



The Mountaineer

Celebrate Change

Many residents of the area remember when Colorfest immersed them in the forest's splendor at the top of Catoctin Mountain. Now the mountain serves as a beautiful backdrop to the festival's current setting in Thurmont. Some festival-goers still visit the mountain. They may awaken to the scent of chestnut beams in a Misty Mount cabin. They may walk their dogs around Hog Rock. They may even prefer the trout to the trees. Whatever their fancy, they come by the bus load for this invigorating time of year.

Admirers of the mountain's beauty may be surprised to learn of its bleak past. Lumber maps of the early 20th century showed the mountain as unsuitable for harvest. The Department of Agriculture deemed the land "sub-marginal" for farming. Tales of moonshine and murder haunted the mountain.

Then, from the depths of the Great Depression, a classic American tale began to unfold. Impoverished but hopeful residents found relief in their ingenuity and hard work. They abandoned unsuccessful exploitative industry and took a great risk. They tried conservation instead.



Colorfest at Catoctin Mountain Park, about four decades ago.

In 1894 Mechanicstown changed its name to Thurmont, meaning "gateway to the mountain." Recreational inns and camps began to dot the mountain. By 1936, the federal government created the Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area.

Dull, scraggly birch and poplar gave way to mighty oak and brilliant maple. A rainbow of reds, golds, purples, and oranges began to shine out of the mountain's stormy past. Deer, turkey, trout, coyote, and even bear have returned in abundance.

The southern half of Catoctin Mountain Park became Cunningham Falls State Park in 1957, where hunting is a favorite winter past-time. In the shadow of the park that served our cause in WWII, veterans now retire in the peace of their mountain homes. As Colorfest outgrew its birthplace, its artisans migrated from the Folk Culture Center in Camp Round Meadow to the town of Thurmont.

Seasons change. Flora and fauna change. People change. In the end, the mountain remains. Come to the mountain, for a change.

Superintendent's Message

Mel Poole,
Superintendent



Welcome to Catoctin Mountain Park and the inaugural issue of *The Mountaineer*. The inauguration of this newspaper is, like so many things on this mountain, a second chance. In 1936 there was a second chance to restore a cut and burned landscape that served the local iron furnace.

When the Civilian Conservation Corps began work in this park in the 1930s, they published a newspaper called *The Mountaineer*. They used it to introduce new recruits, print baseball scores, share some jokes, and find camaraderie. We hope to tap that same spirit in both our staff and our visitors as Catoctin Mountain Park approaches its 75th anniversary in 2011. The work of restoring the ecosystem of this park that began in 1936 with youth groups such as the Boy Scouts (Happy 100th Birthday!) continues with today's Youth Conservation Corps.

We are proud of all who have worked to preserve Catoctin Mountain Park through the years and urge you to join us in enjoying and protecting these resources for future generations. Read all about it in this and future issues of *The Mountaineer*.

Read about
Cunningham Falls State
Park on the
flip side.



Recovery: An Ounce of Prevention

Donald Stanley

Benjamin Franklin once quipped that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) have replaced 21 aging fire hydrants throughout the park.

In the spirit of prevention, red hose boxes once dotted every national park. They contained 300 feet of wildland fire hose and

connections to the hydrant. In theory, any camper could open the box and tame the blazes before the professionals could arrive.

In the end, the hoses were too small to handle structural fires. Chipmunks made their homes in the red boxes and chewed through the hoses. Modern hand-held extinguishers now allow the public to escape safely and leave the heavy work to the professionals.



Thanks in part to the ARRA, modern equipment, professionalism, and response time make Catoctin Mountain Park more prepared than ever to handle fires.

Mountain Views



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

"The Mountaineer" was the name of the CCC's newsletter when they helped create Catoctin Mountain Park. During the Great Depression, New Deal programs made this exploited mountain into a place of hope and rejuvenation for a nation in need of a new economy.

Editor

Christopher Elbich

Contributors

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Park Information & Accommodations

301-663-9388

Emergencies

1-888-677-6677

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

What's That?

Try your skills at identifying animal prints in the snow.



Answers (clockwise from top left): deer, chipmunk, gray fox, opossum, black bear, raccoon, coyote, turkey

Blacksmith Demonstrations

Warm up by the blacksmith's coals. Witness the ancient art in action.

