

BARN LIGHTS

Remembering the Barns and Farms of Our Heritage

Quarterly Newsletter

VOL. 2 No. 1 Spring 2015

BARN DAY SPRINGS FORWARD



To follow up on the outstanding response to the first Barn Day held by the **Appalachian Barn Alliance** last September, the board is working on several enhancements for this year's event.

The biggest change is the date. Mark your calendar for Saturday, **May 30, 2015**, as the new date for **Barn Day**. "We thought we'd have a better chance to get great weather,"

Alliance President Sandy Stevenson said. "Once we were able to tie down a date that the Steen barn in Mars Hill was available, we were ready to start moving."

At this stage of planning, some details remain to be worked out, but the format will be essentially the same as last year: A bus tour, narrated by Taylor Barnhill, followed by a social hour and dinner at the Steen barn, with musical entertainment and an auction featuring contributions from some of Madison County's finest artists.

The bus tour will feature new barns this year with a stop at one barn that has many distinctive architectural features typical of the southern Appalachian barn.

The price for the entire package is \$35 per person (\$65 per couple). Last year tickets sold quickly, so watch for an email announcing the sales. Members will receive early notification so if you have not joined the **Barn Alliance** yet, please contact us to do so.

The President's Letter

We are excited to begin our year with the great news that we were awarded a \$7,000 grant from the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area in a very competitive field. However, unlike the two Covington Foundation grants from 2013 and 2014, this one requires matching funds. But, we have a good start already with the money received from memberships and donations bringing us almost halfway to that goal. So, if you haven't renewed your membership or made your donation, see if you can find our letter and envelope and help us as we continue the work of documenting the historic barns in our region.

With the grant money from last year, we have been working hard on developing the database which will allow us to share the amazing details of each of the barns in our research. Soon, we will be announcing a new link from our website so that there will be access to all of the data collected as well as the architectural drawings and the photographs documenting the barns.

In other exciting news, the Alliance is in the midst of planning our Second Annual Barn Day—this year in May. And, we have a few other ideas in the works to expand our reach. Read in this newsletter (and watch for emails from the Alliance as our ideas grow) about the events which are scheduled during the month of May. We decided “Why just a Barn 'Day'? Why not a whole month of different ways to recognize our heritage?” We are working with the Madison County Arts Council, the Liston B. Ramsey Center for Regional Studies at Mars Hill University, Madison County Schools, the NC Cooperative Extension Office, and some private farms to create a range of offerings.

Please join us in the excitement of another great year for our ongoing project!

Sandy Stevenson



To learn more about the **APPALACHIAN BARN ALLIANCE**, including the latest news, upcoming events, and membership, log on to our website, www.apalachianbarns.org. Or call 828-380-9066.

BLUE RIDGE GRANT SUPPORTS BARN RESEARCH

The **Appalachian Barn Alliance** has received a \$7,000 grant from the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Partnership for its efforts to preserve the region’s legacy in agriculture.

In a highly competitive application process, only 22 grants were awarded to the 52 applicants. “When we had just formed in 2012, we applied for their grant,” said Alliance President Sandy Stevenson. “But all we had back then was an idea. This time, we had several products (in the form of our tour brochures) and a positive track record of raising money. We believe we won the award because of the great progress the Alliance has made in just two short years.”

The grant will support the alliance’s ongoing work of gathering information to create a historical archive and self-guided driving tours of historic barns in Madison County.

The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Partnership receives federal dollars and makes the grants to support diverse initiatives across the North Carolina mountains and foothills. The grant recipients must focus on a facet of the

region’s heritage: craft, music, natural heritage, Cherokee traditions, and agriculture.

Sandy Stevenson acknowledged the help of the community in winning the grant. “The support of our members and donors and all of those who have attended our fund-raising events are an essential part of our success -- an essential ingredient of this valuable grant.”

The grant award must be matched with local or state funding and donated services. “Please help us reach our dollar-for-dollar match,” Sandy said. “You can make a donation or renew your membership if you have not

**PLEASE HELP US REACH OUR
DOLLAR-FOR-DOLLAR MATCHING
GRANT
BY MAKING A DONATION
OR BY RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP
FOR 2015.**

already done so.”



SCHOOL PROJECT TELLS BARN STORIES

The **Appalachian Barn Alliance** has launched a project in Madison County schools, using local barns to help students recognize the history of their family farms, their neighborhoods and their Appalachian region.

The two-day program will culminate in "Every Barn Tells a Story," a contest in which the youngsters will write a story or a poem, keep a journal or a photograph album, compose a song or paint a picture about a barn that they have learned about during the Barn Alliance program.

"Madison County Schools are very excited about this opportunity to bring the Barn Alliance program to our students and faculty," said Will Hoffman, Director of Curriculum for the District.

During "Barn Week" in May or June, the program will be presented to fourth graders in Hot Springs, Laurel, Mars Hill and Brush Creek schools. It includes lectures with photographs of historic and contemporary barns and discussion about barns the students are familiar with. The objective is to help the students begin thinking about the significance of barns in their lives.

The classroom sessions will be presented by Barn Alliance board member Nancy Larkin, a former media coordinator and educator in Buncombe County schools, Jim Thorsen, a retired media coordinator at Madison Middle School and the Alliance's historical/architectural specialist Taylor Barnhill.

