



# The Highlands

# Voice

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## West Virginians for Clean Water Campaign

*Recent Doubling of Support -- More Members Desired and Needed*

By Pam Moe-Merritt

The West Virginia Rivers Coalition believes that the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) is the primary legal tool to ensure the protection of clean water and the clean up of polluted water, nationally and in West Virginia. Unfortunately, there remain a number of Clean Water Act provisions which are either unimplemented or unenforced in West Virginia.

To begin to tackle this problem, we sat down and talked with some folks from various organizations around the state who also use the CWA in their work. The outcome of this conversation was the formation of a working group and a campaign called West Virginians for Clean Water -- an initiative that would be spearheaded by the West Virginia Rivers Coalition.

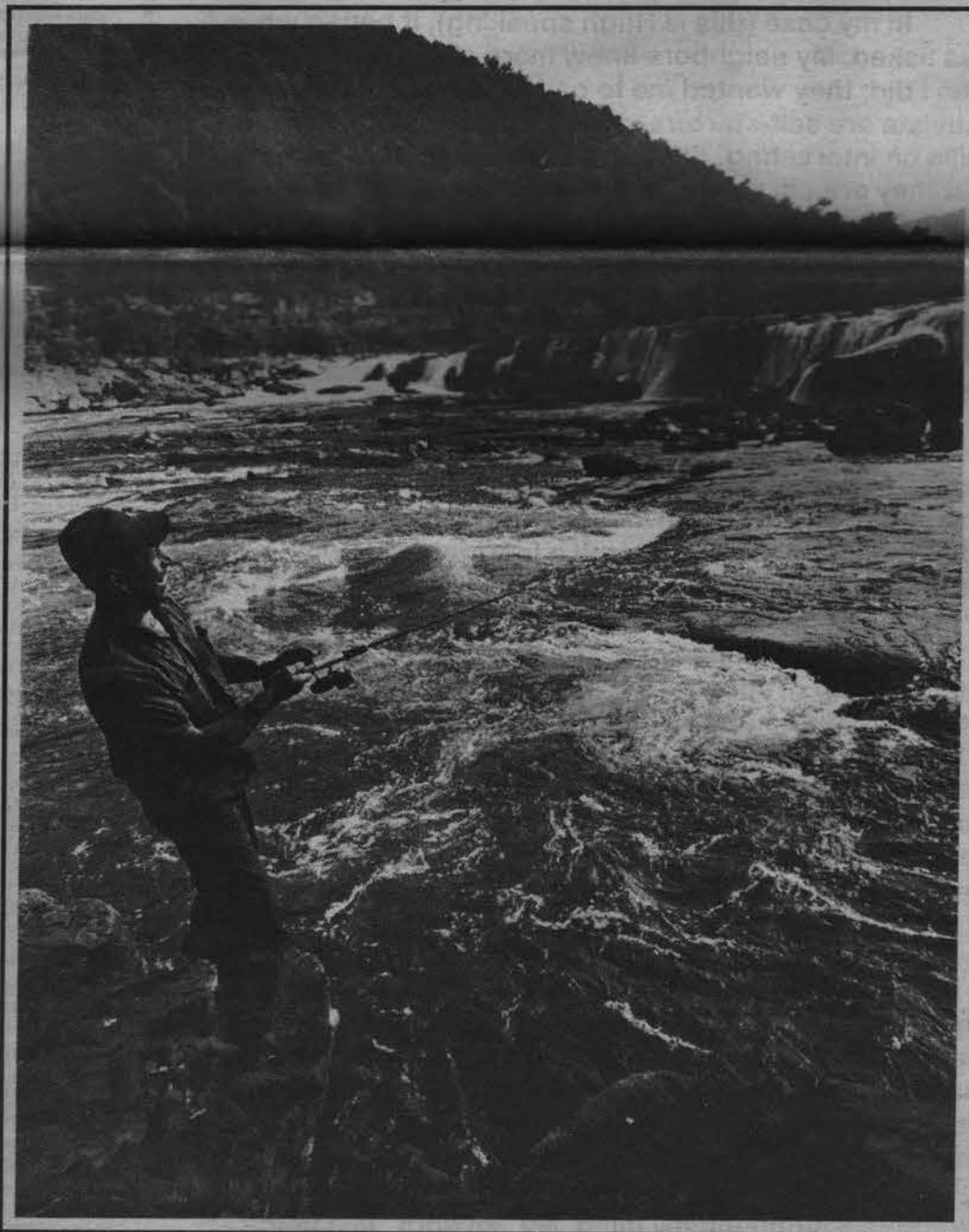
*The agreed upon goal of the West Virginians for Clean Water Campaign is to ensure compliance with and enforcement of the Clean Water Act in West Virginia.*

The ten groups who launched this campaign on Earth Day in 1998 include: Potomac Headwaters Resource Alliance, WV Citizen Action Group, WV League of Women Voters, WV Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited, WV Highlands Conservancy, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, WV Environmental Council, WV Wildlife Federation and the WV Rivers Coalition.

To date, eleven more groups have signed-on in support of the campaign's goal. They are: Blue Heron Environmental Network, Cacapon River Committee, Coal River Mountain Watch, Cabin Creek Watershed Association, Student Environmental Network, Green Club of WV Wesleyan College, White Day Creek Watershed Association, Loup Creek Watershed Association, Friends of the Cheat, Mountaineer Chapter Trout Unlimited and Indian Creek Watershed Association.

And while the West Virginians for Clean Water Campaign has more than doubled in size, we are looking for more support!

You and your group or watershed organization may be working on projects that are directly or indirectly impacted by the failure of full implementation of the CWA. You may be already working on CWA implementation by participating in Total Maximum Daily Loads or listing your stream on the state 303(d) list. You are undoubtedly on a list of many West Virginians who really care about the future of our rivers and streams. Therefore, we ask you to join us in our West Virginians for Clean Water Campaign.



Sandstone Falls (from West Virginia Highlands Conservancy archives)

See CLEAN WATER on page 12

## From the Heart of the Mountains

By Hugh and Gabriel Rogers  
(Guest Columnists)

### Another Path to Activism

People get involved in road resistance because the road would affect them directly. That's the usual way. People stand up to the excesses of mountaintop removal mining when a mine would put the mountain in their hollow. People come forward to defend a river because they can no longer float there, or because their kids develop rashes from what's going into the river. Self-interest is a strong spur to action. There's a term in law for a person who steps forward to assert the public good: "private attorney general." Our system depends on such private AG's.

In my case (this is Hugh speaking), it began when I was asked. My neighbors knew more about Corridor H than I did; they wanted me to catch up and speak up. Most activists are self-starters. Some want to use their special skills on interesting, difficult work; for others, it is enough that they are citizens of this state, this country, this earth. At the Conservancy's board meetings, I look around at the twenty or thirty people in the room and I admire them all. Their motives, I know, are broader than self-interest. But I notice they're graying. I'm graying. Some of these stiff white hairs have come from worries about posterity, about "passing it on."

So I'm pleased that the Student Environmental Network has been revived here in Elkins. SEN had been active in several West Virginia high schools in the mid-90's. The students worked on local issues and environmental education, and they organized a few statewide gatherings for planning, encouragement, and fun. They were a familiar presence at E-Day! But SEN lapsed when its leaders graduated. Last December, Trenton Harper, a former SEN member who graduated from Elkins High in 1997, returned from adventures and training in other big woods with a different approach. He and his friends KiTeya Belford-Smith and Matt Hollen have been mentoring a dozen young people, and they were back at E-Day! this year. Here's one student's experience with a different path to activism.

In December, when we decided to revitalize SEN (this is Gabriel speaking), we made a tentative plan to focus equally on activist work and nature awareness which included tracking and primitive skills. I wasn't convinced that the latter deserved equal status. I saw it as a hobby, albeit a valuable one, that should not take up the time of an environmental organization.

Sitting and tracking, two effective paths to awareness, changed my mind. My "sit spot" is a place where I spend fifteen or twenty minutes a day as nature ebbs and flows around me. Tracking involves much more

PATH concluded on page 4

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**HOLY EARTH!**

By Michael Hasty

**Inconspicuous Consumption**

It has become a cliché among the punditocracy observing this year's presidential contest that voter interest and turnout will be minimal because the nation, once again in a period of "peace and prosperity," faces no serious problems. No "overriding issue" stands out.

What is interesting about this cliché is that this has been the media message in every presidential race of the last twenty years. A possible exception is the election of 1992, when the Clinton campaign's slogan of "It's the economy, stupid" was such a compelling sound bite that it nearly drowned out the pundits' obsession with the personalities and "character" of the candidates.

