Environmental Education on the Potomac
Our Mission

is to provide experiences that encourage connections between people, the natural environment, farming, and the cultural heritage of the Potomac River watershed, leading to personal environmental responsibility.

“Our ideas, laws, and customs should be based on the proposition that each generation in turn becomes the custodian rather than the absolute owner of our resources—and each generation has the obligation to pass this inheritance on to the future.”

—Alden Whitman
American Journalist, (1913—1990)

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Alice Ferguson Foundation

2001 Bryan Point Road
Accokeek, Maryland 20607
Tel. 301.292.5665 • Fax 301.292.1070

1255 23rd Street, NW, Suite 275
Washington, DC 20037
Tel. 202.973.8203

www.fergusonfoundation.org
A Message from the President

**Education. Inspiration. Innovation.** I can’t think of three words that better capture the essence of the Alice Ferguson Foundation, where for nearly 60 years we have been connecting people with the natural environment, farming, and the cultural heritage of the Potomac River Watershed.

“If I could live for eternity, it would be in Nature.”
—5th grade student, Capital Heights Elementary

We know these connections are inspiring the thousands of students we serve, both at our Hard Bargain Farm Environmental Center and at national and state parks through our Bridging the Watershed program, an award winning partnership with the National Park Service.

This year, we held our 23rd annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup, which was inspired by students walking the Potomac shoreline at Hard Bargain Farm and noticing the cumulative impact of trash. Now it is the largest regional cleanup of its kind with 11,388 volunteers at 613 sites in 2011 alone. This year we collected 465,000 pounds of trash and over the previous 23 years we have collected more than three million pounds.

That inspiration has sparked innovation. We know that cleaning up trash is an important part of the solution—but better yet, it is stopping trash from getting into our waterways in the first place. Thus our Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative was born. Now in its sixth year, this comprehensive approach to litter reduction is yielding important results.

The education of our students has inspired us to be innovative in other ways as well. Several years ago we embraced the latest in green building standards and undertook the Living Building Challenge. Embracing the goals of net zero energy, net zero water, and carbon neutral buildings, we began designing our Potomac Watershed Study Center. This year, the plans received a significant boost in the form of support from Prince George’s County. As a result, we plan to break ground on the first phase of the project in spring of 2012.

It has also been a year of transition as we bid a fond farewell to Tracy Bowen and welcomed her successor, Lori Arguelles, as our new Executive Director. Lori’s experience and skills will help guide us through the exciting times ahead. We invite you to join us in our journey as we continue to educate, inspire, and innovate.

Michael D. Herman
President
Education

“The great aim of education is not knowledge but action.”
- Herbert Spencer, British Philosopher (1820–1903)

Nature as our Classroom

At the Alice Ferguson Foundation, we seek to educate and foster the next generation of environmental stewards. Hard Bargain Farm Environmental Center, our 330-acre working farm on the banks of the Potomac River, now features our new Children’s Agricultural Garden made possible by a generous grant from the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC). In 2011, nearly 4,000 students enthusiastically dug, planted, weeded and harvested a wide variety of vegetable crops as they learned first-hand the concepts of sustainability, biodiversity, and energy cycles in the half-acre garden. We are pleased to add this to our comprehensive curriculum, which includes Farm Life Exploration; Habitat Hike; Fish Dissection; Birds Up Close; The Great Terrain Robbery; Down to Earth; Technology through Time (tool museum); Rivers in Action; and more.

Along with the nearly 4,000 students that came to Hard Bargain Farm Environmental Center on day and overnight programs, our Bridging the Watershed (BTW) program educators introduced another 6,636 students to hands-on curriculum-based science in 17 national and state parks over the course of 199 field studies. Our educational activities are made possible by the support of the National Park Service; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); Bay Watershed Education and Training (BWET); Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE); REI; and The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.

Always stayed away from things of the wild.
Even as a child.
Yesterday was the first time,
When I chose to decide

Yesterday I realized that nature is beautiful.
Even in the little things lies something meaningful...

—Poem by Charmaine Wilson-Jones
Parkdale High School
**Talking Trash in Schools...and Beyond**

The Foundation piloted the Trash Free Schools Project in four schools in Prince George’s County and nine schools in the District of Columbia. The Project combines education with action to create a system for K-12 schools to reduce their trash footprint and create a culture of environmental awareness in schools. The Trash Free Schools project integrates elements of the Foundation's Bridging the Watershed and Hard Bargain Farm educational programs with our Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative, while also fostering other community relationships and environmental efforts.

