



# THE CATOCTIN FOREST ALLIANCE BULLETIN

*Newsletter of the CFA*

*Vol. 3 No. 2 July 2013*

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

## **New Schedule for CFA Meetings**

The CFA Board has decided to hold general membership meetings four times a year (the first Monday of February, May, August and November). Board of Director Meetings will continue each month except July. Newsletters will be sent out in January, April, July and October with news updates in between if needed. We will keep you informed about the CFA activities and hope to see you at our general meetings when your time allows.

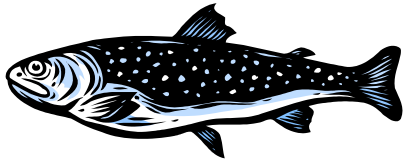
## **Mother Seton School Seeks Renewal of Green School Status**



Recently Elizabeth Prongas, Jim Robbins and Linda Sundergill met with Sister JoAnne, the principal of Mother Seton School, regarding their efforts to renew the Green School status for Mother Seton School. The state is requiring for more environmental lessons with detailed documentation in all classes. Sister JoAnne told us about the school's needs and then we all brainstormed to see what resources we could call on to help them out. We were able to send Sister JoAnne the summary of the Meeting on the Mountain IV that focused on environmental education. The summary provided numerous links to environmental education resources. We also made contact with Alice Nemitsas, newly retired founder of Fountain Rock Environmental Center and she agreed to help the teachers develop environmental lessons for the all the classes.

This year the students at Mother Seton School were again involved in the Trout in the Classroom and were so attached to the fish that they kept three in the chilled tank after all the others were released. The fish have been named and are being given good care. When they outgrow the tank, they will be released to the wild.

Mother Seton School is very committed to quality education and the Green School principles. They will be working very hard to renew their Green School status.



## Trout in the Classroom

**in Frederick County – 2013** By Chuck Dinkel

During the 2012-2013 school-year, seventeen schools in Frederick County participated in the Trout in the Classroom program. This was an increase of four schools from the previous year. In terms of grade level the breakdown is as follows: three elementary schools, seven middle schools, four high schools, two parochial schools and one day-camp which provides before and after school resources. Statewide the number of TIC schools is now 64.

The mission of Trout in the Classroom (TIC) in Maryland is to develop among school children the future protectors of and advocates for establishing and maintaining healthy conditions for trout in local streams. Through the exciting experience of rearing trout from fertilized eggs and stocking them in local waters, TIC helps young people to become stewards of the environment. Trout are the chosen program vehicle because, like the canary in the mine, they give early warning of unacceptable and even dangerous pollution levels. Raising trout through a combination of classroom and hands-on activities demonstrates to youngsters both the importance of clean water and the difficulty of maintaining it.

Trout in the Classroom is essentially a *cold-water conservation* and not a *hatchery* program. Linking students to their watersheds, TIC activities reinforce existing multidisciplinary curriculum requirements from grade three onward. Students learn to value our natural resources through the lifecycle of the trout. Besides creating a durable understanding and appreciation of the importance of clean water, TIC also exposes children to broader themes. These include the concepts of ecosystems and watersheds, preservation and enhancement of natural resources, protection of the environment and the value of maintaining healthy trout populations as an indicator of environmental quality. A collateral purpose is to encourage young people to enjoy sport fishing as a way to connect with nature and part of a healthy life-style.

During May and June of 2013 the schools released over 2100 rainbow trout fingerlings in Frederick County trout water. Three sites in the county have been approved by the DNR for releasing fish. The locations are Owens Creek at the covered bridge on Roddy Creek Road, Carroll Creek at the location of the Potomac Valley Fly Fishers trout rearing facility, and Catoctin Creek at Doubs Park near Middletown/Myersville.

