



Rockfish Valley Foundation

Enhancing the Quality of Life and Celebrating the People, Land, and History of the Rockfish Valley

SPRING NEWSLETTER



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Our program director, Katrina Broughman (left) works with Nelson County Middle School Ecology Club students on nature haiku poetry.

A Message from the Rockfish Valley Foundation

Happy Spring from everyone at RVF! We hope you are all staying healthy. Flowers are blooming and critters are abuzz all around us! From sunshine to rain and cloudy days, spring is certainly in the air in Nelson County.

"I have enjoyed watching a variety of wildlife from my front porch and windows!" says our new program director, Katrina Broughman. "Robins, cardinals, and blue jays are singing songs during the day while peepers and owls add their own melodies to the evening dusk."

We have been busy for the last two months forming relationships, preparing for programs, and getting ready for the Earth Day Nelson Festival. Unfortunately, we have been affected by the coronavirus much like the rest of our community. In regards to Covid-19, we are constantly updating our Facebook and website. We encourage you to take care of yourselves during this challenging time. Stay at home as much as possible and practice social distancing. Follow all CDC guidelines, including washing your hands often and properly. Do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns if you have them. We are here for you!

This newsletter outlines current limitations regarding Spruce Creek Park, Rockfish Valley Trail System, and the Natural History Center. It also provides updates about Earth Day Nelson, a variety of reading material for you to absorb during your quarantine, volunteer information, and our future plans with events and programs.

"I have been amazed at the strength of the Nelson community in response to these challenges," says Katrina. "You have all been phenomenally welcoming these past few months since my partner and I moved here, and especially supportive during this crisis. I am so thankful to be your neighbor."

Together, we will get through this.

The Rockfish Valley Foundation
contact@rockfishvalley.org
programdirector@rockfishvalley.org

Spruce Creek Park Covid-19 Limitations

Due to the recent challenges our community faces from Covid-19, RVF has had to impose limitations on the children's play area and nature trail in Spruce Creek Park.



Please keep in mind the following:

- Utensils have been removed from the Mud Kitchen
- Trash cans have been removed – carry all trash out!
- Lending library has been emptied. Please do not deliver any new books at this time.

Please use equipment at your own risk. We are not able to sanitize equipment. We encourage everyone to avoid close contact (remain at least 6 feet apart). If you see the area is crowded, we highly suggest you avoid it.

If you, your children, grandchildren feel ill, please stay home. Also, please make sure to wash your hands often. The portajohn is still available but we recommend avoiding its use if possible to help prevent the spread of germs. For those who visit often, you will see signs posted at the park.

Rockfish Valley Trails System Covid-19 Updates

Our trails are still open for public use at this time.

We may close the trails if trash piles up.

There are several updates to be aware of:

1. Trash cans are removed.
2. **Take everything home including dog poop.**
3. Please keep all dogs on a leash.
4. Please follow all CDC guidelines, including six foot separations.



A local family visits for a picnic.

Good news!

Two picnic tables were recently constructed by Nelson County High School's woodshop and have been placed on upstream trails. A huge thank you to Paul Connell and all of his students who created these.

A donation was also made to create benches.

Your donation of \$500 will adopt a picnic table and get you a commemorative plaque on it. Contact us if you are interested at contact@rockfishvalley.org. We appreciate all of our community's support in keeping our trails updated and maintained.



Natural History Center Opening Postponed



While new exhibits are being assembled, the Center will remain closed until it is safe for visitors. Our April 4th opening has been postponed until further notice to limit the spread of Covid-19. We appreciate your understanding and apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

RVF wishes to give a "shout-out" to Gordon Miller, the contractor who has done principal work at a major discount since RVF was founded. That includes the bridge over Spruce Creek which is named for him, the building, the gazebo, and the main RVF sign just constructed and installed on the

front of the building. Gordon is the proud grandfather of ten and loves the work of the Foundation. We are very grateful to his donations over time and in particular for the deep reduction in costs of our incredible new sign. Thank you, Gordon, for supporting RVF!

Earth Day Nelson Festival: Before Covid-19

Rockfish Valley Foundation
Presents

EARTH DAY Nelson Festival

Celebrating the beauty of Nelson County!