This emphasis on personalities in American politics is the political version of the celebrity worship central to our commercial television culture. The 1989 book "The Unreality Industry: The Deliberate Manufacturing of Falsehood and What It Is Doing to Our Lives," describes the creation of media celebrities as a deliberate "social technology," which has "literally invaded and transformed the body politic, body social, and body moral of this society." In effect, media celebrities constitute the many faces of George Orwell's "Big Brother."

The authors of "The Unreality Industry" go on to credit social critics like Orwell, Aldous Huxley and media analyst Neil Postman with seeing "the true danger behind TV's surface idiocy. The true danger they foresaw was that...precisely because it would not be viewed as a threat as such, the so-called 'advanced' Western societies would be undermined by their own self-inflicted, endless pursuit of mindless pleasures and trivialities, e.g. drugs, TV, the endless consumption of junk food, useless material items, and trivializing ideas."

Contrary to the celebrity pundits, whose principal function is to lull the electorate into thinking they live in an actual democracy, environmentalists know that there are serious issues that are not being addressed in our politics in any more than a superficial way. We also know that issues like global climate change, disappearing forests and groundwater, air and water pollution, species extinction, and the ubiquitous presence of poisons and synthetic chemicals throughout the entire planetary ecosystem, directly result from the proliferation of a

consumer-oriented system we call "the American way of life."

At the core of the appeal of the "American way" are values that seem intrinsically positive. Hence its infectious popularity. These values include individual freedom and mobility; an optimistic belief in "progress" and the promise of technology and science; a "can do" attitude toward any challenges; and a quasi-religious faith in the limitless abundance of nature and in the blessings of wealth. The product of the interface of Enlightenment philosophy with the practical experience of Europeans settling an unspoiled wilderness, these values worked for two centuries to help Americans both "conquer" the continent, and put a positive spin on the darker aspects of this conquest.

The idea of the American way was also important as an organizing principle in establishing a national identity. In his classic 1960 study of propaganda, French sociologist Jacques Ellul argued that the biggest problem facing the US in the late 1700s was "to unify a disparate population" of "diverse traditions and tendencies." The solution, according to Ellul, "was psychological standardization — that is, simply to use a way of life as the basis of unification and as an instrument of propaganda."

This adherence to a common ideal also had an economic dimension, especially with the advent of the Industrial Age. "Mass production requires mass consumption," Ellul continued. "One therefore needs fundamental psychological unity on which advertising can play with certainty when manipulating public opinion. And in order for public opinion to respond, it must be convinced of the excellence of all that is 'American.' Thus conformity of life and conformity of thought are indissolubly linked."

Four decades after Ellul wrote this, in our present era of "niche marketing" and globalization, his analysis seems at first glance a bit simplistic. That is, until you consider how ever-larger corporations have come to dominate American life and culture, replacing individual family-owned businesses with depressingly uniform chain stores and restaurants, to the point where cities and suburbs all over the country are virtually indistinguishable from each other. This process is sometimes called the

Walmartization of America, or the McDonaldization of the world.

Throughout the past century, there has been a concerted effort by the public relations industry, working in the service of business interests, to change the self-image of Americans from "citizens" to "consumers." The success of this effort cannot be underestimated. With 6 percent of the world's population, Americans account for 25 percent of the annual consumption of the world's resources. The American consumer, carrying a nearly \$300 billion annual trade deficit, is the engine that drives the global economy. American consumer spending is credited with single-handedly lifting the world out of its most recent economic recession.

Of course all this consumption has its costs. For one thing, we have the highest rate of obesity on the planet; and in the developed world, the lowest rate of personal savings. US credit card debt is at a record high; and so are the numbers of personal bankruptcies. To fuel our consuming habits, American workers spend more hours on the job than the workers of any other industrial nation — an average 135 more hours annually than we worked two decades ago. And here in the land that created the concept of "planned obsolescence," we naturally generate more garbage than any other nation, from the household waste that clogs our landfills to the coal waste that fills our streams.

If this were simply a case of yet another imperial civilization in the late stages of decadence and collapse, it wouldn't be so worrisome. History is replete with examples of societies who consumed themselves out of existence. But today, when technology has united the globe to a degree unprecedented in human history, and the US is the world's dominant military, economic and cultural power, the American way of life is our most important export. As a character in a film by German director Wim Wenders put it, America "colonized our subconscious."

The unsustainable economic model we are exporting contains the seeds of tragedy when applied in a regional context, but spread out to every corner of a vastly overpopulated world, reaches critical proportions. This is a fact long recognized by many of the world's leading scientists, who in 1992

**See HASTY on page 5**

## editorial

## Environmental Education -- Spiritual Transformation?

What will it take to save the earth? What will it take to stop our current headlong race to geocide? How many of the current crop of ecocides can we use to trade in for one geocide?

What will it take to turn the arrogant grandstanding of politicians mouthing relatively trivial and inane concerns into truly wise words, nay, truly wise actions, that can lead us out of this mess. Why do they follow us into the moral lapse of the least common denominator?

West Virginia native, Jedidiah Purdy, in his singular book, *For Common Things*, cites an excellent example of the typical politician's disfiguring of the truth. When Bruce Babbitt in West Virginia stood at the strip mine ruined cite at Hobet 21 and proclaimed that the devastation represented a good example of "having a vital economy and living in equilibrium with the landscape," he was conforming to all the evil verbal excesses that politicians are heir to.

Says Purdy, "For Babbitt ... words became a screen between the speaker and the world, concealing the shape and texture of things in the gauze of anodyne phrases. That kind of talk ... does not appreciate the difficulties with which the world presents us." Well said, if perhaps a little understated.

If there is any way at all to save the earth, it must be through a firm counter to the incessant bombardment of mind numbing palaver spewing from an American religious faith through not only politicians, but from the mainstream media, accompanied always by the ever present profit-induced advertising. It must be done through environmental education in the very deepest sense. (Essentially, the education of

all levels of society and age groups. But mostly I'm talking about the young folks.)

Governor Underwood in his state of the state address spoke of "balanced" environmental education being introduced in the schools. Unfortunately, many schools in West Virginia are now getting too big a dose of pro-industry propaganda that serves as the kind of balance Underwood is likely talking about. In our state the schools have been permeated by this kind of "balance" since time immemorial by Big Coal.

When people take seriously the notion of a "balanced" science being taught which includes creation "science" (which obviously is not science at all but a religious faith), then how can we get to present the deeper ecological issues to set to rights the highly erroneous, culturally driven, earth-destroying religion of Progress, the American Way and blatant Materialism?

As Michael Hasty implies in his column this month, this religion is infecting the earth with much more power of destruction on the human (and unfortunately all other) species than some dire new all-pervading pestilence. Yes, the Walmartization that has swept America had not long ago blossomed into the world dominion of Coca Cola and McDonalds. The world looks up to America and, it's sad to say, wants to emulate it. Even more reason for us here to totally change our ways of being on the earth.

One area of encouragement is that college students are now beginning to revisit the activist program they had going in the '60s. The principle issue then was the Vietnam War - now it is the growing power of international oligarchy that is mindlessly and greedily exploiting the earth, destroying

equally species of indigenous forms of the human kind as well as species and ecosystems from the rest of the natural world. Students were a force in the Seattle protests. Large numbers of them are expected to protest against the IMF and the World Bank on April 16<sup>th</sup> in Washington, DC.

Jack Slocomb in his article in this month's Voice relates an inspiring moment with a lad who, immersed in a natural woodland setting, suddenly seems to catch a glimpse of the enlightenment that our young people will need to bring about this kind of change. He emphasizes that the young need to get out into the wilds to view the gestalt of the natural world - it cannot be done in front of a TV set or computer, or even in the classroom.

Perhaps out of Mona-Thon 2000 there will be new awakening of the young to the wilds through the hiking activities of the oldsters. Perhaps there is the kernel of a movement that will snowball into the revolutionary change that is essential to the earth and the survival of all living creatures on it.

And, yes, Hugh and Gabriel (guest columnists), I'm glad that SEN has reconvened. Moreover, I'm glad that the spiritual transformation that occurred with Gabriel in his tracking pursuits has locked him into the connection with the natural world that we all have lurking somewhere in our beings. E. O. Wilson speaks of this as a basic instinctual biophilia (which the American Way tries its best to rid us of). It will take nothing less than a kind of evangelism to make the essential outreach into the human realm of the biophilia in all of us widespread and meaningful. ❖

## PATH from page 2

than simply following an animal, rather it is learning as much as possible about that animal through the signs it leaves behind. With experience and trust, these two practices can heighten awareness.