TIC students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade to high school level celebrated another successful year with trout release activities which included water quality measurements, collecting and identifying aquatic insects, fly casting and tying and scavenger hunts. This year elementary students from Wolfsville teamed up with Middletown HS students for a joint release. The pairing of students from these schools proved quite successful. Even before the release day the teachers had developed relationships by having the students communicate with each other.

None of this would have been possible without the assistance and cooperation of the TIC teachers who added this program to their already busy schedules and many volunteers. The staff of the Albert Powell Hatchery not only provided the trout eggs and food, but generously offered their time and expertise in leading tours of their facility for a number of schools. Members of Potomac Valley Fly Fishers assisted students during several releases as well as delivering trout eggs to schools. The Catoctin Forest Alliance donated fish tanks to schools and their members also delivered trout eggs. Staff from the Alice Ferguson Foundation assisted with macro-invertebrate collection and analysis at trout releases. A BIG thank-you to all for making 2013 the most successful TIC year in Frederick County!

## Seasons 101

By CFA Vice President, Jim Robbins

Seasons 101 is a partnership between the Housing Authority of the City of Frederick's Project Alive, the Legal Aid Bureau, the Catoctin Forest Alliance and the Catoctin Mountain Park. This is a new program that is an adventure into the Catoctin Mountains for youth from Frederick City. The program covers all four (4) seasons in the Park and at the end of the program each young person will receive a booklet with all the pictures that they took, the information on their tree for the 4 seasons, a certificate, patch and additional information that they will receive from the Seasons 101 program. In June the participants began their journey which will continue in October, January, and April.

In each season they will examine the conditions of the environment, learn about the plants and animals that live in the habitat and keep track of the growth of their adopted tree. During the day-long trip, the youth participated in fishing, tree adoption, hiking, and plenty of learning opportunities.



During the morning session, the students were very reluctant to sit on the ground while Debbie Mills, Park Ranger, read "The Giving Tree" and talked about the importance of trees.



A change of attitude came later in the afternoon when the youth were happy to provide community service by helping Jim Robbins remove a tree that had fallen across the Spicebush trail.

Each youth was given a camera to take pictures during the day, a tree worksheet for identification of the tree that they adopted and an opportunity for fishing at the pond on the Lewis Property. Debbie Mills taught the youth about the importance of trees and walked them through the adoption process. The young people became more animated as they searched for their assigned tree, then measured the tree, took a picture of the tree and themselves at the tree and measured their tree for its height, branch length and distance from the ground to the tree's first branch. Then they compared their height, arm length and leg length. The object of this exercise is to see the changes in

the tree at each visit, of the seasons and the changes that the youth have gone through as well. It appears that anything can become a competition as the youth boasted about their tree and bragged that their tree had some quality greater than those adopted by the others.

While on the Lewis Property, the youth learned about the ecosystem created by a small pond and had a great deal of fun fishing for blue gills while they learned how to bait a hook, cast, catch and release the fish safely. One of the youth said, "I really liked fishing; I caught a lot of fish." He continued, "It felt good to do it myself. At first I was scared of the fish, but after Mr. Robbins showed me how, I wasn't scared anymore."

The participants were treated to a pizza lunch at Chestnut Picnic Area and a hike on the Spice-bush Nature Trail. The younger age

group (4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> graders) spent the afternoon hiking the Brown's Farm Trail, had a friendly encounter with a 4' black snake and a hiked to Cunningham Falls. The older age group (6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> graders) hiked to the Falls and then to Hog Rock and on to Blue Ridge Summit Overlook before ending at the parking lot at the Charcoal Trail. This hike was a great learning experience about the importance of water (that it should be conserved, used for drinking and not horseplay) and how important our legs are when hiking.

The next program is scheduled for October and we are planning interim programs to maintain the interest generated by the initial visit. If you are interested in helping out please contact Jim Robbins at [jimrobbins@comcast.net](mailto:jimrobbins@comcast.net). The youth will be encouraged to participate in the next CFA Day of Service to extend their time in the park and their interaction with nature.