10/16 & 11/13



Ranger Notes

Ruth Watson

Have you ever thought about what conservation means? In National Parks, conservation means that we use our natural treasures carefully. Parks were created to protect and preserve natural and cultural resources and for the enjoyment of the public. There are about 88.5 million acres in the National Park System; more than 11 times the size of Maryland! With all of this space devoted to the public, conservation becomes a difficult task.

We need to remember that although conservation is a global issue, the real difference begins locally. At Catoctin Mountain Park conservation is key when it comes to our natural resources, and the changing of seasons brings that point into perspective.



Catoctin Mountain Park was originally created as a recreation area. Now thousands of visitors enjoy it every season, and fall is the most popular. With over 5,800 acres of deciduous forests, Catoctin has a fantastic display of colors in autumn. The federal government decided to conserve this land, and now the public can enjoy its recreational values in every season!

Conservation also revolves around you and your efforts in keeping natural areas wild. A few things you can do to help conserve include: picking up trash, recycling, staying on trails, not feeding wildlife, keeping your pets on a leash, and leaving natural plants and historical objects intact. If we all work together in conserving our natural areas, there will still be parks and public land for our children and future generations to enjoy.

A Winter to Remember



The Second World War did not stop for the winter. OSS trainees in Catoctin Mountain Park needed to continue their work in cabins built for the summer. The Army Corps of Engineers installed rudimentary heat and hot water. But like so many things during WWII, personal sacrifice had to make up for scarce material resources.

"Cold as the devil this morning, nearly froze shaving..." wrote Private Albert R. Guay in October. He later recalled: "The barracks were just board shacks with no insulation in them... There might have been a pot-bellied stove in there, but I don't remember it now. I do remember it being cold!"

Whither the Whitetail?

Lindsey Donaldson, Becky Loncosky

When Catoctin Mountain Park was established in 1936, there were likely no deer living within the boundaries. Since then, suburban development has fragmented forests and farms, creating an ideal "edge" habitat for deer. Deer also enjoy the shelter in public lands, such as Catoctin Mountain Park.

In 2009 we estimated the population at 123 deer per square mile: 8 times more than the forest can support. This many deer mean more vehicle-deer collisions, greater damage to crops and gardens, and degraded natural ecosystems. The deer have crowded out other species such as wild turkey. They have even driven themselves to starvation.

In April 2009 the NPS decided to directly reduce the herd to a target 20 deer per square mile. Last year we had a successful operation despite the

weather. We reduced the herd by 233 deer, about 21%. The snow did limit our access to certain areas and changed the herd's habits. Park staff often traveled by ski and snowmobile.



The park donated 4,400 pounds of meat to the Maryland and Thurmont food banks. Their patrons expressed gratitude for the fresh meat.

The park will continue monitoring and reducing the herd every year until we reach the target population. Check our website for updates on our deer management this winter.

The Real Colorfest

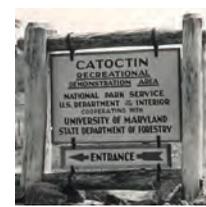
Celebrate the seasonal beauty with a ranger or naturalist. Learn why the trees put on the show and see them in a new light.

10/16, 10/17, 10/23, 10/24



75th Anniversary

Catoctin Mountain Park celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2011. Check our website and read future issues of *The Mountaineer* for special events.



Junior Rangers!

Earning a badge won't feel like homework. Try our redesigned junior ranger activity.

Ages 6-11



Recreation Guide

Featured Trail

Jennie Pumphrey



Hog Rock Nature Trail

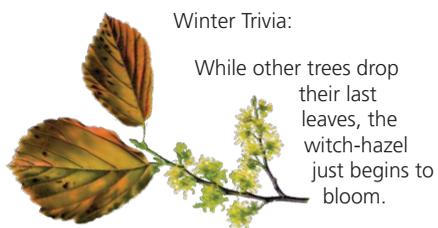
1.2 miles, 25' elevation change

Trailhead: Hog Rock Parking

This loop is one of my favorite trails during any season. It is great for beginning and intermediate hikers and dogs. I enjoy walking my dogs on this trail in the fall. There is a gorgeous mountain overlook approximately 1/2 mile from the trailhead which is the highest hiking point within the park at an elevation of 1610 ft.