Awareness was essential to human life; only the primitive who had intimate knowledge of natural systems survived. We have evolved from that primitive, whose knowledge and worldview are integral to our grasp on life. The possession of such skills may not now be essential to our survival in the same way, but it is still a key to our basic consciousness, and a way to develop environmental ethics on a fundamental level.

I used to do environmental work and support green causes because I loved the mountains and felt some obligation from acquaintances. Now I have reasons that are truer to myself. I am excited about environmentalism because I have developed a relationship with the land and a sentiment for its protection. Through tracking and sitting, stronger bonds tie me to the green movement. ❖

*The New Mon Forest Hiking Guide*

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## Karpan Ousted

*This letter of April 8, 2000, from Carolyn Johnson, staff director of the Citizens' Coal Council*

Dear Members & Allies of the Citizens Coal Council,

Pat yourselves on the back, all of you who sent e-mails to Bruce Babbitt about Kathy Karpan's conflict of interest – today Babbitt removed her.

Today was a very hectic day at the Washington headquarters of the Department of Interior. Top officials scrambled madly trying to head off more critical media attention on the Karpan mess and to satisfy the White House's growing concerns about bad publicity. Late this afternoon, Bruce Babbitt announced Karpan will no longer head the Office of Surface Mining (OSM) and Kay Henry will take over as Acting Director on Monday, April 10.

Karpan will become Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Lands and Minerals Management for non-mining issues such as grazing and oil and gas. (Inside sources told CCC that she will stay only 30 days "to save face" then leave government service. Pray it's true so she doesn't have time to let drilling crews into the Arctic Wildlife Refuge or some other disaster.) Babbitt's press release also said she recused herself from making decisions on "most" OSM issues and took vacation time "to consider an offer of employment from a non-government entity associated with the mining industry." (This is a complete spin of the facts we know – last week's story was she recused herself to go interview for the top job at the National Mining Association. Babbitt's staff told her to take a vacation and let the fuss blow over.)

Kay Henry is now the head lawyer for OSM and was acting OSM Director from September 1996 until August 1997, when Karpan was appointed.

### What Next?

We can't kid ourselves, Karpan's leaving and Henry's arrival change nothing but the name and face; the disastrous policies and decisions stay. We now have a good opportunity to call attention to these.

Please contact the media and write letters to your local newspapers:

We urge groups to call your media contacts and send out press releases that demand that the Clinton-Gore Administration reverse these policies and decisions and make real, positive changes in the coal fields. It's critical that citizens keep the heat on and hold President Clinton and Gore accountable. Some of these policies and decisions include:

\* The Administration has filed notice that it will appeal the judge's decision in the West Virginia mountaintop removal lawsuit and try to overturn it. Work is also underway to rewrite the Clean Water Act rules so coal companies can continue filling streams with millions of tons of mining waste. Karpan spearheaded these positions and also said she would rewrite to weaken the OSM rules that protect streams.

\* Karpan has opposed any effort by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate utility companies that dump toxic coal waste from power plants into strip mine pits and lagoons, polluting the groundwater. Her opposition has stopped, hopefully only temporarily, EPA's decision and allowed more time for the utilities and National Mining Association to try to cancel EPA's efforts.

\* In December, Karpan approved new rules that allow underground mines to collapse the land surface under cemeteries, national parks, wildlife refuges, historic sites and up to 1.8 million homes. She refused to do her legal duty to write protections for these areas; instead she adopted the same position of the National Mining Association: underground mines need to mine in these areas so they can make enough profit to stay in business.

\* Since 1993 when the Clinton-Gore administration took over, OSM's enforcement has nosedived 64 percent and half of the already understaffed inspector force was let go or moved to other, non-enforcement jobs as a budget-cutting move. Babbitt has refused to ask for more money to restore this program that is critical for protecting the environment and the public's health, safety and property. Karpan publicly criticized OSM inspectors who had written violations and told industry and state officials she wouldn't put up with vigorous enforcement on her watch.

\* Uncontrolled blasting has damaged and destroyed thousands of homes and water supplies across the country and even killed members of the public. OSM has allowed the coal industry and state regulators to blast at will and ignore their legal duty to prevent any damage, injury and death.

If you would like help with contacting the media or writing a letter, please call or e-mail Jane in CCC's Washington office: 202-544-6210 [citcoal@essential.org](mailto:citcoal@essential.org)

### Investigate Karpan

Karpan's contacts and relations with mining industry officials over the past year must be revealed and reviewed to find out exactly what did happen. She appears to have taken industry's position on many important policies and decisions and these have not been canceled with her leaving; they will continue to cause harm to coalfield citizens and their environment. Also, agency employees have told CCC since last July that she openly said she wanted to work for the National Mining Association. If so, we believe she should have stopped making decisions then, not nine months later. CCC will keep on asking for information about her contacts and we expect to join soon with other environmental groups in asking for a formal investigation by the Justice Department.

We'll let you know as we learn more.



### HASTY concl. from page 3

published a "Warning to Humanity," whose signatories included a majority of living Nobel laureates. The statement warned, "We are fast approaching many of the earth's limits. Current economic practices that damage the environment, in both developed and underdeveloped nations, cannot be continued without the risk that vital global systems will be damaged beyond repair."

In the eight years since that warning was issued, virtually none of the recommendations the scientists made to correct humanity's course has been implemented.

For quite distinct reasons, it is unlikely that either of the major party candidates in the 2000 US presidential campaign will concentrate on the environment. They would both like to evade their environmental records – one because he doesn't want to offend his corporate donors, the other because of his long association with polluters.

That will suit the mass media just fine. They know that a happy viewer is the most lucrative target of their advertisers, so they don't want to disturb anybody with bad news. They prefer melodrama to reality, in which case they'll concentrate on the candidates' human qualities. Is one not serious enough? Is the other too serious? Human conflict – now that's entertainment!

Pass the popcorn.

*Michael Hasty marches to a different drummer somewhere in the Eastern Panhandle where he is a regular columnist for the Hampshire Review. You can access his weekly column on the Internet at <[www.hampshirereview.com](http://www.hampshirereview.com)>.*



*"USA Sludge Researchers from Cornell University and the American Civil Engineers have found more than 60,000 toxic substances and chemical compounds in US sewage sludge, and report that 700 to 1000 new substances are developed every year, some of which also enter the sewage stream. These substances include PCBs, pesticides, dioxins, heavy metals, asbestos, petroleum products, and industrial solvents, many of which are linked to ailments ranging from cancer to reproductive abnormalities. They are also a threat to soils: once introduced to cropland, for example, heavy metals persist for decades (as in the case of cadmium) or even centuries (as in the case of lead)."*

-- from "Recycling Organic Waste: From Urban Pollutant to Farm Resource" by Gary Gardner in Worldwatch Paper #135

## Environmental Education 101

By Jack Slocomb

I lost the wild sometime after 1956.

My grip on it loosened. I let things slip away from me. Bob-o-links in the wet bottom land below our house. The jerky Chipping Sparrows bouncing up and down along the rusty old barbed wire fence near our back door. Chipmunks, Ground Hogs, Deermice, Milkweed, Flowering Judas, Painted Trillium, and a lot of other things that were growing, slithering, and flying around the woods and fields around where I lived.

Their presence vanished abruptly from my life and I was intolerably quiet about their demise. I was in my early thirties when I finally comprehended how my friendship with such an immense nature could have passed away.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

I spent most of my childhood of the 1950's on a small farm on the outskirts of Buckhannon. Buckhannon was (and still is) a small sized college town in north central WV and not a very noisy place - especially after about ten o'clock at night. Back then the only natural calamities I cringed at were the sight of road kills or when our Dalmatian, Cindy, dragged in baby Cottontails with their intestines dangling out. I didn't know that all those awful brooding carved off hillsides along the roads meant anything. They were just there, the everyday geography of time and place. There was no larger picture.

I believe I was a very privileged child, because I could claim a demesne of nature that was limitless and reckless. As far as I was concerned, the woods in back of our steep pasture went forever. It was where an Indian tribe lived, I was sure. And so when my friends would make an appearance in the field, we would work ourselves up into believing that the warriors were trying to leave us feather and footprint signs and other clues of their existence. We looked everywhere for the evidence, always feeling a little closer to discovering a real Indian than we had been the day before. And I knew that there just had to be bears lurking around in there, too. So we were always on the lookout for the gleam of an eye or the flash of bared teeth in the dark recesses of rock ledges and hollow logs.

