Season

HUMPSBACK ROCKS, MILEPOST 5.8. 11A.M.-4P.M.

Twenty dulcimer players celebrate the beginning of farm-life season in addition to farm craft and garden demonstrations, livestock and story-telling.

Fun for the whole family. Free

For more information (540) 943-4716.

Sundays, Beginning May 29

Traditional Music

MABRY MILL, MILEPOST 176.5. 2P.M.-5P.M.

Bring a lawn chair and your flat-footin' shoes and enjoy the sounds of the Mabry Mill Band. Free

Sunday, May 29

Asheville Community Band Concert

FOLK ART CENTER, MILEPOST 382. 3P.M.-5P.M.

Asheville Community Band celebrates Memorial Day.

Featuring marches, classical, semi-classical and show tunes.

For more information (828) 298-7928.

Saturdays, Beginning June 4

Traditional Blue Ridge Mountain Music Concerts

BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER, MILEPOST 213. 7P.M.-9P.M.

For more information see inset below or call (276) 236-5309.

Sundays, June 5 - October 16

Mountain Music

ROANOKE MOUNTAIN CAMPGROUND, MILEPOST 120.4.

JUNE 5 UNTIL SEPT 4, 7P.M.-8P.M. -- SEPT. 4 - OCT. 16, 6P.M.-7P.M.

Bring a lawn chair and a picnic - enjoy an evening of traditional music. Free.

For more information (540) 745-9680.

Saturday, June 4

Clay Day

FOLK ART CENTER, MILEPOST 382. 10A.M. - 4P.M.

Potters and other ceramic artists share techniques including wheel throwing, coil building and raku firing. Many activities geared for children.

Glaze and watch the firing of your own raku pot (\$5 fee for each.)

For more information (828) 298-7928.

Saturday, June 11

Grand Opening - Blue Ridge Music Center

BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER, MILEPOST 213.

Saturday, July 2

Independence Day - Mountain Family Style

HUMPSBACK ROCKS, MILEPOST 5.8. 11A.M.-4P.M.

Authentic 'ole-style string bands. Open hearth cooking, story-telling, farm-life exhibits. Bring a family picnic. Free.

For more information (540) 943-4716.

4th of July Weekend

Independence Day Celebration

PEAKS OF OTTER, MILEPOST 86.

Saturday, July 2 - Bluegrass Music by "Let it Fly"

Monday, July 4 - Hike to Sharp Top to View Fireworks

Saturday & Sunday, August 6 & 7

Brinegar Days

BRINEGAR CABIN, MILEPOST 238.5.

SATURDAY, 10A.M.-4P.M.

Demonstrations of traditional homestead activities and handicrafts and children's activities.

SUNDAY, NOON-4P.M.

Learn about the Brinegar's family history and participate in workshops on "Discovering your own family history."

For more information (336) 657-8161.

Saturday, August 13

Wood Day

FOLK ART CENTER, MILEPOST 382. 10A.M. - 4P.M.

Explore a variety of woodcrafts, from detailed lifelike woodcarvings to woodturning.

Woodworkers demonstrate techniques, equipment and traditions.

4th Annual Carve Off Competition will be held from 1p.m. - 3p.m.

For more information (828)-298-7928.

Sunday, August 28

Summer Harvest

HUMPSBACK ROCKS, MILEPOST 5.8. NOON-4P.M.

"Ole-time music by Heather Berry and friends. Puttin' up the beans, timber and cross-cut demonstrations, livestock and story-telling.

Recognition of Junior Volunteers. Free.

For more information (540) 943-4716.

Saturday, August 13

Cone Heritage Day

MOSES H. CONE MEMORIAL PARK, MILEPOST 294.

A day of special craft demonstrations, manor house tours, storytelling and music celebrating our cultural heritage.

For more information (828) 295-6308.

Saturdays, June 4 - Labor Day Weekend

Summer Concert Series
Traditional Blue Ridge Mountain Music
BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER, MILEPOST 213.

"Pickin' in the Plaza" - 4:30p.m.-6p.m. prior to shows.

Informal Jam Sessions open to all. Bring your instrument and join in!

JUNE 4 - BLACK DIAMOND BLUEGRASS BAND
 and Southern Pride Band.

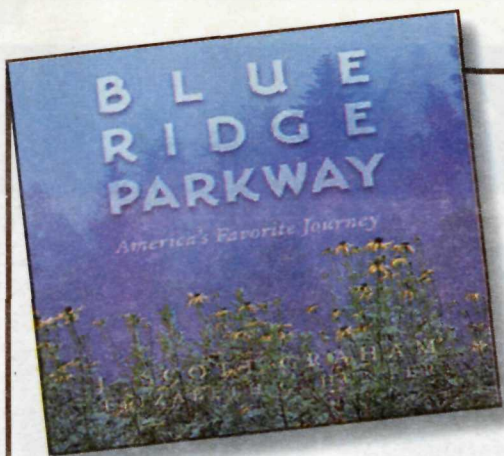
June 11 - The Del McCoury Band

All concerts will be held in the outdoor amphitheater - rain or shine - and will begin at 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Most are free of charge.

Some are ticketed. Alcohol is not permitted on the Music Center grounds, but visitors may bring picnics. Bring wraps for chilly evenings.

Gates will open two hours prior to event.

For more information (276) 236-5309 of www.blueridgemusiccenter.net.