SUNDAY, APRIL 19TH 12-4^{PM}

SPRUCE CREEK PARK & THE NATURAL HISTORY CENTER
Rockfish Valley Foundation 1368 Rockfish Valley Highway, Nellysford, VA.
Parking off Glenholme Loop

Celebrate Earth Day's 50th Anniversary!
Live music, food, activities for kids, exhibits, vendors, and more!
This is a FREE family-friendly event. Participate in community voting on contest submissions by Nelson County School students. This will take place instead of our kille festival this year, which we intend to bring back in 2021!
Rain Location: 12-5pm, Rockfish Valley Community Center-190 Rockfish School Ln, Afton, VA 22920.

LIVE MUSIC BY

THE BAND BIG! LONESOME ROADS
MADLY BACKWARDS GRAYSON HARLOW

WWW.ROCKFISHVALLEY.ORG #EARTH DAY NELSON 2020
FACEBOOK/ROCKFISHVALLEY FOUNDATION

Check our website & Facebook for coronavirus updates & possible postponement

A special thank you to all of our sponsors for making this event possible!

Wintergreen Resort Blue Ridge LIFE

50 YEARS EARTH DAY 2020 Mountain Area Realty ROGERS KEEP VIRGINIA Beautiful SYLVAN DESIGNS CONSERVATION

Thank you to our local food vendors! Ignacio & Maria Mexican Tacos, Kona Ice and BBQ151
These materials are neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Nelson, Albemarle, Charlottesville, Waynesboro, or Augusta County School Board, their superintendents, or any of these schools.

SAVE THE DATE

SUNDAY, APRIL 19TH, 2020
12 - 4PM

EARTH DAY NELSON FESTIVAL

COME CELEBRATE EARTH DAY'S
50TH ANNIVERSARY WITH US!
THIS IS A FREE FAMILY FRIENDLY
EVENT. ENJOY LIVE MUSIC, FOOD,
ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS, EXHIBITS,
VENDORS, & MORE!

SPRUCE CREEK PARK
ROCKFISH VALLEY FOUNDATION
1368 ROCKFISH VALLEY HIGHWAY
NELLYSFORD VA 22958
(NEXT TO BOLD ROCK CIDERY)

RAIN LOCATION
ROCKFISH VALLEY
COMMUNITY CENTER
ROCKFISH SCHOOL LANE
AFTON VA 22920

FACEBOOK.COM/ROCKFISHVALLEYFOUNDATION
WWW.ROCKFISHVALLEY.ORG

RVF originally planned to have an outdoor festival in Spruce Creek Park on April 19th. We had plans for live music, food, family friendly activities, vendors, exhibits, and more. These two images above are our beautiful posters designed by Mihr Walden at Sylvan Graphics and Michael Hudson at [Yee Haul Inc.](#), respectively. A huge thank you to our committee co-chaired by Katrina Broughman and Betsy Agelasto for making this all come together so beautifully.

RVF wants to thank all of its sponsors for their continued support of Earth Day Nelson: Blue Mountain Brewery, Wintergreen Resort, Earth Day Network Virginia, Virginia Master Naturalists Central Blue Ridge Chapter, Devils Backbone Brewery, Blue Ridge Bucha, Mountain Area Realty, Conservation Plus, Rogers and Associates, WNRN Radio, Blue Ridge Life Magazine, YeeHaul Inc., and Sylvan Graphics. Without these sponsors, Earth Day Nelson 2020 would not be possible in any form.

After Covid-19: Earth Day Nelson Has Gone Digital

As RVF adapts to the unexpected changes caused by Covid-19, we have decided to go digital to celebrate Earth Day's 50th international anniversary.

The Earth Day Nelson Festival originally scheduled for April 19 has been tentatively postponed to **Sunday, August 23, 2020**, and will be combined with RVF's **15th anniversary** celebration that weekend as well as the 10th anniversary of our Rockfish Loop Trail. This celebration is a big deal for our planet! More details about this event will come in the coming months and available shortly from the website.

In order to celebrate **Earth Day Nelson 2020** digitally, *all students* in the Nelson County area (NCPS, homeschoolers, North Branch, Afton Christian School, etc.) as well as anyone in the surrounding counties (Albemarle, Augusta, Amherst, Rockbridge, etc.) and cities thereof are invited to participate in our digital **Earth-Art-Athon**, which will replace our poster contest that we previously had scheduled to take place at our festival. Submissions will be accepted *until Wednesday, June*

In response to Covid-19, The Earth Day Nelson Festival is postponed to Sunday, August 23rd. However, the poster contest is now a digital art show!