Our Trash Initiative’s litter prevention public service campaign also has been widely adopted throughout the region by support from partners including Prince George’s County, Montgomery County, Arlington County, Fairfax County, and the District of Columbia. With the message that “Piece by piece, litter adds up and makes the place we go everyday unsafe and unhealthy,” and the tag line “Your Litter Hits Close to Home,” the campaign seeks to educate the public and stop litter at its source. The Washington, DC public school system has featured posters and litter prevention materials at all schools in order to encourage students to “Take control. Take care of your trash.” With support from the District Department of the Environment, the campaign was also piloted in the Community of Deanwood in the District of Columbia.

**Opening Doors for Future Opportunity**

Thanks to the support from the Toyota USA Foundation, Northrop Grumman and the National Park Service, Bridging the Watershed staff trained 72 teachers and 41 rangers in BTW’s core curriculum and park-specific modules and added four new parks to the BTW fold of public lands available to schools. Antietam National Battlefield, Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary, Cunningham Falls State Park, and Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts became the newest parks for students and teachers to experience and learn about the natural and cultural resources so close to their own neighborhoods.

Encouraging students to consider careers in the outdoors is a key component of the BTW program and this year we launched several new programs to show students and teachers what career opportunities and jobs exist within the Department of Interior. The career academy for high-school students, held at the C&O Canal Farm in Tuscarora, MD, gave students the chance to interact with and interview various National Park Service employees about what rangers do in their day-to-day jobs. The students encapsulated their experiences in a short video showcasing National Park Service careers as well as the multitude of outdoor activities they participated in during the week.

We also launched the Educator Career Awareness Institute, thanks to the support from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, which reached out to high-school teachers and guidance counselors to give them an in-depth view of the diversity of careers available to their students within the many agencies of the Department of Interior. Held at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, and the DC Booth National Historic Fish Hatchery in Spearfish, South Dakota, the educators received an array of career education materials as well as vital first-hand experience to help guide their students to jobs and opportunities in the outdoors.
My Life-Changing Visit to Hard Bargain Farm
By Christiana Rigby

I first experienced Hard Bargain Farm as a pre-teen, and I’m privileged now to be able to experience it every day as a staff member. I came with my Girl Scout troop to learn about a working farm, the history of Accokeek, and the Fergusons. What stayed with me was a deep and abiding appreciation for the natural world and sustainable agriculture. Though I didn’t know it at the time, I was truly experiencing “place-based education.” Following my visit to Hard Bargain Farm I grew into a conscious and attentive young woman. I graduated with a degree in Environmental Science, worked for the US Fish & Wildlife, and have come home to the Alice Ferguson Foundation as an educator with the Bridging the Watershed program. My big hope is that I can inspire the same sense of wonder in my students as Hard Bargain Farm first inspired in me.

The Arts at Hard Bargain Farm

Henry and Alice Ferguson loved the outdoors and lived a generous, intellectually curious and creative life at Hard Bargain Farm. Today, the Alice Ferguson Foundation honors their inspiring legacy through our arts programs and cultural heritage preservation efforts. This year, the Hard Bargain Players produced and performed three plays to sell-out audiences, including Foxfire, Fat Pig, and Rocky Horror Picture Show. The Concert in the Woods series featured jazz, bluegrass, country, rock, and folk music performances at the Farm’s Amphitheater.

In keeping with the Ferguson’s tradition of community, we welcomed visitors to Hard Bargain Farm during the 25th Spring Farm Festival in May, the 23rd Potomac River Watershed Cleanup in April, and the 31st Oktoberfest in October. Visitors from around the region experienced the charm of the Country Place Era (1890-1940) and the Ferguson lifestyle when Hard Bargain Farm was featured on the 2011 Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage. We also hosted our Annual Membership Meeting in April and opened our doors to friends and volunteers at the Pig Roast in July and Ice Cream Social in August for a total of 4,920 visitors for the year.

In order to not only preserve the spirit of Alice and Henry, but the place as well, the Foundation increased its commitment to the preservation and care of Alice’s art, the Ferguson collections, and the farmhouse with its formal gardens and pastoral views, which overlook the Potomac River to Mt. Vernon. The National Garden Clubs, Inc. recognized Fergie’s Gardeners top awards at its 82nd annual convention. First place-honors went to the Fergie’s Gardeners membership brochure, and the Fergie’s Gardeners yearbook, which compiles information on programs, leadership and governance for garden club members.