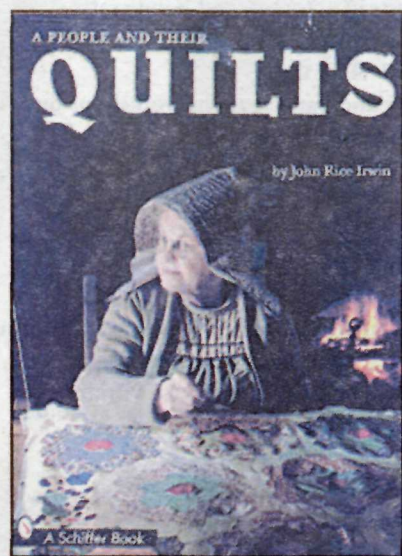
**Blue Ridge Parkway:
America's Favorite Journey**
\$39.95

Now you can take the high road along with acclaimed photographer J. Scott Graham and award-winning author Elizabeth Hunter who have combined their unique talents to produce *Blue Ridge Parkway, America's Favorite Journey*, a coffee table book showcasing this magnificent piece of Appalachian landscape and heritage.

*Visit Eastern
National Bookstores
in Blue Ridge Parkway
Visitor Centers*



**Hiking, Driving & Theme-Related Tour Guides • Nature Guides
Regional History • Fiction • Biographies • Music • Toys • Momentos**



A People and Their Quilts
\$19.95

A firsthand account of a people and their art. Lavishly illustrated, many quilts are represented including the Victorian Crazy Quilt, the Lone Star, the Friendship Album and other innovative variations, the Bell Telephone Quilt, the Hanging Elephant and Rob Peter to Pay Paul. 214 pages, full color. by John Rice Irwin, photographed by Robin Hood.



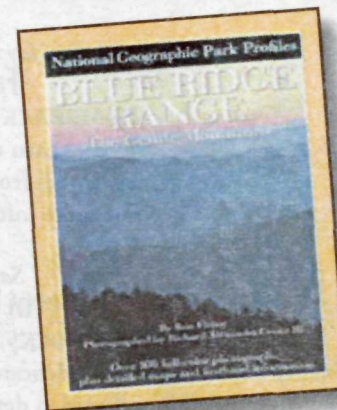
Driving Tour of the Blue Ridge Parkway, CD \$12.95

Provides an essential introduction and overview of the Parkway. Told in the mountain story-telling tradition, the tour is designed and ideally suited for listening whatever your Parkway location. Entertaining and informative, it helps you discover opportunities and places of interest. Fully-narrated, the soundtrack also features the sounds and authentic regional mountain music.



Guide to the Blue Ridge Parkway
\$13.95

Highlights Parkway attractions, destinations and remnants of historical Appalachia, trailheads, campgrounds and cultural sites and contains many color photographs and a wildflower bloom calendar. Softcover; 154 pages. by Victoria Logue, Frank Logue, Nicole Blouin



National Geographic Park Profiles: Blue Ridge Range
\$15.00

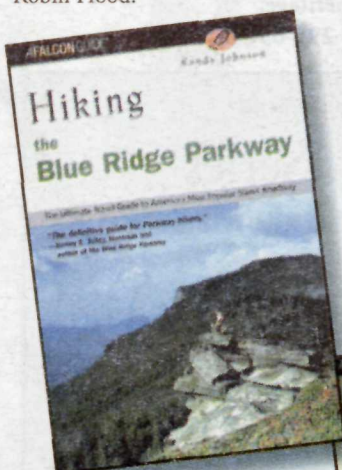
Writer Ron Fisher and photographer Rik Cooke guide you through the land, the parks and the people of the gentle mountains that rise in a sky-wash haze from Pennsylvania to northern Georgia.

*Eastern National is a non-profit partner to the Blue Ridge Parkway.
Shopping with us supports the Park.*



Blue Ridge Parkway Ball Cap
\$14.95

A delightful and functional momento of your Parkway visit. Our fully-adjustable ball cap has the official Parkway logo in dark blue on the front and "America's Favorite Drive" embroidered in dark blue on the back.



Hiking the Blue Ridge Parkway \$16.95

Randy Johnson's *Hiking the Blue Ridge Parkway* is an extensive photographic-rich guide to Parkway trails in the national forests, state parks and private preserves that line the Parkway. Included are mile-by-mile logs, topographic maps, in-depth descriptions, difficulty ratings and directions.



Best Easy Day Hikes
\$9.95

Randy Johnson's *Best Easy Day Hikes* excerpts easier walks for families and less experienced hikers. It also includes topographic maps and the same high-quality descriptions and directions as his more comprehensive book shown at the left.

Mail This Order Form to:

Eastern National • 210 Riceville Road • Asheville, NC 28805 • 828-299-3507 • Fax 828-298-5645
or alphier@easternnational.org

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____

Ordering Information

• All prices subject to change without notice •

Qty	Description	Price Each	Total

Shipping and Handling*
Plus State Sales Tax
Total Amount Enclosed

*Shipping & Handling charges are taxable except in AL, DC, IA, IL, LA, MD, ME, OH, VA and VT

Standard Shipping and Handling

\$00.00 - \$20.00.....\$3.50
\$20.01 - \$40.00.....\$6.50
\$40.01 & above.....\$8.50

1 Day and 2 Day rates also available.

International orders subject to additional charges.

Sales Tax must be added for the following states:

AL - 4%	IN - 6%	MN - 6.5%	RI - 7%
AR - 5.125%	KY - 6%	MS - 7%	SC - 5%
DC - 5.75%	LA - 4%	NC - 4.5%	TN - 6%
FL - 6%	MA - 5%	NE - 5.5%	VA - 5%
GA - 4%	MD - 5%	NY - 4.25%	VT - 5%
IA - 5%	ME - 5%	OH - 6%	WI - 5%
IL - 6.25%	MI - 6%	PA - 6%	WV - 6%

Method of payment: Check Money Order Credit Card

(Make check or money order payable to Eastern National)

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Name on credit card _____

Signature _____

VISA • Mastercard • American Express • Discover
Credit Card statements will show "eParks.com" as the Merchant Name
Please allow 1 to 2 weeks for delivery