But as I look back on things now, I believe that I first began to grasp that I had forfeited these wonderful imaginings when I was a college student.

At that time, I took a summer job working as a counselor for a Methodist summer program for children in Baltimore's inner city. During one of the weeks, we herded a group of kids into a yellow school bus and went off to stay at a rustic church camp in rural tobacco growing region of southern Maryland called Camp Lothian - which early on in the week we quickly transmogrified into "Camp Loathful".

Massive thunderstorms boomed and roiled their way in almost every day. The incessant rains came down in Niagara torrents, in no time at all turning the place into a mucky, oppressively humid rain forest. Before long, we began making runs on a daily basis out to a local laundromat in one counselor's (literally) wired together Volkswagen Beetle to dry out anything made of cloth. Two of the cabins leaked because the roofs had apparently been used as target practice for several loads of buckshot. The cook harped day in day out (over the quavering screams of preacher whom she had tuned into on her radio) about the children getting "fever

chills," the kids viciously fought and scrapped constantly, everything was overgrown with either briars or thick shiny luxuriant clusters of poison ivy, and mosquitoes and bees underwent a population explosion that should have been cited in the annals of Ecology. And leaving was out of the question, because the charter service had all their buses in use, and wouldn't be back until Friday afternoon.

And so we just had to make the best of it.

This was also the week that the first U. S. Astronauts touched down on the moon. When the news came over the cook's radio (thankfully interrupting the preacher), I momentarily thought about the dry dusty glare of the moon above the thick dripping torn clouds hanging ominously over the camp, and then forgot about it.

One afternoon, however, there came a break in the weather, and the sun poured through - drawing out peals of joy and dancing and jumping up and down everywhere. The boys in my counsel group had been pestering me all week to go and wade in a little stream that flowed near the edge of the camp property. I didn't waste any time in getting there, either. I wanted them to have some fun before the week was over, and this might be the only opportunity we had.

For the first time since the beginning of camp, peace reigned. There were no more fights, no more cracking on other kids' mothers. They just walked right out in the middle of the stream and sloshed along for two or so hours pulling up all sorts of squirming things for me to identify. They grabbed crayfish and Leopard Frogs without even a hint of hesitation and begged me to let them take their booty back to the cabin - and in some cases - home. They splashed each other and let themselves fall into the water fully clothed time after time (I hadn't thought to ask them to wear swim suits because I pictured them just playing cautiously around the edge) without any thought of getting soaked from head to foot. They also kept saying "... this awright man....this awwwright!...." and talked about how glad they were that they had come to camp and made me promise to bring them back down there the next day because they hadn't explored all of it yet.

The dry weather thankfully held for the rest of the afternoon, and so my group sat around quietly and talked outside the dining shelter right before supper. (On the other days, because of the rain, we had to seat everybody inside around the tables to wait for their supper, and Pandemonium would soon break loose no matter how many songs we sang). Some of them even wanted for it to start raining again so they stand there and get their clothes soaking wet like they had down at the stream. This really boggled me. But I didn't dare make any comments. Let sleeping dogs lie, I thought. And I went inside to let them be.

Then an even stranger thing happened.

I saw two of the boys crawl under the building, which sat on cemented concrete block pillars. I was about to tell them to get out from under there when they reappeared dragging with them a discarded refrigerator tray. They all talked for a while and then began to fill it up with the sandy coastal plain soil. Then they scraped out a small channel through the center, which they filled up with water. After that, they carefully patted the dirt into what

looked like rolling hills. Then they stuck in clumps of grass, leaves, and Shortleaf Pine twigs they found lying all around them. The final touch was a kind of miniature hut right in the middle - that they very carefully built up with the twigs.

I decided to go out and ask them what they were doing. As they continued to put in twigs, one of the boys answered me, without even looking up, "This be camp!"

But to me it also looked like something else.

It was the river village described by Joseph Conrad in *Heart of Darkness*. I don't know why this came to mind, but it just did. Then it fleetingly occurred to me that the landscape they had created in the refrigerator tray might be some other place and time that was whispering to them. Maybe not. But I sensed there was a fidelity to something more than a mere replication of the camp. Most of them were Black and probably had origins in West Africa. And it seemed to me they that they were creating a habitat of remembrance, a dimly perceived kindredness of land and soil that was suggested to them by cues which they had become attuned to that afternoon along the stream and which they could hardly explain.

Then I had a passing recognition of something else: in another place I, too, once had a patch of ground which I left behind.

I was eleven years old when I left that patch. In 1956 my family moved out of Buckhannon to Cumberland, then the large industrial town of western Maryland, as a result of my father being reassigned on his job. The announcement by my parents and the move came quickly - too quickly for me to get my bearings. The haymow and Meadowlarks, the heavy warmth of snows, the moist soily smell of the woods in April, the stars flaming in the cool blue night, and all the people we knew who were one in the same with that rolling country suddenly were no more in my life. I went packing off, and that world stayed in place.

We spent the first year in Cumberland in a third story apartment. No more farm and no more baby rabbits. And Cindy was consigned to a doghouse in the backyard to which she was roped to keep her from roving. Away from the manure and Peach blossoms and the Honeysuckle of the farm, I became somebody else. I had to ban any thoughts of that place from my life. If I couldn't be lavished with it, I just wouldn't admit that it had ever existed. And I simply erased it from my mind.

But when I had that conversation with the campers, who had perhaps put their memories of race and earth into a refrigerator tray (who knows?), I could not help but remember that I, too, had an ancestral ground to account for. Exile is exile. And in those few moments the awareness of that whole other history of myself rose up. A history that was secreted away in the forests of another earth I had inhabited. The old blood was aroused.

These feelings fermented a long time, and it wasn't until some years later I acted. I began trying to locate people I once knew who were still living in or around Buckhannon. I was finally successful with this and was welcomed back for visits there with true West Virginia hospitality after an absence of about twenty years. As far as these folks were concerned, I had just come home.

Next page, please

## ENVIRON EDUCATION concluded

But as soon as the very real happiness of this reunion had settled in, a bone deep disappointment began to well up. It had to do with the landscape. One of the first things that I noticed when I started to make trips back to Buckhannon was that I could not discern the town/country boundary as easily as I used to. This once clear line seemed to be blurred by residential developments, which were beginning to uncoil their way out through the hills, a few small shopping centers here and there, and a halting punctuation of fast food stops along the highways leading in and of town. Stuff I was used to in Baltimore where I was living at the time. But here it made no sense at all.

(And latest thing in this depressing process, by the way, has been the construction of the western end of Corridor H - which has visually sheared off the town from one of its largest and most picturesque cemeteries, sending the dead into a kind of permanent exile, interrupting some undefined, yet vital, flow of meaning and remembrance between the living in the town and their ancestry).

Simply put, Buckhannon was not Buckhannon anymore. The place that was so indelibly etched into my young bones. This evoked a terrible sadness in me. But I had a very clear feeling then that there was something more than an upwelling of nostalgia, more than the yearning for lost childhood, at work here. It was something about the earthy past of human makeup, rooted down deep below the finite sprout of my own life time, that tugged away at my insides when I saw the edges of the town becoming so ragged. Coming back to Buckhannon had in some ways raised more questions for me than it answered. There was some other task here that needed to be completed. But I didn't know what it could be. So in the busyness of my life, I just didn't give it any thought for a while.

My story picks up again in the early 80's when the social and spiritual promises of the wonderful revolution in thinking of the late 60's and the 70's began to wear thin under the weight of Reaganomics. I had been swept up in the redemptive power of the changes born of Vietnam and Civil Rights and the Greening of America and free love. This is where my energies and all my cautious hopes had been placed. And now it seemed gone.

To comfort myself, I began to hike - the Shenandoah National Park, Catoctin Mountain, the Appalachian Trail - wherever I could get to to forget and feel some peace. I also joined the Sierra Club and soon became an addicted Backpack leader. These little weekend pilgrimages seemed to do me good, and they were a lot more fun than when I was in the Boy Scouts in Cumberland and always felt sort of clumsy and inept in the out-of-doors.

On one of my early Dolly Sods trips with the Sierra Club, I agreed to take along the fourteen year old son of some friends of mine in Columbia, Md. I will call him Matt.

As I remember, we camped that night along the Big Stone Coal Trail in an area known to those who tramp around up there as the "Pine Tree Hilton" - the result of an energetic reforestation effort that was then apparently aborted. But the little grove of trees provided a perfectly soft bed of pine needles to sleep on in an otherwise knotty landscape - and a copious supply of dry firewood, to boot. You couldn't ask for better anywhere.