Renewed attention to the care and preservation of the Ferguson Farmhouse and art collections was begun by implementing the first steps of the Conservation Assessment of Collections report written in 2010. First floor windows were covered with UV film to lessen light impact on artwork, and humidity and temperature sensors were installed to monitor the indoor climate. An Emergency Preparedness Plan that will guide future protection and maintenance of the house and collections was also created. This was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.
A New View

To ensure the public can enjoy the land endowed by the Fergusons, the new boardwalk along the Potomac River across the Accokeek Creek marsh was completed by the National Park Service in August. This vital conduit for Hard Bargain Farm’s Habitat Hike was sorely missed during the construction phase. Taking care to minimize any damage to surrounding habitat the boardwalk remained in the existing footprint of the old one and no large equipment was used during construction. The new boardwalk has railings that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act 201 Standards for Accessible Design. Two extended areas for group discussion and observation of the natural areas were built, along with a ramp that leads from the boardwalk to the sand beach near the smaller tidal gut at the NE end. The new boardwalk was celebrated with an opening ceremony on September 1st.

In the News

AFF Executive Director Lori Arguelles, BTW Program Manager Katrina Fauss and Monocacy National Battlefield ranger Barbara Justice introduced Fox 5 morning news reporter Holly Morris – and the entire Washington, DC metropolitan area – to BTW’s award-winning environmental education partnership with the National Park Service and area schools on November 8. Morris shadowed a BTW Water Canaries field study with students and their teacher from St. Mary’s Catholic School in Hagerstown, MD. Similarly, Suitland High School science teacher Daniel Holmes and his students helped The Nature Conservancy tell the story of the Potomac Gorge while on a BTW field study at Great Falls National Park in Virginia. The short film also featured BTW rangers Cheryl Bresee and Aaron LaRocca.

Keeping It Clean

The Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup inspires the surrounding communities as they tug litter and trash from the Watershed. The Cleanup in April marked the 23rd year that residents of the Watershed have followed the Alice Ferguson Foundation’s lead in promoting clean land, safe water, and healthy lives by participating in the Cleanup.

Our first Annual Litter Enforcement Month took place in April with the goal of raising awareness of litter, illegal dumping and related crimes, as well as the laws associated with them, and their social and environmental effects on our communities, our economy, and the Potomac River. During this month, the Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative engaged and trained law enforcement from six jurisdictions in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. To keep enforcement going year round, an Illegal Dumping Training was held in June 2011 with 68 officers trained from nine jurisdictions.

The Alice Ferguson Foundation received this year the “Nonprofit Organization of the Year Award” from the DC Chamber of Commerce.

2011 Cleanup Data:

- Total tons removed 228 (456,000 lbs.)
- Loose trash 6.6 tons (furniture, scrap metal & debris)
- Trash and recyclables 14,606 bags
- Recyclable glass, aluminum and plastic bottles 48.4 tons (193,600 containers)
- Plastic bags 26,624
- Cigarette butts 29,437
- Tires 20.7 tons
- Volunteers 11,388
- Each volunteer removed an average of 36.3 pounds of trash
- More than 425 groups and partners participated
Innovation

“Learning and innovation go hand in hand. The arrogance of success is to think that what you did yesterday will be sufficient for tomorrow.”
-William Pollard, British Clergyman (1828–1893)

Building for the Future

2011 marked the final planning stages of our new Potomac Watershed Study Center, which embraces the very greenest of building standards. These buildings are designed to meet the Living Building Challenge and will be among the most energy efficient and progressive ever to be built. In keeping with the Foundation’s mission, our high-performance green buildings will work in harmony with nature, allowing us to make use of the sun and rain to achieve a no net energy, no net water and carbon neutral facility.

The Moss building will replace our current lodge and its roof will gather rain that will be purified for use in both buildings. In addition, the surrounding landscape will channel and filter stormwater runoff and gray water from sinks and showers to help recharge the underground aquifers. The Grass Building will be located at the sunny edge of a field, its roof spreading out like wings to collect solar energy for the entire complex. A boardwalk across the marshy wetlands on Bryan Point Road and two additional sleeping cabins will round out the Center. A generous grant from Prince George’s County in 2011 will help ensure the Center will be built. Construction is slated to begin on the Grass Building and sleeping cabins in the Spring of 2012.

My Thoughts on Hard Bargain Farm

I was an elementary school music teacher when I first visited Hard Bargain Farm in the 1970’s. Asked to chaperone the 5th graders for their overnight excursion, I brought along my guitar for our campfire sing along. What I experienced with my students was truly inspiring. I was raised in rural Kentucky so my “green shock” was not as pronounced as that of my students; however, seeing their reaction to milking a cow, rolling down the hill, walking the swamp trail, discovering living things in the water, was a joy to behold!

My 'mom', Thelma Gasparovic, was an early member of the Alice Ferguson Foundation, serving as Henry Ferguson’s personal secretary. For many years she scheduled the visits and coordinated with school systems and groups. She’s too modest to acknowledge her vital roles in those early years, but I said yes to serving on the board—it is my personal way of honoring her legacy.