## **Catoctin Mountain Park Successfully Concludes Deer Management Actions for Winter 2012-2013**

By Lindsey Donaldson, Catoctin Mountain Park Ranger

Catoctin Mountain Park completed the fourth year of white-tailed deer population reduction as prescribed in the Catoctin White-tailed Deer Management Plan / Final Environmental Impact Statement. The plan addressed the consumption of tree and shrub seedlings by an increasing deer population, which has limited the ability of native forests to regenerate.

Park staff worked with United States Department of Agriculture biologists to carry out the herd reduction. This action included extensive measures to ensure a safe, humane, and successful operation. This included using highly qualified and experienced personnel familiar with the park's geography, establishing safety zones, conducting population reduction actions in closed areas of the Park, shooting from elevated positions with a safe backdrop, and utilizing non-lead ammunition. Catoctin closely coordinated communication with local law enforcement officials and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Reduction took place between November 2012 and January 2013, resulting in the removal of 161 deer from the park. A total of 3,611 pounds of venison was donated to the Maryland Food Bank and Thurmont Food Bank in Frederick County, Maryland during the winter of 2012-2013.

A total of 104 deer were tested with negative results for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), a fatal, neurological disease that has been detected in Pennsylvania approximately 25 miles from the Park boundary.

Reduction using firearms will continue annually to reduce and maintain the deer population at Catoctin. Before the first season of deer management began in February 2010, there were approximately 123 deer per square mile in the Park. The deer population was estimated by Park Biologists to be 66 deer per square mile before the fourth season reduction began, still approximately 4 times higher than the density of deer in healthy forest ecosystems (15 deer per square mile). The number of deer removed each year will be based on the results of annual vegetation monitoring and deer population monitoring conducted each fall.



## Does Everything Happen for a Reason?

By Susan Burke, Catoctin Mountain Park Ranger

So, what is the reason for sequestration? Some believe it happened to ruin their lives. Must we believe that? We, the National Park Service, have been directed to reduce our budget. What will this mean? A direct result is the reduction in the number of days the visitor center will be open. However, the visitor center is now open longer hours on the weekends and that is a benefit to the visitor. We can provide service to hikers when they return from their hike. Visitor count and purchases in the book shop have increased. Does this mean one balances the other?

We were not able to hire seasonal help. That is true, but we have always been willing to do what we need to do to get the job done. Perhaps we cannot offer as many programs but we can train volunteers to present programs. One member of the park staff can train many volunteers; therefore we can offer a variety of programs differently. This season we were fortunate to have several wonderful volunteers come to the park. Two of these are Teresa and John Walther. They are both seasoned volunteers and trained interpreters. They jumped right in and began presenting campfire programs. Additionally, they assisted visitors, young and old, to complete their books and be sworn in as official Catoctin Mountain Park Junior Rangers. They are also working on producing a version of the junior ranger booklet for those visitors who are over the age of the traditional junior ranger. The number of campfire programs continued at last year's number however, the children completing the requirements to become Junior Rangers has increased dramatically.

Several of the vehicles, owned or leased by the park were sold or returned, resulting in a reduction of automobiles available. Everyone in the park has joined together to make cars available to whoever needs one. This has been the most challenging of the sequestration dilemmas, simply because of the logistics. It is the one result that I wish we could have handled differently, but that is only my opinion. Overall things are different, but are they better or worse? This has given us the push we needed to look at things in a new way. As the over used saying goes, 'think outside the box' and in government that is not easy to accomplish. Change does not come easily. But sometimes we need to be forced in doing things differently and maybe, just maybe, things will change for the better.



## Lions Get Briefed

By Mel Poole, Superintendent, Catoctin Mountain Park

On June 26 Superintendent Mel Poole provided a presentation to the Thurmont Lions Club at their monthly meeting at the Cozy Restaurant. Mr. Poole spoke about plans for the two most recent land acquisitions to Catoctin Mountain Park. These are the 63 acre Braestrup Area on the northwest side of the park and the 18 acre Lewis Area on the southeast side of the park. Due to significant cultural resources found at the Braestrup Area the public opening has been delayed. The Lewis Area has been open since April and several young visitors have been observed fishing at the pond.