After supper, Matt wanted to go for a walk through the rest of the pine plantation. It wasn't very long before he discovered the clean bones of a fawn,

half buried in the thick cover of needles. We pulled the bones out, shook off the dirt, and handled them, trying to identify the various parts. I told him that I thought the winters up in this 4400 feet tableland were probably pretty severe, and maybe the little animal had been one of the casualties.

"But it was a natural death," he said.

And a kind of gentle death, too, I thought - in the soft snow and needles under those White Pines. The snow was gone now, but it seemed to me that the ghost of the deer inhabited every green needle. And because of that deer and many like it dying under the pines, the soil had been made all the richer and the trees perhaps more lovely. I felt the presence of it everywhere. I had a powerful sense at that moment that, in the woods, life is never lost. It is just transfigured.

Transfigured.

Matt, who was still holding onto the blanched bones while I was lost in these thoughts, suddenly turned to me then and said, "Y' know if I died today or tomorrow, it'd be alright - because I was here."

The conviction in his voice still haunts me. How he came up with this thought is still a mystery to me. It was a kind of a Summa Theologica in one sentence. As if he were swept through by some strange and ineffable wind and the words were just blown out of his mouth. And all I could say to him was, "Yes, ... yes.....yes", nodding my head. Yes.

Yes, now I had come back home. And Matt had found home. All in a moment.

The campers with their miniature village, and later, that time I spent bone picking with Matt up in the Dolly Sods, were invocations to a kind truth, I think. For after the Sods trip, something awakened in me. It was like Service Berry and Dogwood and Flowering Judas slowly adding color and revelation to the gray Alleghenies in early April - until one day everything just swells into a tender and effusive calamity of life.

The things of the wild had inhabited every space I roamed in once. They had watched over my comings and goings, they had been my very own language, and it was in them that I came to know the home of inwardness that I called myself. And nature had been taken from me, yes. But the truth was that I had abandoned nature - in all of its here and now inexhaustible presence of pure being - just to preserve the sweet grief of the wound.

Living in the moment of the wild, in all of its turnings - and trying to honor it in the way I make my life choices - has now become my single most important reference reality.

Most people are not as abruptly yanked away from a natural life as I was. Nowadays it is more likely to be the vacuous rituals of TV and the materialistically permeated technosphere which efface the tracings of the earth from our inner workings. It has crossed my mind more than once that the reason why the cold fluorescence of a vacuum tube can be so addicting, so all consuming, it that it is a deceptive substitution. An electronically contrived replacement for the hypnotic glow and hissing of campfires which once burned in the regions of trees and bears, which flickered in the night in places where gods and terrors once ignited dreams - and where there was also a peace which linked us with eternity and with everything of the earth and enchantment.

In a sense, I was lucky. Because I at least had a memory to nurture me. I had been there. But the children of the Age of Information (or as Bill McKibben has more appropriately called it, the Age of Missing Information) have no such delight to draw upon. I think that they are robbed of even knowing what they yearn for.

And yet an experience happens that is unequal to anything else when a child first allows an insouciant millepede to glide up an arm. He or she gains a sense of origins, the realm that has been disappearing, thanks to their elders. But some of that world is still left (owing to the perseverance of organizations like the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy), and the more people of all ages are encouraged to learn of it and keep fooling around in it, perhaps the planet has a better chance. This is why it so crucial to transfuse learning with the wet and windblown, the sunbaked and slimy, and the creepy and crawly. This is why parents need to spend time with their kids looking at and caring for living things.

It is so important now for people, and especially for children, to enter deeply and dance with the parts of the natural world that still exist - in wildlife preserves, public forest lands, wilderness areas, patches of tall prairie grass hiding in a forgotten lot somewhere, and in all the other scattered remnants of the once Great Wild.

Done often enough, perhaps we can articulate those isolated provinces into a new continent within our minds, a mainland of feral blessing that is larger and more sentient than the pale technology that has so dismembered and disfigured the earth. In such things there is hope. We can renew our relationship to the earth in this image. Time may still be on our side.

We have to take our kids out into the woods and fields again, so they can claim for themselves the flame of Azaleas, the sucking and oozing of black swamp muck underfoot, the shock wave of a Ruffed Grouse whirring out of the bushes, and all the other inheritances of the old, rhythmic land which are still around somewhere to be touched. For the return of nature is, in reality, our own return to ourselves in nature. To reforest the forest, we have to first reforest our minds.

The world renews itself from the inside out.  
And that is Environmental Education 101.



# MON-ATHON 2000



*Celebrating Our* **MONONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST**  
WEST VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY

## Join a Mon-athon 2000 Outing in Your Wonderful Monongahela National Forest!

This is a list of "everyone invited" public outings in the Monongahela National Forest, sponsored by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and cooperating groups. Please contact the listed outing leader directly for more information on participating in an outing. This list is updated every two weeks or so. This version of the list is as of April 9, 2000. You can visit <http://www.wvhighlands.org> for the current list. See the end of this list for lots more information on Mon-Athon 2000, including how you can win fabulous outdoor recreation prizes when you recreate in the Mon!

**Saturday, April 15, 2000** -- "Pedaling to Escape the IRS" Mountain Bike Day Trip, Cranberry Wilderness Area, Pocahontas/Nicholas Counties. Easy, single track. Leader: Dave McMahon, 1624 Kenwood Rd., Charleston WV 25314, (304) 344-3620, [wv david@access.mountain.net](mailto:wv david@access.mountain.net). Don't have a bike? Dave can probably steer you to a rental or loaner (and give you an idea of how muddy you'll be getting.)

**Friday - Sunday, April 28-30, 2000** -- "Spring Fling" -- the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy Spring Review, Cheat Mountain Club, Randolph County. A three-day outdoor recreation ex-travaganza. For more information on the Spring Review, places to stay, meals, programs, contact Dave Saville, (304) 284-9548, [daves@labs.net](mailto:daves@labs.net).

**Saturday, April 29** -- There will be several day outings in the Mon, including: a kayak/canoe trip (easy level) (BYO boat, contact Tom Rodd, [thomasrodd@hotmail.com](mailto:thomasrodd@hotmail.com)), (304) 265-0018; and field trips in the Cheat Mountain Back Country, the Upper Shavers Fork Watershed, Gaudineer Knob; and more!

**Saturday, April 29** -- The 14th Annual Great Greenbrier River Race at Marlinton. Attending/participating in this Race (bikes, canoes, and running) is also a feasible day outing from the Spring Review location (about an hour). Contact Leslee McCarty, HC 64 Box 135, Hillsboro, WV 24946, (304) 653-4722, [current@inetone.net](mailto:current@inetone.net) for more information about the Race.

**Saturday, May 6, 2000** -- "Cherish the Cheat" Day Canoe Trip, Cheat River, Tucker County. Easy Class 1-2 -- Parsons to St. George. Leader: Tom Rodd, Rte 2 Box 78, Moatsville, WV 26405, (304) 265-0018, [thomasrodd@hotmail.com](mailto:thomasrodd@hotmail.com). This is a beautiful ancient river. The trip is suitable for novices. Canoe/paddle/life jacket rentals and shuttle service (package, about \$50.00 per Old Town Canoe -- reserve ahead, deposit not required, mention WVHC) from Blackwater Outdoor Adventures (Marion and Jim Browning), Rte 1 Box 239, St. George, WV, (304) 478-6260; [browning@iolinc.net](mailto:browning@iolinc.net); [www.raftboc.com](http://www.raftboc.com).

**Saturday, May 13, 2000** -- "Cranberry Backcountry" Day Hike, Pocahontas/Nicholas Counties. Easy to moderate level. Leader: Carter Zerbe, 16 Arlington Court, Charleston, WV 25301, (304) 345-2728 (H), (304) 345-3175 (O). This should be a good trip for wildflowers. Carter is a long-time Highlands Conservancy stalwart, a prodigious hiker, and many other good things. The Cranberry is the fruit of a generous creation -- including the good people who fought to protect it.

**Saturday, June 3, 2000** -- Celebrate National Trails Day. "In The Heart of the Mon" Day Hike. East Fork of the Greenbrier River, Pocahontas County. Easy to moderate. Leader: Peter Shoenfeld (the WVHC Webmaster), 713 Chesapeake Ave.,

Silver Spring, MD 20910; (301) 587-6197; [peter@cais.net](mailto:peter@cais.net). Allen DeHart, co-editor of the WVHC's Mon National Forest Hiking Guide, listed this as a favorite trail. Find out why.