Through family conversations I had been aware of AFF, but experiencing it first as a teacher and mom, and now as a proud board member, have strengthened my zeal and passion knowing our myriad of programs are impacting our world and its future.

–Nancy Gasparovic
Expanding Our Action Plan

The Trash Free Potomac Facility program recruited two new facilities this year, making a grand total of 19 facilities recruited since its inception in 2009. Through this program, businesses and organizations are given ideas, incentives, and a structure within which to reduce their trash footprint on the watershed. The Pentagon, the largest office building in the world, has been added to the list this year along with our other elite facilities who are committed to reducing their waste and encouraging employees to responsibly manage their waste.

The Sixth Annual Trash Free Potomac Watershed Summit, supported by The Campbell Foundation, The Summit Fund of Washington, NOAA Marine Debris Program, and Chesapeake Bay Trust, convened on October 19, 2011. The Summit brought over 200 stakeholders together to look for solutions to the litter problem in the region. This year featured six roundtables, all with innovative speakers from around the watershed and beyond. Roundtable topics included Policy, Structural Technologies, Litter Prevention Campaign, Regulation, Containing Waste, and Odd Items: Cigarette Butts, Tires, Carts, and Sharps. Attendees included a middle school class who took part in discussions and planning sessions designed to create action items that will contribute to a trash-free Potomac watershed.

Rethinking and Reconstructing

As a working farm, our reputation for selling pastured broilers, grass-fed beef, and fresh eggs has grown steadily. To keep up with the growing demand, we finished the chicken processing center and increased the management of the grass fed beef cattle. For the chickens, we now have an independent building with electricity and running water, along with a scaler and a plucker. This year, we processed 138 broilers and approximately 40 older hens and roosters. This project was supported by a grant from Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO). Hard Bargain Farm has also become more widely known as a producer of fine meats. Grass-fed beef production increased with careful management of rotational grazing, which reduces the need for hay production while improving the quality of the pastures. We successfully grass-fed a herd of 28 beef cattle and sent six steers to market in November—the most we have ever processed. Seventy-five percent of the meat was pre-sold by the quarter.

In February, a windstorm blew a large tree down on our one-of-a-kind Antique Tool Museum smashing the building. Fortunately, nearly all of the collection, donated by Harry J. Patton, was spared. The museum has been rebuilt and will soon once again be used for hands-on lessons with students as they visit the farm as part of the Hard Bargian Farm educational program.
Our Community of Support

We are grateful for the support and donations of the following individuals and organizations. Their contributions helped us to provide high quality programming to students, teachers and citizens in the region.

Public Sector Partners
Charles County Public Schools, Nanjemoy Creek Environmental Education Center
DC Department of the Environment
DC Public Schools
DC Water & Sewer Authority
Environmental Protection Agency
Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO)
Maryland State Department of Education
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Chesapeake Bay Office, Marine Debris Program
Nation Endowment for the Humanities
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
National Park Service, National Capital Region
Prince George’s County Government
Prince George’s County Public Schools, William Schmidt Outdoor Educational Center
Prince George’s County Farm Bureau
Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission
Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Corporations, Foundations and Organizations
Accokeek Creek Baskets and Gourds
Accokeek Foundation
America’s Charities
Aries Enterprises
Arnold & Porter, LLP
Bates Trucking Trash Removal, Inc.
Best Buy
Beveridge & Diamond
Buck & Associates Realtors
Capitol Hill Community Foundation
Charlie’s Family Restaurant
Chesapeake Bay Trust
Chowder House
Community Bank of Tri-County
Community Foundation for National Capital Region
Community Foundation of Charles County
Constellation Energy
Early Childhood Academy
Endurance Enterprises, LLC
ExxonMobil
Fresh Creek Technologies, Inc.
Friends of the Accokeek Library
GenOn Energy
GMMB
HMSHost
Kohl’s
Liberty Mountain & Resort
Living Lands and Waters
Logistics Management Institute
Maryland Environmental Trust
MIRANT Mid-Atlantic
MOM’s Organic Market
Moyaone Association
National Capital Area Garden Clubs
National Park Foundation
Northrop Grumman