ROCKFISH VALLEY FOUNDATION
PRESENTS

Earth-Art-Athon

#EarthDayNelson2020 #EarthArtAthon www.rockfishvalley.org www.facebook.com/rockfishvalleyfoundation

WHAT: Online eco-art show. Guidelines on back of flyer.

WHEN: Now through Wednesday, June 10, 2020

WHO: ALL students in Nelson County

HOW TO ENTER: Take a picture of your entry (unless it's already digital!).
1. You/your parent can post it to Facebook along with #EarthArtAthon
2. Email it directly to programdirector@rockfishvalley.org
3. Give it to a teacher or school staff during school pick up dates & times.

HOW TO WATCH: On RVF's website or on our Facebook Event at "Earth-Art-Athon"

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:



RVF is "as big as all outdoors," supports environmental literacy, and provides Spruce Creek Park, Rockfish Valley Trails, and the Natural History Center for the Nelson community.

These materials are neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Nelson, Albemarle, Charlottesville, Waynesboro, or Augusta County School Board, their superintendents, or any of these schools.

10, 2020. Raffle winners will be announced June 12th.

Additionally, RVF will be hosting a daily **Earth Day Challenge** on our [Facebook page](#) from now until April 25. Each day, there will be a post about actions individuals and families can do to celebrate and take care of the planet during a pandemic. Make sure to include the hashtag #earthdaynelson2020 in each post!



ROCKFISH VALLEY FOUNDATION PRESENTS

OUR FIRST EVER FACEBOOK OFFICIAL

DAILY EARTH DAY CHALLENGE

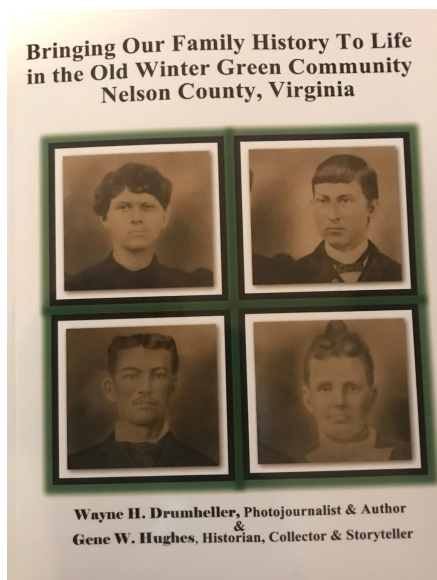
NOW THROUGH APRIL 25TH 2020
USE THE HASHTAG #EARTHDAYNELSON2020

Details for both digital interactions and other ways to connect to Digital Earth Day can be found on our Facebook page at facebook.com/rockfishvalleyfoundation and website at rockfishvalley.org. Guidelines about the art show are listed below. Please direct any questions to Katrina Broughman, Program Director, at programdirector@rockfishvalley.org. Visit www.earthday.org/ for more information.

Instructions and Guidelines for Earth-Art-Athon:

<p><u>Q: How do I submit?</u> A: There are several options for submitting your eco-art: 1) If you are under 13 or over 13 & don't have Facebook, have your parent post for you directly on our Facebook along with the hashtag #earthdaynelson2020, 2) If you or your parents don't have Facebook, email us your submission to programdirector@rockfishvalley.org, 3) If you don't have internet access, give your art (or a copy of it) to your teacher or other school staff during designated pickup/drop off dates & times, & ask them to send us a picture of your submission. *Please let us know if you want to be anonymous. Likewise, feel free to submit a picture of yourself if you would like to have that posted alongside your submission.</p> <p><u>Q: When do I need to submit by?</u> A: Submit your entr(ies) by Wednesday, June 10th. We will not accept entries after this time.</p>	<p><u>Q: What kind of art can I submit?</u> A: Any form of artwork will be accepted! This includes visual (graphic design on computers, photography, collages, paintings, drawings, in any medium, i.e. charcoal, crayons, pencils, markers, multimedia, items found in nature); 3D (woodworking, sculpture, crafts, fabric, clay, beading, upcycled art using bottle caps, bottles, etc.), performance* (songs, dances, short skits, comedy, miming, instrumental compositions on piano, guitar, clarinet, etc.), language (poems, prose, short stories, plays), etc. Anything goes as long as it can be considered art and is about celebrating the earth and/or protecting our planet. *Please keep performance entries under 2 minutes.</p> <p><u>Q: How will you know which one is mine?</u> A: Regardless of how you submit, include your name, grade, school, teacher, and the title of your artwork with your submission.</p>
<p><u>Q: Will there be any prizes?</u> A: We will do a raffle and pull 10 names from a hat. Those 10 names will win a special Earth Day t-shirt to take home. Other prizes will also be included - but these will be a surprise! The more entries you submit, the more likely you are to win! Winners will be announced on Friday, June 12th.</p>	<p><u>Q: How will you be displaying entries?</u> A: We will have these on our Facebook page under the event called "Earth Day Nelson Eco-Art Show for Kids" which will be active by Friday, March 27. Entries will also be posted on our website at www.rockfishvalley.org in a rotating slideshow. Don't forget to add the hashtag #earthdaynelson2020 to your entries!</p>
<p><u>Q: I'm a parent. How involved should I be?</u> A: Provide your kids with info & supplies but limit your involvement in creating the art. Let them take ownership!</p>	<p><u>Q: Am I only allowed to submit one entry?</u> A: No. You can submit as many as you want! There is no limit. Have fun and get creative!</p>
<p><u>Q: Do you care if I copied an idea from someone else?</u> A: We do not mind if you found an idea that someone else did and want to put your own spin on it, but we will not accept entries that are plagiarized (example: you copied a picture that someone else created and posted on the internet and posted that as your own creation). Any plagiarized entries will be automatically disqualified.</p>	<p><u>Q: Are there any themes for this art show?</u> A: Our focuses are Earth Day, Arbor Day, & Covid-19 (coronavirus). Be creative in how you want to incorporate those into your artwork. If possible, keep Nelson County in mind, since our original theme was "Celebrating the Beauty of Nelson County."</p>
<p><u>Q: I'm having some trouble getting started. Do you have any prompts for inspiration?</u> A: We sure do! What is beautiful about your backyard? • What kind of animals, plants, water, or rocks do you think are beautiful? • How can you keep your backyard beautiful?</p>	<p>• What about Nelson County do you think is beautiful? • Don't litter • Pick up trash • Pick up dog poop • Recycle, reduce, reuse, compost, etc. • Start a vegetable garden in your yard • Plant a tree • Plant a butterfly garden • How can you protect the animals, plants, rocks, or water in your backyard?</p>

Books For Sale in Our Gift Shop – Reserve Now Online!



Celebrating the History of the Wintergreen Community (\$20)

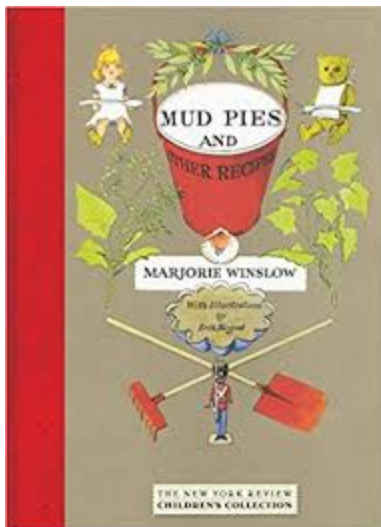
You can place your order by email for a copy of *Bringing Our Family History to Life in the Old Wintergreen Community: Nelson County, VA* by Gene Hughes (Storyteller, Historian, and Collector) and Wayne Drumheller (Photojournalist and Author).

This is 188 pages of stories and photos published in limited supply.

We can sell 50 copies. Get them while they are hot but wait to come see us until it is safe. Reserve your copy by emailing contact@rockfishvalley.org. Payment upon receipt.

We had scheduled a book signing April 19th during our Earth Day Nelson Festival but have had to postpone that. We will reschedule once it is safe. Stay tuned for details!

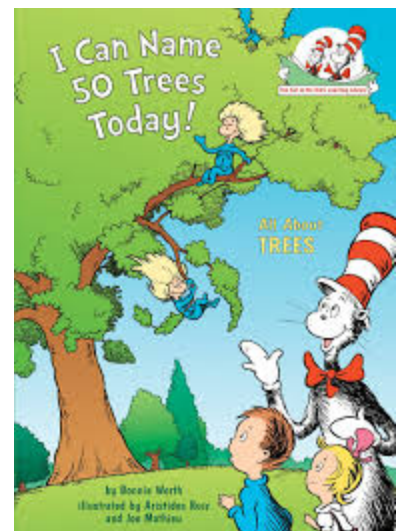
I Can Name 50 Trees (\$15) + Mud Pies and Other Recipes (\$20)



Calling all grandparents! This is meant for you. We have two books in limited supply both available in our gift shop. The first one, *Mud Pies and Other Recipes*, was originally published in 1961 by Marjorie Winslow.