**Saturday, June 10, 2000** -- "You Oughter Be in Otter" (Otter Creek, that is) Day Hike, Tucker County. Easy to moderate. Leader: Susan Bly, PO Box 207, Great Cacapon, WV 25422, (304) 258-3319, [sbly@shepherd.edu](mailto:sbly@shepherd.edu). Susan lives within a stone's throw of the Potomac in the Eastern Panhandle, but she's a-headin' over the mountains to lead this outing in the fabulous OC Wilderness. Join her for a hike amidst the stunning forest and crashing waters of this pristine wilderness area!

**Saturday, June 24, 2000** -- "Into the Earth" Day Cave Trip, Sinks of Gandy, Pendleton County. Moderate exertion level, wet. Leader: Barnes Nugent, 1978 Smithtown Road, Morgantown, WV 26508; (304) 284-9548;

[barnes@geosrv.wvnet.edu](mailto:barnes@geosrv.wvnet.edu). A guided trip through a unique high mountain cave in the middle of a remote section of the Mon -- suitable for caving novices.

**Saturday, July 15, 2000** -- "The Peak Experience" -- or, "A Simultaneous Summit Celebration!" This outing will be several day excursions -- all on the same day -- on several prominent peaks in the Mon, including (naturally) the highest point in the Mon, Spruce Knob, in Pendleton County. At least one outing will be entirely car-friendly, for mountain lovers who can't quite hack a hike. We will commune with the wind and sky, picnic, release seeds, flowers and balloons, wave flags, blow horns, etc. -- from several different peaks -- all at the same time of day. Mountain lovers in Scotland do this every year from their favorite peaks -- they call them "munros" and ascending a special peak is called "munro-bagging!" Yes, it does sound a little like the Harmonic Convergence, doesn't it? However, we don't expect the world to end -- we just plan to change it for the better!

Leader/Coordinator: Ruth Blackwell Rogers, Moon Run Farm, Kerens WV 26276, (304) 636-2662, [ruthbr@wvhighlands.org](mailto:ruthbr@wvhighlands.org). If you have a particular peak in mind, and would like an outing there, contact Ruth soon!

**Monday-Wednesday, July 17, 18, 19, 2000** -- "Backpack Extravaganza." Middle Fork of the Williams River, Cranberry Wilderness. Moderate level. Leader: Jack Slocumb, (301) 777-8810; [JSLOCOMB@prodigy.net](mailto:JSLOCOMB@prodigy.net). Jack does great outdoor writing for the Voice. Dehart and Sundquist give this one an exceptional rating for scenery -- pure wilderness feel. Meet midafternoon on July 17 at the W trailhead and hike 2 or 3 miles to set up a base camp. On July 18, hike the many trails nearby or laze or meditate in the sun and turquoise waters of the Middle Fork.

"Mon-Athon 2000" is a West Virginia Highlands Conservancy project (cooperating with others) to celebrate and enjoy our wonder-full Monongahela National Forest. Mon-Athon 2000 includes all types of outdoor recreational activity -- hiking, biking, swimming, fishing, birding, hunting, boating, skiing, etc. -- in or adjoining the Monongahela National Forest Proclamation Area (green on state road maps.) Join a Mon-Athon 2000 "everyone invited" public outing in the Mon, like the ones listed above -- and/or report on your own private outing in the Mon. (It's easy to make an outing report at <http://www.wvhighlands.org>). All outing participants, public and private, will be entered in drawings for fabulous outdoor recreation prizes. We send a free MON-ATHON 2000 T-SHIRT to everyone who submits a report! (They are cool shirts!) If you're looking for a good excuse to get out and enjoy an excursion in the Mon this year, we'd love to have YOU lead an outing. It's easy -- call, write, or e-mail for more information. Looking for ideas about recreational activities in your Monongahela National Forest? We can connect you with an experienced volunteer to talk about trip planning, destinations, gear, accommodations, etc. For more contact: Tom Rodd, c/o WVHC, PO Box 306, Charleston, WV, 25321. E-mail: [thomasrodd@hotmail.com](mailto:thomasrodd@hotmail.com). Phone: (304) 345-7663 (WVHC Charleston Office); (304) 265-0018 (Rodd home). Or go to <http://www.wvhighlands.org>.



## Check Out These Mon-Athon 2000 Activity Report Excerpts -- and Then Get in on Your Own Mon Forest Outing Experience!

**From Kristina Logsdon, Morgantown; Outing Location: Dolly Sods, Rohrbaugh Trail, April 1, 2000:** The destination of our hike was the Rohrbaugh Trail of the Dolly Sods wilderness area. We weren't looking for a long hike, just one that would fill a few hours of the day and provide a change of scenery for us Morgantownies. Unfortunately the beginning of April is still early in the year for buds and blooms in the Wilderness area. However, there was a plentitude of rhododendron which added color to the bleak, brown of winter. We did not encounter anyone on our trip, which made the hike a silent, solitary hike, one we were looking for. The trail bypasses an outcropping of rocks, I believe they are called Bear Rocks, which overlook Red Creek and parallel the ridge line containing Lion's Head. The sun was beginning to lower in the sky and the wind helped us cool off from our hike. The view is one of trees, valleys, and, well, "nature." A great trip if you want to forget the city including the people (since we never encountered anyone).

**From Ruth Blackwell Rogers, Kerens; Outing Location: Blackwater Canyon Rim Trail, March 18, 2000:** Hikers met at the Olson Tower parking lot and introduced ourselves to each other as we looked at maps of the area. Most participants climbed the tower and took in the amazing view all around. Braving the cold wind above the trees, we could see the opposite rim of Blackwater Canyon, the tip of a ski slope in Canaan Valley, the Mt. Storm power station in Grant County, another in Maryland, another in Harrison County, the Dry Fork Canyon, Otter Creek Wilderness area, the Fernow Experimental Forest, Parsons, the Shavers Fork River and the Cheat River, and the long scalloped ridge of Laurel Mountain. Whew!

The hike leader had put up a sign, "March Madness Hike this way" at the beginning of Forest Road 117. A passerby, new to West Virginia, saw it and rushed to join the hike. He told us, "Madness! That's for me!" Larry Kaeser recently retired to the Weston area from New Jersey, and was a welcome addition to our group. One of the hikers was an 8-yr-old boy accompanying his uncle. Only a few yards into the hike, his uncle identified showshoe hare tracks in the snow under the hemlocks. An exciting way to begin a hike!

The trail proceeded gently downhill through mixed hardwoods to the canyon's rim where it joined an old logging railroad grade. Through the tree trunks we enjoyed views of the opposite side of Blackwater Canyon. Abundant rhododendron and mountain laurel line the trail and create a fairyland garden in summer. Cherry and yellow birch stand above large carpets of club moss. At one point several hikers noticed a small stand of pines, but were unable to identify the species. The trail ends at Big Run, which we crossed and walked another .2 mile to the overlook just off FS 18.

The 8-yr-old, Ian, kept himself going by periodically describing each item in his uncle's pack. "There's a donut in Uncle's pack." Later, "We bought subs." Later, "How far is lunch?" Later, "There's chocolate on the donut." By the time we reached the large stone slab at the overlook, we were all ready for lunch. Lunchtime gave us the opportunity to get to know each other a bit. Most hikers had brought peanut butter sandwiches, gorp, and fruit, but one couple, Young and Chung Moon of Huttonsville

unpacked chopsticks and containers filled with rice and beans and sauteed vegetables. From a large thermos they poured hot herb tea which they passed around. Chung said this particular tea reduces the salt content of the blood. The Moons moved to the Tygart Valley a year ago to raise green tea.

The overlook gave us a good view of part of the south side of Blackwater Canyon, including some of Allegheny Wood Products' logging roads. The largest logging road was clearly spilling silt downhill at one spot. Several hikers had not anticipated this view and were shocked. Hike leader Ruth Blackwell Rogers had announced she would put her feet in Big Run, which she happily did. Seeing the pleasure and stimulation it caused, Tom Rodd and Jack Slocomb removed their boots and put their feet in the stream. The water was not numbing, only revivingly cold!