NPower Greater DC Region
O’Brien & Gere Engineers
Old Line Bank
Open City
Prince George’s Community College
Port of Washington Yacht Club
REI
Safeway
Saint John the Evangelist School
Sheryl Romeo Real Estate
Sierra Club
Southern Maryland Oil
Storm Water Systems, Inc.
Stormwater Maintenance, LLC
Tanta-Cove Garden Club
Terre Hill Stormwater Systems
The Campbell Foundation
The Community Foundation for Prince George’s County
The Kresge Foundation
The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
The Summit Fund of Washington
Title Professionals
Toyota USA Foundation
United Way of Central Maryland
United Way of Charles County
United Way of the National Capital Area
VA Restoration Fund
Washington Gas Light Company
Washington Metropolitan Area Corporate Counsel Association
Westmoreland Hills Garden Club
Winchester Homes
Woodrow Wilson Half Marathon

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Jan Steeger  
John Stelfero  
Corey Stewart  
Peter Strass  
Sandra Sue  
William Suworoff & Betsy Reid  
David Swick  
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Donald Williams & Carolyn Sanford  
Dorothy Williams  
Fred Williams  
Jennifer Williams  
Frank Willis  
George Wilmot  
Michael Wilmot & Amy Tarleton  
Monieta Wilson  
Josephine Withers  
Linda Witkin  
Jonathan & Brenda Wright  
Mark Wright  
Andy & Nicole Xander  
Henry Xander  
Mark Xander  
Jeffrey Yeager  
Cathie Zimmerman  

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Baltimore Orioles  
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The Laser Tag Group  
TKM Marketing, Inc.  
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Wegman's
How Can I Support the Alice Ferguson Foundation?

The Alice Ferguson Foundation welcomes gifts of cash or other assets which can include stocks, bonds, and/or personal property (such as real estate or artwork). These gifts can not only provide you with charitable deductions, but often offer additional tax savings.

Cash, Check and Credit Cards
- A gift of cash is easy to do, and the gift is not subject to gift or estate taxation.
- Gifts of Appreciated Securities: Stocks, Bonds, Mutual funds, and Other assets
- Smart gift planning combines charitable intent with cost-efficient planning techniques.

Real Estate
- Almost any type of real estate may be donated including undeveloped land, farms, vacation homes or personal residences.

Tangible Personal Property: Artwork, Collectibles, and Other items
- Tangible property contributions provide charitable donations based on a standard of ‘related use.’

Life Insurance
- Life insurance may directly fund a gift or may be used to replace a previously gifted asset.

Closely Held Business Stock
- Business owners contributing closely held stock are allowed a charitable deduction for fair-market value of the stock.
- You may also choose to support us through monthly giving, planned giving, gift memberships, gifts of stock, or memorial gifts. These types of gifts are a wonderful way to show your support and appreciation for the Alice Ferguson Foundation and its mission, while accommodating your own personal, financial, estate-planning, and philanthropic goals.

Gifts by Will
- Through various types of bequests for AFF, you may secure a charitable estate-tax deduction for the value of the gift. Best of all, you will know that your generosity will support AFF for years to come.

Gifts that Pay You Income
- Do you want to support AFF, but worry about having enough income for yourself and your loved ones? Life-income gifts can provide donors with an income stream, significant tax savings, and the satisfaction of supplying AFF with vital, long-term resources.

The Charitable Lead Trust
- Transferring property to AFF and individuals you wish to benefit is not always an either/or proposition. With careful planning you may be able to arrange your transfers to accomplish more than one objective. For example, if you have assets that are appreciating, children who may want to start a business in the future, and a desire to assist AFF, you may wish to consider creating a charitable lead trust.

Gifts from Retirement Plans
- You may consider using retirement plan benefits to make a significant gift that will support AFF. Because of the estate- and income-tax treatment of retirement plan benefits, the cost of your gift to your estate and heirs is often relatively small.

Estate Notes
- You may make a charitable gift to AFF after your lifetime without revising your current will or estate plans. An estate note is an irrevocable pledge or debt against the donor’s estate.

For more information about making a contribution, please visit our website at www.fergusonfoundation.giftplans.org or contact us directly at giftplanning@fergusonfoundation.org.
Financial Statements
2011 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

REVENUE
- Individuals: 72,296
- Government: 1,049,112
- Foundations: 170,896
- Corporations: 187,027
- Investment Income: (31,265)
- Program Income: 132,986

TOTAL REVENUE: 1,581,052

EXPENSES
- Programs
  - Educational Programs: 730,530
  - Trash Free Potomac: 334,472
  - Bridging the Watershed: 639,545
  - Capital Projects: 110,258
- Total Programs: 1,814,805
- Support
  - General & Administrative: 206,455
  - Fund Raising: 305,034
- Total Support: 511,489

TOTAL EXPENSES: 2,326,294

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS: (745,242)
Kids' Fan Mail

Today we... Heather went Birdwatching!

WHAT'S THE COOLEST FARM?

HARDBARGAIN FARM®