## The Arts in Thurmont

The new Main Street Manager of Thurmont, Vicky Grinder, is making a commitment to encourage the arts in Thurmont. On July 30<sup>th</sup> a preliminary meeting to discuss the formulation of a committee to meet this goal will be held at Timeless Trends in Thurmont. Representatives of Catoctin Mountain Park and CFA will be in attendance. More details to follow as they become available.



## Surviving the Gettysburg Civil War Sesquicentennial

By Cynthia Wyant, Catoctin Mountain Park Administrative Officer

During an eleven-day period, June 24 through July 5, 2013, several Catoctin Mountain Park staff worked with the National Park Service Eastern Area Type 2 Incident Management Team and Gettysburg National Military Park employees preparing for and being part of that park's sesquicentennial commemoration:

Cynthia Wyant (CATO Administrative Officer) served as the Deputy Finance Section Chief. Lily Martin (CATO Budget Analyst) and Jennie Pumphrey (CATO Secretary) served as Personnel Time Recorders. John Kempisty, Don Stanley, Ryan Petersen (CATO Park Rangers) and Holly Rife (CATO Chief Ranger) served as Law Enforcement personnel.

Days were long during the event, with normal 12-hour shifts sometimes turning into 14 or 15 hour workdays. At the peak of commemoration activities, 225 NPS personnel from over 43 parks, regional offices, and the Washington Office were assigned to the event which was deemed a huge success. Media interest was unprecedented, with approximately 400 media representatives from more than 80 media outlets credentialed. NPS staff used social media as well as traditional methods to keep the world connected to the various sesquicentennial events.



## Artist in Residence (AIR) Program Update

By Alicia Lafever, Catoctin Mountain Park Ranger

The AIR rating panel met on June 30, 2013, and made selections for the summer and fall Catoctin Mountain Artists-in-Residence. Elizabeth Prongas, Don Frame, Ann Hess and Carroll Kehne were the members of the AIR rating panel and they graciously donated their expertise and time (~1 hour and 45 minutes) to evaluate the sixteen applications and make their selections. The artwork submitted was excellent, making the selections difficult. Out of the sixteen applications, fifteen were visual artists and one was a literary artist. The advertising on the free artists' websites has increased the number of applications and next year we hope to only need one rating panel to select all four of the artists for the year.

Chip Irvine (photographer) from Baltimore, MD has accepted the summer Catoctin Mountain Artist-in-Residence position. He'll be at Cunningham Falls State Park (CFSP) August 11-24 in site 98 in Deer Spring Branch Circle of the William Houck campground. He'll be coordinating a program at CFSP with Ranger Alicia Norris. He may also present a program at Catoctin Mountain Park.

Visit <http://www.nps.gov/cato/index.htm> and/or <https://www.facebook.com/CatoctinNPS> for more information during his residency for program information. Chip Irvine's website is <http://www.chipirvine.com/>

Shannon Durbin (painter) from Los Angeles, CA has accepted the fall Catoctin Mountain Artist-in-Residence position. She'll be staying at the Good Luck Lodge at Camp Greentop in Catoctin Mountain Park September 16-30. She'll be presenting a program at Catoctin Mountain Park.