✦



Part of a great Mon-Athon 2000 hike on Otter Creek -- Pizza and Ice Cream at C.J.'s in Parsons! From left to right: Bill Rodd, Yuong Moon, Rich McGervey, Helena Gouws, Tom Rodd, Chung Moon, Hugh Rogers. Photo: Tom Rodd

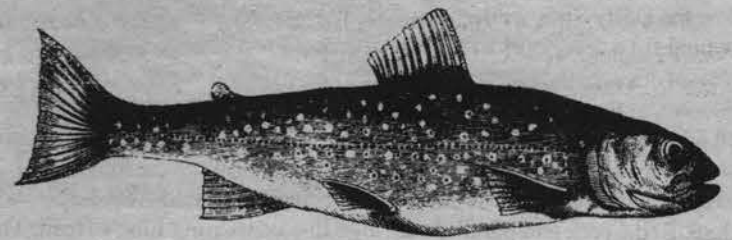


Mon-Athon 2000 hikers along Otter Creek -- a happy crowd! Photo: Tom Rodd



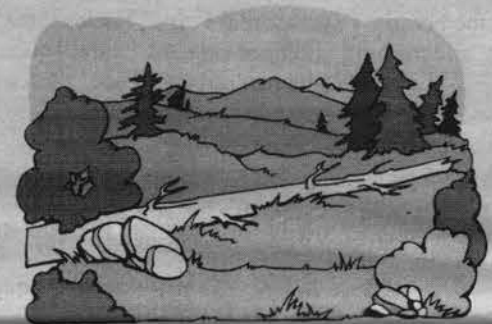
**Head of Shavers Fork**

Grand Mountain !  
Rising high amongst blue Allegheny Peaks.  
Thunder crashes rumble forever  
disappearing into scenic peaks surrounding.  
Sun and Fog.



Grand Mountain.  
Strung with wires and cables, big machines, empty chairs.  
Winters they spray water on your shores  
to lure the people.  
Dead Spruce.

Grand Mountain.  
Below you Beaver dammed.  
Large Trout swam alone.  
Now the Builders have their pond, the Beaver ponds now removed.  
Flowing Rivers.



Grand Mountain.  
Bluffs edged with little row houses.  
Endless sounds of beeping bulldozers.  
If They build it They will come.  
They did.

Ode to Snowshoe Resort  
Allegheny Echoes Workshop  
© June 1997 Robert F. Gates



Canaan Valley (from West Virginia Highlands Conservancy archives)

## Coal River 6th Most Endangered River in America

*Mountain Top Removal Mining Is Cause – Residents in this Region Given Short Thrift from Politicians*

West Virginia's Coal River is listed as the sixth Most Endangered River in America, according to American Rivers, a national river conservation organization.

Organizations who nominated the Coal River for this designation are: West Virginia Rivers Coalition, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, Coal River Mountain Watch, Trapp Hill Watershed Association, Horse Creek Community Association, and Coal River Watershed Preservation Association.

Mountaintop removal coal mining lops off the tops of mountains to reach thin seams of coal. Millions of tons of waste material -- leftover earth and rock -- are dumped into headwater stream valleys, creating "valley fills."

This is destroying the Coal River.

"This is a bittersweet announcement to make," said Nathan Fetty, program associate for the West Virginia Rivers Coalition, and writer of the nomination. "In the Coal River watershed, at least 220 miles of streams have been buried under millions of tons of waste from valley fills. Today, segments of the Coal River, which used to run twelve feet deep, are now at depths which even canoes cannot navigate." Sediment from mountaintop removal mining and the associated deforestation is filling in the river, altering it and the habitat and water quality it provides.

"The Coal River has lost a multitude of headwater streams to valley fills associated with large scale strip mining, and it is targeted to lose many more," said Cindy Rank, mining chair for the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. "In March, there were an additional 30 or more fills in the Coal River basin included in mine plans

for a dozen new permits that are already in the pipeline awaiting approval."

In October 1999, US Chief District Judge Charles Haden II ruled that perennial and intermittent streams could not be filled with mining waste, consistent with the Clean Water Act and the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act. These federal laws were written to protect our nation's waterways and to responsibly guide surface mining. According to Judge Haden's ruling, the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) was granting permits that did not conform to these federal regulations.

"Simply, if coal was mined according to the law, much senseless destruction of West Virginia's exceptional rivers and streams would end," said Jeremy P. Muller, executive director of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition.

Efforts are either on-going, or have been attempted, to alter the law so that mountaintop removal coal mining can continue to be permitted as before. An end-of-session legislative rider by the West Virginia congressional delegation did not pass in November of 1999. Currently, the Clinton/Gore administration has instructed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) to re-define what constitutes fill material. This would legalize the disposal of mining waste in our rivers and streams, and would gut the Clean Water Act, setting water quality degradation precedents for the entire nation.

"We are very concerned about the Clinton/Gore administration's efforts to change the definition of fill material, due to its impact on West Virginia's rivers and streams, and the country as a whole," said Muller.

Clean water is our greatest and most precious natural resource," said Judy Bonds, community outreach coordinator for Coal River

Mountain Watch. "If we do not act now to stop the destruction of our waterways, our children will pay dearly."

Another serious threat to protections from mountaintop removal is an appeal of the Haden ruling by DEP, pending in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. It is expected to be heard later this year.

As part of the settlement of a federal lawsuit, state and federal regulatory agencies must develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for mountaintop removal and valley fills. The EIS is intended to evaluate the effects of mountaintop removal on rivers and streams, mountains and forests, and West Virginians and their communities. A draft EIS will go out for public comment this summer.

"West Virginians need to call on the appropriate regulatory agencies, like DEP, EPA, and the Army Corps, to develop an EIS that protects people and our rivers and mountains from this destruction," said Fetty. "The fate of the Coal River and hundreds of rivers and streams affected by valley fills hangs in the balance of a couple of crucial decisions to be made in the upcoming months."

"There are a lot of things in this life we can live without, but water is not one of them," said Bonds.

The Coal River ranking as the sixth most endangered river in America this year is the sixth consecutive year that West Virginia has had a river listed on the American Rivers report.

"This designation brings even more national attention to the damage valley fills are doing to our rivers and streams," said Fetty. "But it's disheartening to have the Coal named an endangered river two years in a row."

The Coal River was listed as the country's ninth most endangered river in 1999. The Cheat River was listed in 1995 and 1996 for acid mine drainage, and the Potomac River was listed in 1997 and 1998 due to pollution from factory poultry farms.

"It is unfortunate that West Virginia has another river in peril, but thinking positively, this recognition of the Coal River's current condition is a step towards protecting it," said Muller.

In a separate report released earlier this year by U.S. Public Interest Research Group (USPIRG), West Virginia's Ohio and Kanawha rivers were recently ranked 4th and 15th respectively in America for the amount of toxic materials released into them.

*This message is delivered by West Virginia Rivers Coalition, seeking the conservation and restoration of West Virginia's exceptional rivers and streams. For more information, visit us on the Web at [www.wvrivers.org](http://www.wvrivers.org) or call 304-637-7201.*



How can a river survive this kind of devastation?  
Photo: Penny Loeb & the US News & World Report



## CLEAN WATER from page 1

Here's what signing onto the West Virginians for Clean Water Campaign means to your group:

- ◆ enhancing the ability for all of us working on water issues to effect state policy
- ◆ the opportunity to sign-on to letters of comment or support regarding clean water issues. *It is important to note that each West Virginians for Clean Water Campaign member has a choice as whether or not to sign-on to each letter.* We will circulate each letter asking for your endorsement. Signing on to the Campaign does not mean that you have to support or endorse every individual action, but it does mean that you agree with the campaign goal of working to ensure compliance with and enforcement of the Clean Water Act in West Virginia.
- ◆ the ability to communicate and network with a group of like-minded (and sometimes not so like-minded) folks on water issues
- ◆ the opportunity to join an email working group of folks who talk and work on developing comments and policy statements for the campaign
- ◆ name recognition and publicity, as we would request listing your name as a campaign member in brochures, newsletters and websites (and yes, we will establish links to your website!)
- ◆ the opportunity to receive alerts, news flashes and action items on issues by email
- ◆ the satisfaction of helping to keep the rivers you love clean or working to clean them up!
- ◆ oops, we almost forgot to mention.....it's free

### The Problems We Face

Only 42 percent of rivers in West Virginia have water quality that fully supports aquatic life uses. Metals and siltation are the most common water quality problems in our rivers and lakes. Fecal coliforms and acidity also impair a large number of river miles.

More than 7 million pounds of toxic pollution were released in West Virginia in 1997, ranking the state 12th highest in the country for toxic releases to surface waters.

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), during the period from 1994 to 1996, West Virginia had 199 water systems in violation of EPA standards, which is 12 percent of the state's systems.

The total population affected by these violations is 247,866 people or 16 percent of our state's population.

