



Built in the 1950s, Craggy Gardens Visitor Center requires extensive repairs. Gifts for the planning project will be doubled.

Double the love for Craggy Gardens!

We are thrilled to announce a matching gift opportunity that will double donations for Craggy Gardens, one of the most popular destinations on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Thanks to a \$750,000 grant from Explore Asheville and the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority's new Legacy Investment from Tourism (LIFT) Fund, you can multiply the impact of your gift to rehabilitate this recreation area just north of Asheville, N.C.

With its winding trails leading to 360-degree mountaintop views, Craggy Gardens is a hub for hiking, birdwatching, wildflower photography, and more.

Unfortunately, the site is in dire need of maintenance and new facilities to welcome Parkway travelers. The 71-year-old visitor center is weathered and run-down. The building's

restrooms are only accessible via a steep exterior stairway, close seasonally, and require frequent repairs. Along the trails, there is little information to safely guide and educate hikers. The picnic area also requires significant repairs.

Your donation for this initiative will help fund:

- three new sets of permanent, fully accessible, waterless vault toilets with two located at Craggy Visitor Center and a set at Craggy Pinnacle trailhead for the first time
- five new trailhead exhibits
- planning and design work to renovate and improve the visitor center, the picnic area, and other site features.

Please give today to have your gift matched dollar for dollar. Use the enclosed envelope to mail a donation or visit BRPFoundation.org.

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Rule the Ridge with motorcycle safety

Motorcyclists love to explore the winding route of the Blue Ridge Parkway from milepost 0 to 469. To keep riders safe, National Park Service officials recently debuted a campaign, Rule the Ridge, designed to remind motorcyclists (and all motorists) that a ride on the Parkway is different than most roads. In 2023, the park's Law Enforcement Rangers responded to approximately 394 motor vehicle crashes, and of those, 83 involved motorcycles. The Parkway has one of the highest number of motorcycle crash injuries and fatalities in the national park system.

"Motorists need to understand that the Parkway is designed differently than other roads they may be used to," said Acting Chief Ranger Deb Flowers. "In addition to sharing the road with cars, bicyclists, and hikers, the Parkway's narrow and soft shoulders, long sweeping curves, and tight curves present unique challenges to riders."

Riders are reminded to follow these three rules:

- 1. Ride in single file. Remember to ride single file and maintain a safe following distance to provide better reaction times.*
- 2. Keep your eyes on the road at all times. Keep your focus on navigating the route. Take advantage of the many overlooks to stop and enjoy views safely. Watch for many hazards you may encounter and practice safe, defensive driving.*
- 3. Ride in the center of lane position #2. Given the park's design, the center position offers the safest path for optimal maneuverability.*



Riders are invited to share their Parkway adventure using #RuleTheRidge on social media. Photo courtesy of Blue Ridge Parkway/National Park Service

Tap in to Blue Ridge Rising's regional endeavors

Mark your calendar for the second annual Blue Ridge Rising Two-State Summit on Dec. 3 & 4 at Hotel Roanoke in Virginia.

The summit is a key element of the Foundation's Blue Ridge Rising initiative to strengthen cross-jurisdictional relationships within the Blue Ridge Parkway's gateway communities. Come learn and share your ideas on the latest efforts to implement a collective regional vision that celebrates a shared culture, protects unique natural resources, and strengthens the regional economy.

To learn more about the work guiding the summit, you can request a printed copy of the Blue Ridge Rising Action Plan, which details steps and objectives outlined by leaders from the 29 counties that neighbor the national park. Email Kelly Fain at kfain@brpfoundation.org to receive a copy or visit BlueRidgeRising.com to read the plan online.



The Blue Ridge Rising Summit will be held in Roanoke.

Tickets for the summit will be available online soon at BRPFoundation.org.

ECONOMIC IMPACT *of the Blue Ridge Parkway*

NUMBER OF PARKWAY VISITORS IN 2023:

16,757,635

MORE THAN
*Yellowstone, Yosemite,
and the Grand Canyon*
COMBINED

The Blue Ridge Parkway is just

1 OF 431 NATIONAL PARK UNITS

...but accounts for

5.3% OF ALL NPS VISITOR SPENDING



\$1.4B

Spent by visitors in local communities



19,159

Jobs supported along the Parkway

2023 data courtesy of the National Park Service

A song-filled autumn at the Blue Ridge Music Center

Plan a trip to the Blue Ridge Music Center, milepost 213, near Galax, Va., for a host of musical offerings. For more information on the events featured, visit BlueRidgeMusicCenter.org.

Kids & Family Fun Day

11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sat., Oct. 12 | Free

Join the Music Center for a free day of family fun, including performances, an instrument “petting zoo,” scavenger hunt, art activities, guided hike, and a square dance.