The contest will encourage students not only to think about local barns, but to learn more about them. They are encouraged to choose a particular barn for their entry, learn what type of barn it is (livestock, tobacco, or equipment storage), how old it is, what condition it is in and other details. Their entries should reflect their newfound knowledge and awareness.

"The opportunity for our students to engage in the rich cultural history of Madison County through the exploration of the significance of barns used for tobacco, livestock and equipment use will give our students the opportunity to share and capture their own stories and relate them back to local history," said Will Hoffman of the school district.

EMBRACE. EQUIP. EMPOWER.



Madison County Schools

"Building Brighter Futures"

Contest prizes are \$50 for first, \$25 for second and \$15 for third place. The winning entries will be published in the News Record and Sentinel.

DRIVING TOURS *MOVING FAST*

The driving tours of significant barns in Madison County townships, organized by the Appalachian Barn Alliance, are drawing a strong turnout as residents and visitors alike take the opportunity to check out the landscapes and history of rural Appalachia.

“The first tour brochure we produced featured barns in the Beech Glen community,” says Alliance President Sandy Stevenson. “We’re already into our second printing on that one. We originally printed 1,000 copies, and they went fast.”

The second and third tours—of the Laurel and Spring Creek areas—are also drawing heavy interest, Sandy says. She expects the pace to pick up even further as the nicer spring weather draws more people outside.

Meanwhile, the historical/architectural specialist for the Alliance, Taylor Barnhill, is working to document the barns in more areas. These additions to the tour series will be published later this year.

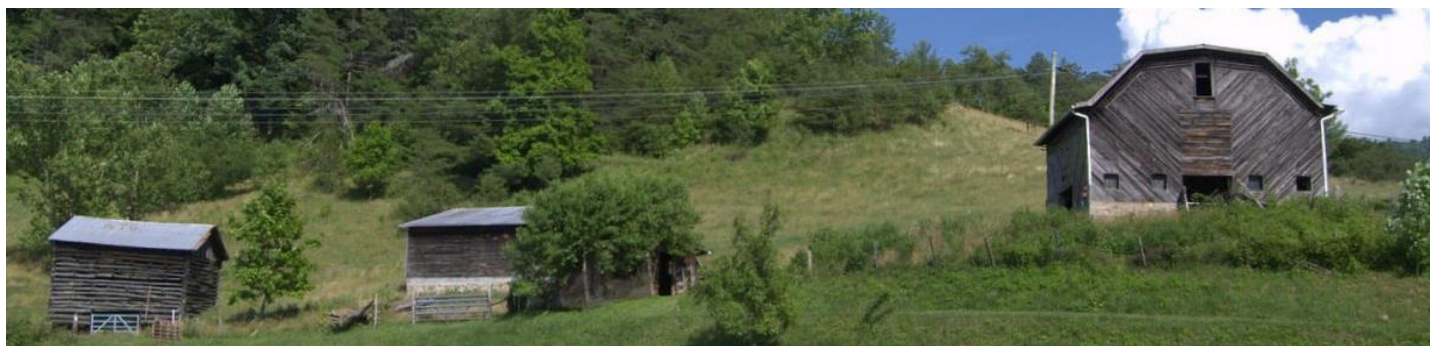
The three current brochures published for driving tours are available at the Alliance website, www.appalachianbarns.org.

WORK SHOP WITH TAYLOR BARNHILL &

NCSU EXTENSION SPECIALIST ON STRUCTURAL PESTS

The Appalachian Barn Alliance and the NC Cooperative Extension Service will offer an educational workshop entitled “De-bugging your barn” on Saturday May 2, 2015, from 9:00am until 12:30pm.

Powder-post beetles and other insect pests are the greatest threat to the safety and longevity of our historic barns and outbuildings. Learn how to diagnose, treat and prevent this kind of damage. The workshop will include classroom instruction and a site demonstration at a typical infected barn. Attendance fee is \$15. Watch for emails announcing details.



APPALACHIAN BARN ALLIANCE

Board of Directors:

Sandy Stevenson (President), Jeannie Blethen, Ryan Cody, Katie Estridge, Rob Kraft, Nancy Larkin, Jim Murphy and Les Reker.

Advisory Board:

Betty Clark, Layten Davis, Pat Franklin, Maurice McAllister, Karen Paar, Jerry Plemmons, Betty Reeves, Ross Young and Louie Zimmerman.

We gratefully acknowledge our generous patrons:

Business Supporters:

Buffalo Ridge Beef
French Broad Cabin
Gallery Dallos
HandMade in America
Mountain Meadows
RiverDance
Diane VanHelden, Attorney

Benefactors

Lesley King
Sandy & Mike Stevenson

Individual Supporters:

Andrea Anders
Joy Anders
Connie Buckner
Larry & Genevieve Burda
Debbie & Bob Davis
Sidney Mashburn
Debbie Ponder
David Rogers & Sumner Mitchell
Jim Woodruff
David & Willa Wyatt

In-Kind Supporters:

Fiddlestix
Mars Hill Retirement Center
Lunsford Festival
The News Record Sentinel

Foundation Grants

Madison County Tourism
Development Authority



Blue Ridge National Heritage Area

