



Rockfish Valley Foundation

Enhancing the Quality of Life and Celebrating the People, Land, and History of the Rockfish Valley. www.rockfishvalley.org // contact@rockfishvalley.org



SPRING NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 11th, 3pm: Free Geology Webinar on Nelson and the Region

RVF has been inspired by the pandemic to begin to share its knowledge of rocks, water, plants and animals through the zoom format. We held our first program with Chuck Bailey on March 21st. It was a great success with over 100 "zoomers" attending! Those participants were not disappointed as Chuck, head of geology at William & Mary, spoke in detail on the fascinating geological heritage of Nelson County. You can find a recording of that presentation on RVF's YouTube by visiting tinyurl.com/3zmy3fwu.

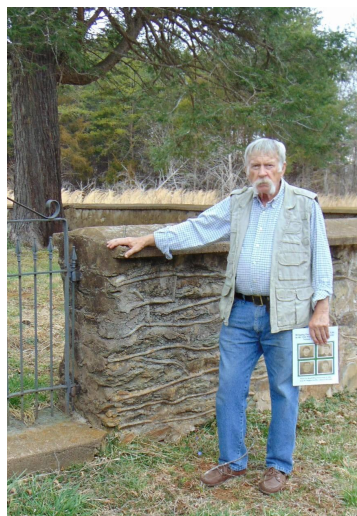
The RVF geology committee is at it again. Committee member Callan Bentley (pictured right) is Assistant Professor of Geology at PVCC, and he will be the host of another information-packed online geology zoom presentation on Sunday, April 11th at 3 pm. This presentation will review the past 1 billion years of local history. Diving deep into the geologic past, he will examine two major periods of mountain-building, making now-dismembered supercontinents, two episodes of rifting, breaking up those supercontinents and filling the space between their fragments with new ocean basins, and also periods of tectonic calm, when sediments akin to those of the modern Bahamas piled up gently on the edge of the North American continent.



While the direct link to join the Zoom is below, all participants are required to register by sending an email to register@rockfishvalley.org.

Zoom link: tinyurl.com/yn5tma5z

July 4th, 11-3pm: Old Wintergreen Day at Spruce Creek Park



While originally scheduled for May 2nd, Old Wintergreen day has been moved to July 4th. Watch for further announcements. Gene Hughes, pictured left, is co-chair of the applicable committee and has been recently chosen as Wintergreen Historian by the RVF Board. Hear what Gene has to say about Old Wintergreen Day:

"The area we call Old Wintergreen with its commercial enterprises was the business and social center for the surrounding area from the end of the Revolution until the 1950s. There were two grist mills, a store, a sawmill, and four distilleries with a magistrate to keep the peace. The Fourth of July 2021 will be the third celebration of Old Wintergreen Day. This is a Sunday afternoon when it was a tradition for the old folks to gather after church and sit on the front porch all afternoon telling stories and having a good time. There will be storytelling, displays, living history, food trucks, and music.

The Fourth is our most important Patriotic Holiday. Come on down to old Wintergreen at the intersection of Rt. 151 and Glenthorne Loop at the Rockfish Valley Foundation to celebrate."

Oct. 8-10th: Plein Air Paint Out at the Rockfish Valley Trails

For the first time, a group of 20-25 invited professional artists will paint outdoors to capture the beauty of the streams, woodlands, pastures, and mountains that make Nelson County, VA such a wondrous place. Visitors will watch paintings being developed from sketches to finished works of art while they hear natural scientists talk about the ecology, agriculture, history, and the unique character of the region.

The weekend event is sponsored by the Rockfish Valley Foundation (RVF) in cooperation with the Rockfish Valley Trail System, Wintergreen Resort, and more.



Painting by Priscilla Whitlock

This free, public event will include artists painting along hiking trails, naturalists giving talks near the streams, and families hiking the extensive trail system. Those will take place all day Friday, Saturday, and Sunday October 8, 9 and 10, culminating in Quick Draw competition at Spruce Creek Park during which artists will have two hours to create a painting, and to then present an exhibition of all their wet paintings from 2-5pm at the Tuckahoe Clubhouse at Wintergreen.

There is a long tradition of outdoor painting - often called plein air painting - that in America began in the 19th century with artists exploring new frontiers. That tradition continues today with groups of artists painting during events organized to let local residents and art collectors observe the artists' individual responses to scenes that are very familiar to the community. This event in Nelson County will offer the same opportunity to be part of an informational celebration of all that makes our communities so special.



S. Rockfish Valley and 3 Ridges Mtn

Earth Day and Arbor Day

Thursday, April 22nd is the 51st celebration of Earth Day. The major Earth Day event RVF had planned was cancelled due to COVID-19. Regardless, access to the Rockfish River Trails and Spruce Creek Park makes it easy to celebrate the Earth any day- take your camera and your family and enjoy the fresh air and sunshine!