The day wraps up with a free concert by Grammy winners Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer from 3 to 4 p.m. in the small theater. The duo has been connecting families through music for more than 25 years. Their superb harmonies are backed by instrumental virtuosity.

You can also explore the Kids in Parks TRACK Trail using a complimentary activity guide and earn a prize in the mail.



Kids & Family Day performance schedule

11:30 a.m. – The Brothers Young

12:30 p.m. – Ettore Buzzini

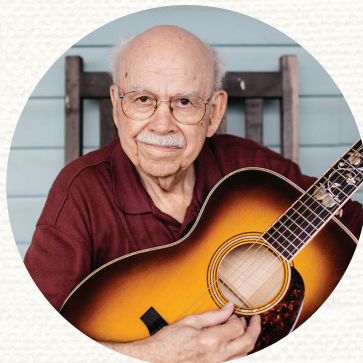
1:30 p.m. – Newfound Gap

3 to 4 p.m. – Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer

A Tribute to Willard Gayheart

5 to 7 p.m., Sat., Oct. 5 | \$15 | Seating limited

The Music Center will honor Willard Gayheart, an old-time and bluegrass musician recognized for the authenticity of his songwriting and musicianship and a founder of the free Midday Mountain



Musical sessions hosted daily for visitors. The event will feature performances by Gayheart’s family and friends, including Scott Freeman, Dori Freeman and Nicholas Falk, Wayne Henderson, Jack Hinshelwood, Sandy Grover Mason, Edwin Lacy, Steve Lewis, Katy Taylor, and Mike Gayheart. The Music Center will also recognize the contributions of the original Midday Mountain Music performers who volunteer their time to share tunes and tales with Parkway travelers.

Alice Gerrard in concert

5 to 7 p.m., Sat., Oct. 19 | \$25 | Seating limited

The Music Center is thrilled to welcome legendary talent Alice Gerrard. With a career spanning more than 60 years, Gerrard has collaborated with many old-time and bluegrass greats and has earned worldwide respect for her important contributions to folk music. Known for her groundbreaking collaboration with Appalachian singer Hazel Dickens during the 1960s and '70s, Gerrard influenced scores of young women singers, including Emmylou Harris, Naomi and Wynonna Judd, and Alison Krauss. Gerrard and Dickens were inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Association Hall of Fame in 2017.



Autumn, art & events at The Bluffs

The Bluffs Restaurant at Doughton Park, milepost 241, is updating its offerings for autumn! The restaurant is adding new seasonal items to the menu and expanding its breakfast offerings. The restaurant is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Wednesday to Sunday through Nov. 3.



Star-studded night

In August, The Bluffs hosted a Celestial Dinner Party during the Perseids meteor shower at Doughton Park. Guests dined on wild boar, sunchoke croquettes, 14-hour beef chuck smoked with pine, and other delicious dishes prepared by guest chef Jordan Rainbolt of Native Root in Winston-Salem, N.C. The three-course family-style meal was complemented by an impressive selection of wine from American Premium Beverage.



As the sun set and stars emerged, astrophysicist Via Weber shared her knowledge of indigenous perspectives on meteor showers through history.

The special event is one of many programs hosted by the restaurant this summer, including Milepost Music and chair caning demonstrations. Check BluffsRestaurant.org for additional events this fall and information about hosting an after-hours event at the restaurant.



Art-o-mat for the people!

The Bluffs is now home to an Art-o-mat! The upcycled cigarette vending machine dispenses pint-size paintings, cyanotypes, relief prints, wire sculptures, portraits on glass, and many more works created by regional artists. To pick a piece, you can purchase \$5 tokens at the host station and then make a selection based on the artists' placards. Simply pull a knob, and out pops a tiny treasure to take home!

Appalachian foodways with Sheri Castle

10 a.m. and 2 p.m., Fri., Oct. 18

Come explore Appalachian culinary traditions with Sheri Castle at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., Friday, Oct. 18, at The Bluffs Restaurant. Castle is the host of *The Key Ingredient*, an Emmy-winning cooking show from PBS NC, and an award-winning food writer, recipe developer, cooking teacher, and storyteller. For details, visit BluffsRestaurant.org.



Kids in Parks continues to grow in its 15th year

Kids in Parks is celebrating 15 years of connecting children with nature! In this anniversary year, the Foundation's signature program will surpass 300 TRACK Trails across the country that get children outdoors for their health through guided activity brochures and an interactive web-app.

This year, 30 new TRACK Trails have been added — 20 hiking sites, eight TRACK Trail Minis,

and two disc golf courses in six states. More than 30 additional trails are slated to join the network soon. The most recent additions include Cherry Blossom Trail in Virginia, Cypress Gardens in South Carolina, and Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon. To learn about the program and the prizes kids can receive for completing activities, visit KidsInParks.com.