Many visitors ask "why is this area called Hog Rock?" The exact origin is unknown, however some people say that years ago this area was home to the American Chestnut tree and the spines on the Chestnut fruit looked like the hairs on a hogs back. Other mountain lore claims that domestic hogs were driven to the area to feast on wild nuts in order to fatten them for slaughter.

An abundance of wildflowers such as Indian Pipe and Wood Anemone may be seen along the trail throughout the spring. Test your tree identification skills using the Hog Rock Nature Trail guide that is available at the Visitor Center. Please remember to keep your dog on a leash at all times!



Winter Trivia:

While other trees drop their last leaves, the witch-hazel just begins to bloom.

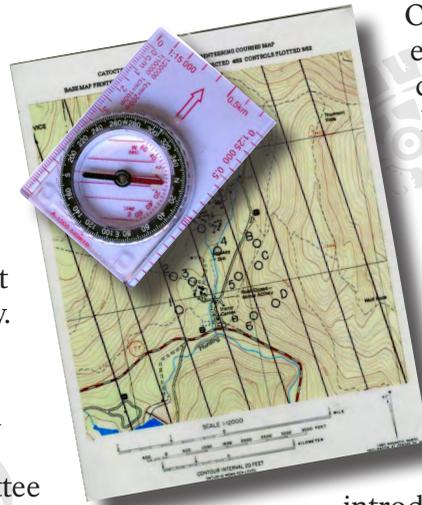
You Are Made for this Sport

Christopher Elbich

Humans pride ourselves on our large brains. But more than any animal on the planet, human beings are made to walk. Our bodies uniquely combine long bipedal legs and sweat glands. Human marathon runners can beat a horse in a race of stamina any day.

Orienteering pairs our large brains with our long legs. It is often called the "thinking sport." Regulated by the International Olympic Committee since 1977, orienteering enjoys popularity in dozens of nations worldwide.

The premise is simple: find your way from one spot to another using a map, a compass, and your own two feet. An orienteering map contains a series of "controls" that the runner must navigate. The map shows topographic and geographic features to aid the runner.



Olympic prowess is not necessary to enjoy orienteering. You can make it as competitive or leisurely as you wish. Families, individuals, community groups, and athletic teams can all enjoy the sport. Kindergartners may hold their grandparents' hands as they find their way.

Catoctin Mountain Park boasts two courses that are open from November through March. Ask rangers for maps and course descriptions. We also conduct introductory sessions to help you learn how to use a map and compass.

Research shows that walking daily can boost brain health and slow down dementia. So take some time away from the car and the GPS unit. Come to Catoctin Mountain Park to find your inner human.

Call 301-663-9388 to register for sessions on:

November 6, 14, 20, & 21; at 1:00

Roughing It In Comfort

* Layering clothes will help you fend off winter's nip and work up a sweat on our trails.



* Wear waterproof boots. Trails can be

muddy in the cold season. The extra traction and ankle support helps, too.



* Check for ticks. They can still be active.

* Know your limits, know your way!



Trails can be difficult to find after snow and leaf falls. Trust your instincts and turn around before you get too cold or lost.

Winter Fun

The cold season makes water change to ice, the leaves change to brown, and the sneakers change to boots. Try some of these winter recreational activities on Catoctin Mountain:

* **FISHING:** Flies are still hatching and trout are still rising. Will you be here to test your skill against the fish's instincts?

* **SKIING:** The park boasts over 8 miles of cross-country ski terrain. Trails are not groomed. Ask a ranger for reports on conditions.



* **HIKING:** A winter hike can be truly magical. Only ten minutes on the trail can make the blood run enough to overcome almost any chill.

* **CAMPING:** Our two shelters are available year-round with a free permit. The adventurous camper can experience the challenge of real backcountry solitude.

* **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Fall offers a cornucopia of subject matter for both the amateur and the professional shutterbug. Whether your interest is in scenic landscapes, shy wildlife, or majestic skylines, there are more photo opportunities here than you can click a shutter at.

Misty Mount Reservations : Camping

Reserve your cabin through www.recreation.gov or 877-444-6777. The service is available to groups in December 2010 and individuals in January 2011.