Visit <http://www.nps.gov/cato/index.htm> and/or <https://www.facebook.com/CatoctinNPS> for more information during her residency for program information. Shannon Durbin's website is <http://www.shannondurbin.com/>

We hope you have a chance to meet these fantastic artists and show your support for the Catoctin Mountain Artist-in-Residence program! For more information about the program please

visit <http://www.nps.gov/cato/supportyourpark/artist-in-residence.htm> and <http://catoctinforall.org/air/>



## Catoctin Mountain Park (CMP) YouTube Video

A video spotlighting Catoctin Mountain Park, narrated by CMP Superintendent Mel Poole and CFA Vice President, Jim Robbins, can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1mFxfYAbik>



### Visitor Center Bridge Project By P. Scott Bell, Catoctin Mountain Park Ranger

The Federal Highway Administration, Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division (EFLHD) and the National Park Service (NPS) have initiated the planning process to repair/reconstruct the bridge over Blue Blazes Creek to the Blue Blazes Parking Lot adjacent to the Park's Visitor Center and in addition, replace the double culvert over Blue Blazes Creek at the entrance to Camp Misty Mount in Catoctin Mountain Park.

The bridge to the Blue Blazes Parking Lot is a 22-foot by 8.9-foot timber beam structure with masonry abutments built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1939. In June 2011 a heavy rainfall and high water storm event damaged the existing bridge to the parking lot, making it unusable. Visitor access to the lot is currently provided via a temporary structure, on loan from Frederick County, installed over the existing bridge.

The existing double culvert at the entrance to Camp Misty Mount, a historic structure on the National Register, includes two, 16-inch by 24-inch elliptical corrugated metal pipes with two stone masonry headwalls (each approximately 3.5 feet by 10 feet). The barrels are in poor condition and exhibit signs of abrasion and corrosion along the flow line and some loss of the barrel floor at the inlet end.

Both the culvert at Camp Misty Mount and that associated with the Visitor Center Bridge have experienced overtopping and structural deterioration and must be repaired to improve flow conditions and prevent further damage to historic resources.

The Park and Federal Highway Administration have begun the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance process and are proposing to have an Environmental Assessment (EA) available for public and regulatory review in the summer of 2013.



### Emerald Ash Bore

Tom Lupp, Entomologist with the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) has reported that emerald ash borer adults were found on a trap in Frederick County earlier this month. The positive trap was located near Jefferson. At this time MDA will continue to monitor the situation but no control actions are planned. Since Frederick County is already in the Federal Quarantine, no new regulations will be needed.

To learn more about the Emerald Ash Bore, go to <http://www.emeraldashborer.info/#sthash.HN1TRobU.dpbs>

For more information about the quarantine, go to [http://mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/Documents/eab\\_quarantine\\_2011\\_july\\_final.pdf](http://mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/Documents/eab_quarantine_2011_july_final.pdf)

# Mason Dixon Welcome Center Ribbon Cutting

On June 28<sup>th</sup> the Mason Dixon Welcome Center held a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the official opening of a permanent gallery of interpretive exhibits at the state operated visitor center, located off US 15 Southbound, just north of Emmitsburg. Elizabeth Prongas represented CFA at the ceremony. The Tourism Council of Frederick County provided several of the interpretive exhibits to highlight the unique tourism aspects of our county.

If you have not already visited the welcome center, do plan to stop by and see the exhibits and get great information about the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway and lots of other marketing and visitor attractions throughout our county.

## 2013 Membership Drive

Our membership drive for 2013 is still underway. All dues are renewed in December. See sliding scale for dues below, based on the month that you join. To join CFA, please send the membership application form and a check made out to Catoctin Forest Alliance to the address below.

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

### Dues Schedule:

Joining Month	Per Person	Per Couple	Club Membership
Dec- Feb.	\$20	\$30	\$50
Mar-May	\$15	\$25	45
June-Aug	\$10	\$20	40
Sept-Nov.	\$5	\$15	35

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Committee Interest

Strategic Planning \_\_\_\_      Membership \_\_\_\_      Conservation/Education \_\_\_\_  
Fundraising \_\_\_\_      Artist in Residence \_\_\_\_      Marketing/Publicity \_\_\_\_  
Information Technology \_\_\_\_      Finance \_\_\_\_

## CFA Website

Visit our website at [www.catoctinforall.org](http://www.catoctinforall.org)