The other, *I Can Name 50 Trees Today: All About Trees: A Cat in the Hat Learning Library*, was published in 1998 by Bonnie Worth.

Get them before they're gone! These are great texts to read to your grandkids during your video chats in quarantine!



To reserve a copy, email us at contact@rockfishvalley.org.

Report on Volunteers

Once the Covid-19 issue is resolved, we are staffed to be open Saturday and Sunday, and some Wednesdays at the Natural History Center.

We have started a Tuesday Giveback Workday from 9am-12pm for the maintenance and upkeep of our parks and trails. You are welcome to help us anytime by picking up sticks and branches and putting them in our brush pile located in Spruce Creek Park. Stick collectors unite!

Our new Comprehensive Volunteer Committee has been busy creating new materials for volunteers. Check out the website volunteer section for application, policy, and more. Many thanks to our committee, chaired by Bruce Slater and Bill Plyler, for all their hard work.



RVF staff and volunteers pose during Kidvention 2020 on February 8th at the Discovery Museum in Charlottesville, VA.

The Future of Education Programs

Below: Mary Haynes-Johnson (left), English Language Arts teacher at Nelson County Middle School, with her group of Ecology Club students talking with our program director (center), Katrina Broughman during their visit to RVF in late February.



Our [website](#) now has updated information about our education [programs](#). Please click on "Education" to see what we have added!

We recently had students from Nelson County Middle School's ecology club visit us and take a hike along our park and trails. Read more about it in Blue Ridge Life Magazine's article titled [Land Stewardship 101](#). Thanks, BRL!

Our program director has been busy designing programs for Nelson County Public Schools and has formed partnerships with several NCPS teachers and parents. We are excited to implement our ideas once it is safe to do so.

As of now, our **Wild Wednesdays Reading Program** for young children and their guardians is postponed until further notice. There is talk of possible summer programs depending on Covid-19 restrictions. Please see our Facebook page and websites for updates.

Our education committee is continuing to plan for fall programs. If you are interested in having a classroom visit, field trip, after-school club or activity, or field day at your school or with your school group, please email Katrina Broughman at programdirector@rockfishvalley.org. If you are in Nelson County, it is totally free! Even if you are outside of the Nelson County area, your first program with us is also free! Sign up using this [form](#) if you are an educator and we will be in touch with you soon.

Future Events: Save the Dates

Mark your calendars! We hope to be able to still hold both of these events but will make changes depending on Covid-19 in the coming months. Check our Facebook and website for updates.

As we noted earlier, our **Earth Day Nelson Festival** will now be combined with the celebration of the **15th anniversary** of RVF. This is tentatively planned for **Sunday, August 23rd**.

Breaking news! The Nelson Scenic Loop turns 10 years old in **June 2020**. NELSON SCENIC LOOP The Nelson Scenic Loop is a 50 mile auto and bike tour that features Nelson County's bounty of natural, cultural, and historic attractions. Comprising Route 151, Route 664, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and Route 56, the Nelson Scenic Loop traverses both the lower foothills of the Piedmont as well as the summits of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains. Scenic and natural wonders abound. Hike the Appalachian Trail, visit Crabtree Falls, or stop at scenic overlooks on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Along the way visit breweries, cideries, apple and peach farm markets, pumpkin patches, and more. Shop for crafts. Eat local food and enjoy the views from the many local restaurants. Begin your loop journey at the Rockfish Valley Foundation's Natural History Center on Route 151 in Wintergreen, VA.



In addition, the third annual **Old Wintergreen Day** is scheduled for October 11. There were 350 visitors and 20 exhibitors plus the old fire engine and Vietnam helicopter at our last event. Save the date for another fun day!



Thank you for supporting RVF!

Please support RVF and make your gift by texting RVFDONATE to 44321, by mail to P.O. Box 235, Nellysford, VA 22958, add us to your [AmazonSmile](#), feed the donation boxes at the center, the park, or on the trail, or make a [PayPal donation](#) on our website.

Have a wonderful spring, and stay healthy!