: Owens Creek Campground stays open until 11/21.
: Misty Mount cabins stay open until 11/1.
: Our backcountry shelters are available year-round.



: Park Central Road Closes

: For reasons of recreation, safety, and maintenance, Park Central Road will be closed from 12/22/2010 through 3/30/2011.



Volunteers & Partners

VIP Profile



Dave & Jan Cooney

"We have a P.O. box in South Dakota, but our home rides on these four wheels." But the life of a campground host and award-winning VIP is more than a choice site.

Jan considers herself shy, and hosting has brought her out of her shell to meet wonderful people. As for her husband, "Dave is a high-energy person, and he needs to keep busy. He can't watch someone work without sticking his nose in it."

Besides hosting, Dave and Jan help with park projects year-round. Jan takes on clerical projects, while Dave helps with heavy work, like building accessible campsites.

The winter of 2010 squeezed a few more volunteer hours than expected out of the couple. Three-foot snowfalls forced them to "boon-dock in front of the fire cache." They cuddled their dogs as their heating fuel drained to within hours of empty.

But volunteering has its benefits. A little elbow grease and an RV give them the chance for extended visits with family in the area.

Artist-In-Residence Carl Braun finds inspiration during his residency in Catoctin Mountain Park.



Universal Camp

Donald Stanley

Universal design is not just mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act, it has been a cornerstone of Catoctin Mountain Park's development. Over the years, the Order of the Arrow (Boy Scouts of America) made the new ramps for the cabins at Greentop and the accessible boardwalk around the sawmill. This year, with 100 volunteers and 1,500 service hours, they spearheaded the construction of three accessible camp sites in the park's campground at Owens Creek.

Also contributing many hours of service: the U.S. Marine Corps, Youth Conservation Corps (see below), Frederick County Alternative Sentencing, a few Eagle Scouts, and VIPs Bob Wirt and Dave Cooney (see left).

The innovative design came from many sources. Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts



modeled the Wood Carpet™, a wood chip and resin compound with a steady but earthy surface. An Eagle Scout in Hunterdon County, NJ designed the unique handrail arch for mounting a wheelchair from the elevated tent pad. Design features such as the double-walled fire ring and elevated tent pad came from the U.S. Forest Service, USDA.

Best of all, the project illustrates how ingenuity, partnership, and some elbow grease can make a real impact with minimal expense.

Not Your Average Summer Job

Kevin Pumphrey

The National Park Service preserves 88.5 million acres of our national treasures, an area equivalent to 11 times the



state of Maryland. With only 16,000 permanent employees, the National Park Service relies heavily on volunteers and partnerships to meet the challenge of preserving our natural and cultural resources.

The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) has been active in national parks since its inception in 1971. Youth ages 15-18 have the opportunity to work with the YCC in Catoctin for the summer. Having personal experience with the YCC here

in Catoctin, I can vouch for the importance of their work within the park. Members are actively involved in trail construction, campground upkeep, and various work within the park. During the course of one summer we were able to build a new mile-long trail. Since its completion, it has allowed visitors to safely hike between the visitor center and the headquarters. While not everything the YCC does is as tangible as a trail, it's all the small things that keep Catoctin going.

Mountain Art

Before there were national parks, artists immortalized our national treasures in pencil, paint, photographs, and poems. Thomas Moran, William Henry Jackson, George Catlin, to name a few, captured the nation's attention and helped inspire Congress to establish our National Parks.

The Catoctin Forest Alliance this year launched the Artist-In-Residence program to support this tradition. Artists of various media are encouraged to apply, via the park's website.

Visitors may see art in action with our resident artist during the month of September.

Catoctin Forest Alliance

Your membership in the Catoctin Forest Alliance helps to preserve a network of public lands on Catoctin Mountain. The Catoctin Forest covers over 100 square miles, with 20,000 acres of public lands, 700 miles of streams, 100 miles of trails, 18 historic sites, and 7 historic districts.

The Alliance provides guidance and professional cooperation on projects such as natural resources management, sustainable construction, historic preservation, and bringing together leaders in the area's conservation agencies. It inspires new leaders through scholarships and youth programming.

Contact us for details on membership:

Catoctin Forest Alliance
14039 Catoctin Hollow Road
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