Friday, April 30th is the 149th celebration of Arbor Day. Many community values are dependent on the health of our trees. They are grown and cared for to provide economic, environmental, and social values for everyone. The concern for tree's health is everyone's responsibility. We all need to take a leadership role in our communities to inspire others to care for and preserve them. RVF is doing its part- on Friday, April 2nd, native persimmons and paw-paws will be planted in Spruce Creek Park. Read further to discover the stream buffer planting along the S. Rockfish.



Discover 2021 Full Moons And Their Names

The most recent full moon of this year was the Worm Moon on March 28th, and the next will be the Pink Moon, aka the Fish Moon, on April 26th. The name of each full moon is derived from what the Native American tribes of this country observed around them at that particular time of year. The most recent moon, the Worm Moon, got its name as it heralded the arrival of spring and the emergence of earthworms in the thawing ground. Likewise, the Pink Moon got its name because it signalled the blooming of moss pink, one of the earliest wildflowers of spring. Additional moon dates, names, and meanings can be found on the Farmer's Almanac at farmersalmanac.com/full-moon-dates-and-times



Spring Has Sprung!

Spring is here, grass is growing, and the flowers and trees are blooming! The purchase of the mower that makes it possible for RVF to maintain Spruce Creek Park and the Rockfish Valley Trails was supported by a local private foundation that has been helping RVF for 5 years with major needs. Thank you to Jack (pictured left), Dennis, and Dan for keeping the Park and Trails maintained.

James River Buffer Program Tree Planting Completed

On March 23rd an expanded riparian buffer, covering 1 and $\frac{3}{4}$ acres, along the Rockfish Valley Trail in Nelson County was installed through the James River Buffer Program, with matching funds from the Virginia Trees for Clean Program. The project was completed with help from employees of the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF), Deya Ramsden, James River Buffer Program Coordinator, and area Foresters, Martha Warring and B.J. Butler. Conservation Services Incorporated (CSI) was contracted to provide the plant stock and install the seedlings, along with tree shelters and provide follow up maintenance.

The goal of the buffer is to provide better protection of the Rockfish River from sediment and pollutants, increase shading of the river, and also diversifying the plant species composition within the buffer. A combination of 570 native shrubs and trees was planted along the river. Six different species of shrubs were planted including buttonbush, hazel-alder, red osier dogwood and silky dogwood, false indigo and southern arrowwood. Eight different tree species were planted including persimmon, paw paw, red mulberry, redbud, river birch, yellow poplar, sycamore, and pin oak. A full write-up of the project by VDOF's Deya Ramsden can be found on our website at tinyurl.com/yj2e6rma.



Emerald Ash Borer Claims Its Next Victim

The ash trees in Nelson County are doomed unless you can afford to treat them. A historic ash tree at the corner of Glenthorne and Rt. 151 was killed by the emerald ash borer and has been removed by VDOT. Its wood has been “recycled” and will be used at RVF. More information on this devastating insect can be found on RVF’s website at tinyurl.com/yj2e6rma.



Help Us Continue to Grow

Donors: The Rockfish Valley Foundation is trying to increase its annual donors from 250 to 350. RVF is introducing a new matching challenge where Trustees will match the gift of a new donor up to \$250 from April 1st to August 31st until the sum of \$5000 of new funds has been raised. Please make your gift and spread the word.

Facebook followers: RVF currently has 1409 followers on our Facebook page at facebook.com/RockfishValleyFounation. Help us grow that number to 1600 by RVF’s 16th anniversary in August.

The Future of RVF:

Capacity and Sustainability Requires Additional Community Trustees

RVF is a much-appreciated community asset, providing education, a museum, Spruce Creek Park and the Rockfish Valley Trail System. Now in its sixteenth year, change is in the air. The founders, Betsy and Peter Agelasto have begun a transition where their leadership, responsibilities and tasks will be transitioned to others. There is a need to gather their experience and knowledge and to help RVF build resilience and organization. Studies have shown that RVF must recruit four or five additional trustees to improve governance, manage the foundation, and increase diversity and inclusion. The Trustees will work with a capacity building staff person, the founder, and volunteers to put into place task oriented processes to guide administration and governance tasks over the next year. The goal is to build capacity and reach a level of sustainability.

The future is bright. Here is a teaser: through a zoom meeting on March 31, a project called StoryWalk was birthed conceptually to be added at Spruce Creek Park and the Rockfish Valley Trails. Keep your eyes open for a press release. This is a big step forward for ENLIT which you recall is all about environmental literacy. ENLIT is also gearing up for two big projects in 2021. One provides more geology deliverables on the Rockfish Watershed and the other is a major interpretation and study of Spruce Creek. Despite this, the need to add to our Board of Trustees is the key to the future. If you or someone you know are interested in being considered by our nominating committee, please email contact@rockfishvalley.org prior to April 30th.