Grand opening at Cayce Riverwalk in Cayce, S.C.



Ribbon cutting at the Cherry Blossom Trail in Daleville, Va.

Adaptive kayaking sessions create new adventures

In August, two groups set out on adaptive kayaking adventures at Price Lake near Blowing Rock. The excursions, led by Waypoint Adventure and hosted in partnership with the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, paired trained staff and volunteers with individuals with physical or mental disabilities for morning and afternoon sessions of paddling.

"I know it had an extremely positive impact on all the participants," said Parks Duncan, a Waypoint volunteer. "And it provided a sense of empowerment to them which will serve them well in their other endeavors."

The sessions enabled 14 participants to explore Julian Price Memorial Park on the Parkway. The outing was accessible to people with a range of disabilities thanks to a variety of adaptive kayaking equipment and instruction designed to meet each individual's needs.

"Our national parks belong to everyone, and increasing visitors' opportunities to

experience and enjoy public lands is central to our organization's mission," said Foundation CEO Carolyn Ward. "We're thrilled that this collaboration allowed more people to experience the natural wonder of the Parkway."

The training and excursions were funded by a grant from the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF).



Kayakers and volunteers explore Price Lake on the Parkway.

Generosity & good times at The Denim Ball

The Denim Ball welcomed nearly 250 guests for a magical night at Camp Yonahnoka at the Linville Golf Club. During the annual fundraiser in support of Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, guests enjoyed delicious mountain-inspired cuisine, a stunning view of Grandfather Mountain, signature blackberry cocktails, live and silent auctions, and dancing to the music of Continental Divide.

An anonymous donor offered a \$100,000 match for gifts made during the evening, and has now extended the opportunity to gifts following the event!

Proceeds from The Denim Ball and additional gifts will go toward critical repairs to historic plaster ceilings inside Flat Top Manor and the construction of an ADA-compliant ramp to increase trail accessibility at Bass Lake on the former estate.

To learn more about the celebration and support enhancement projects at Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, visit DenimBall.com.



(Left to right) Janet Cone, Susan Leonard, Donna Lewis, and Barbara McKay in denim attire.

Workplace matches can double your generosity

Maureen Flanagan knew the Blue Ridge Music Center was raising funds to update the stage lighting at its outdoor amphitheater on the Parkway. The existing lights were failing and needed to be replaced with more sustainable LEDs, so she decided to take advantage of her employer's workplace giving program.

"Through my employer's matching gift program, I was able to double the impact of my contribution toward the project I care about," Flanagan said. "I donated online and then immediately applied for the match from the Merck Partnership for Giving, a benefit offered to employees to support eligible 501(c)(3) organizations."

Did you know that 65 percent of Fortune 500 companies have a matching gift policy? You or a family member might be eligible. Visit doublethedonation.com/brpfoundation to see if your employer participates.



It took just a few minutes, and I was able to double the impact for a cause that is close to my heart. I hope others take advantage of this opportunity!

- Maureen Flanagan

Start a career with the NPS

The Blue Ridge Parkway is hiring for the 2025 season in North Carolina and Virginia. The positions include recreation fee clerk, technicians at campgrounds, park guides and park rangers in visitor centers, maintenance workers and tractor operators. These seasonal positions usually run from May through November. Look for details about duty locations by county at USAJOBS.gov. To learn tips for applying, watch our recent webinar, *Unlock Your NPS Career: Insider's Tips with USAJOBS*, on our YouTube channel @BlueRidgeParkwayFoundation.



717 S. Marshall St., Suite 105B
Winston-Salem, NC 27101-5865



Need to update your address? Contact Rebecca Askew at raskew@brpfoundation.org.



Virginia plate represents family ties to the Parkway

The Blue Ridge Parkway specialty license plate is a wonderful way to show support for the national park, which has a special place in the hearts and memories of so many people. We're so grateful Jeanette Morris shared the story of her special connection to the park and why she ordered the new Virginia Parkway tag.

"I want to honor my father who began working on the Blue Ridge Parkway in the early 1930s and became the foreman of the Doughton Park Civilian Conservation Corps camp," Morris shared. "He oversaw the construction of the Parkway from Cumberland Knob to the [northern] end of the Parkway in Waynesboro, Va. Once construction was complete, he served as a park ranger at Cumberland Knob until his death in 1953 at the age of 55."

To order your specialty Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation license plate in Virginia or North Carolina, visit GetThePlate.org.



Jeanette Morris with her Parkway plate and a photo of her father, CCC foreman and park ranger Ed Carico.