### What You Can Do

We are hopeful that you will join the West Virginians for Clean Water Campaign and help solve these problems together. This effort will require large numbers of people and diverse

**YES!** WE'RE SIGNING-ON TO THE WEST VIRGINIANS FOR CLEAN WATER CAMPAIGN. WE SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN'S GOAL TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT IN WEST VIRGINIA.

By signing-on to the campaign, our group:

- ◆ Effects West Virginia's water quality policy
- ◆ Can sign-on to letters of comment/support for clean water issues, and has a choice of whether or not to sign onto each letter. (Signing onto the campaign doesn't mean we have to support every individual action.)
- ◆ Communicates and networks with other folks working on water issues
- ◆ Can join an e-mail working group to develop comments and policy statements
- ◆ Gets name recognition and publicity through brochures, newsletters and websites
- ◆ Will receive alerts, news flashes and action items by e-mail
- ◆ Gains satisfaction of helping keep rivers clean, or working to clean them up
- ◆ Joins at no cost!

WE'D LIKE MORE INFORMATION BEFORE SIGNING ON TO THE WEST VIRGINIANS FOR CLEAN WATER CAMPAIGN. PLEASE CONTACT US SO WE CAN TALK FURTHER OR SET UP A MEETING IN PERSON TO DISCUSS THE CAMPAIGN.

YOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

\* The best way to contact me is at \_\_\_\_\_

When you have completed this form, please mail it to us at: West Virginia Rivers Coalition, 801 North Randolph Avenue, Elkins, WV 26241. Thanks!

resources to work. We want to pool people and blend resources to work towards fishable, swimmable and drinkable waters throughout West Virginia. *To join the West Virginians for Clean Water Campaign, please sign and return the adjacent form and together we'll go to work to conserve and restore our wonderful rivers and streams!*

If you would like to learn more or have a West Virginians for Clean Water Campaign representative come talk to your organization, please feel free to contact us at (304) 637-7201 or by email [wvrc@neumedia.net](mailto:wvrc@neumedia.net).

*Pam Moe-Merritt is the conservation program director for the West Virginia Rivers Coalition and is the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy's Rivers Committee Chair.* ❀



## Granny D

*I am amazed that the AMAZING trek by Granny D across the breadth of this nation has not attracted more publicity from the mainstream press. I was in Florida when Granny D hit Washington, DC, on February 29. I would have thought that this event would have had major front page coverage. Yet I only found a small insert about Granny D in only ONE of the two newspapers that I read during the whole time I was in Florida. To me, this is spooky. Perhaps this was just an aberration, and that, overall, she did get a lot of coverage in the nation's newspapers.*

*Yet, for example, I saw nothing in the Gazette on-line about it. Ed.*

### Some excerpts of Granny D's remarks in Washington, DC

"Before the rise of the Environmental Movement, a senator might have looked upon a polluted Hudson river and said that the old river is simply paying the inevitable price for progress. But now, after so much sickness endured, so much new understanding gained of our fragile network of life, and after so much effort by so many, we see the insensitivity and ignorance of such a statement. How did anyone dare think that our beautiful land stretches itself out for companies to ravage for their profit and our misery?"

"Before the Campaign Finance Reform Movement, which grows every day now with such power that it shakes the political parties to their foundations, a senator might have advised his fellow member to not worry about voting down campaign reforms, because the people don't care. That is, in fact, what Senators McConnell and Lott did say -- and that is what precipitated my walk. I have come to tell them that they are wildly mistaken, and I am glad to have you along to add your voices to mine. ....

"What might we call the selling of our government from under us? What might we call a change of government -- from a government of, by and for the people, to a government by and for the wealthy elite?.....

"Of course you may not have our democratic republic to sell. What our family members died for, we do not forget. They died for our freedom and equality, not for a government of the rich alone.

"Along my three thousand miles through the heart of America, which I made to disprove your lie, did I meet anyone who thought that their voice as an equal citizen now counts for much in the corrupt halls of Washington? No, I did not. Did I meet anyone who felt anger or pain over this? I did indeed, and I watched them shake with rage sometimes when they spoke, and I saw tears well up in their eyes.

"The time for this shame is ending. The American people see it and have decided against it. Our brooms are ballots, and we come a-sweeping. We will visit every state where anti-reform Senators are up for reelection and

bring with us the long lists of your corruptions, and I will be with them. You will try to buy your way out if it with expensive advertisements. But we will take such spending as further proof of your corruption, for Americans pay ten dollars in extra taxes for each dollar you receive for your campaigns from special interests. ....

"Now, Senators, ..... If I have offended you speaking this way on your front steps, that is as it should be; You have offended America and you have dishonored the best things it stands for. Take your wounded pride, get off your backs and onto your feet, and go across the street to clean your rooms. You have somewhere on your desks, under the love letters from your greedy friends and co-conspirators against representative democracy, a modest bill against soft money. Pass it. Then show that you are clever lads by devising new ways for a great people to talk to one another again without the necessity of great wealth. If you cannot do that, then get out of the way --go home to some other corruption, less harmful to a great nation. We have millions of people more worthy of these fine offices." ❖

## Letters

### Greetings:

My name is Larry McNeely II. I grew up in Buckhannon, and am currently a public administration graduate student at WVU.

I want to personally invite the Highlands Conservancy to join in a very promising organizing effort. In Seattle last November, despite the actions of a few extreme protestors and the excesses of the Seattle police, an incredible thing happened. Labor and environmental groups found common ground.

This April 8-17, activism centered around the negative aspects of corporate globalization will once again make headlines, this time in DC. (SEE <www.a16.org>, <www.aficio.org> and <www.j2000usa.org>) I, along with representatives of student groups here including the Student Sierras, the Independent Steel Workers Union, and community members are starting to organize a very loose network of folks interested in participating in the April events.

We had our first meeting Thursday, March 9, and we are generating an email list planning events, on which labor, students, and environmentalists can collaborate. I invite you to participate in these efforts, or at least to join our email list to keep aware of our efforts.

If you are interested, you may certainly contact me at <larry\_mcneely@hotmail.com> or call me at (304) 685-5283.

Thank you.

Larry C. McNeely II

*This from an e-mail message to Julian Martin. The message has been edited for grammar, spelling and punctuation. Ed.*

Hi Julian,

Here is a letter I sent to the Mon.Nat.Forest supervisor -- thought you would like to see his response!

Dear Mr.Myers,

I am writing to express my disapproval of the way trails and roads have been closed to the public to let an individual like John Crites run his timbering operation! AWP [Allegheny Wood Products] owns land they can fly over to move their logs instead of shutting down public land. We are frequent visitors to this area. Can you tell me when this land will be reopened (not just on Sundays)?

I just wonder if Crites wasn't a friend of the Governor's, would this have ever happened? If other WV residents wanted land like this closed, I don't think it would happen, do you?

Thank You,

Barb & John M. Haynes 119 Crescent Circle  
Spencer, WV 25276 (304)927-2279

### From E-mail

Just a note to say "Bravo!" to Betsy Reeder's poem, "Appalachia," in the March issue of The Highlands Voice. It has been a long time since a poem left me as breathless as this one did. Thank you, Betsy Reeder. And thank you, WVHC.

All best,

Patty Marsh March 29, 2000 ❖



## The Ever Present Presence of the Master

On Corridor H West between Elkins and Weston, four-year-old "Robert C. Byrd Highway" signs have been joined by shiny new blue ones that read, "Robert C. Byrd Appalachian Highway System." Have you seen these on other corridors?

Our curiosity got the better of us, and so for the past month we have endured full-body security precautions to get into the secret Robert C. Byrd Sign Shop. Finally, after the CAT scan, we were taken by a shadowy escort far beneath the Allegheny Front, on the old southern route of Corridor H, into a space originally designed for a tunnel but now much enlarged. There we found Pitney Arbogast working at a giant computer. He turned off the monitor as we approached. He was quite affable and willing to answer our questions.

According to Mr. Arbogast, new signs became necessary after the Robert C. Byrd Highway was added to the Robert C. Byrd Freeway, Robert C. Byrd Expressway, Robert C. Byrd Drive, and Robert C. Byrd Bridge. "The truckers didn't know where they were," he said. "Some of them tried to drive onto the Robert C. Byrd Lock and Dam. So we made up a sign to let them know they were always on the Robert C. Byrd System. Now they can't get lost."

"That Appalachian Highway System is nearly forty years old, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes, but you know the Interstates are even older and they just got around to putting up signs for the 'Eisenhower Interstate System'."

"We thought the Appalachian Regional Commission was President Kennedy's idea. Why not call it the John F. Kennedy Appalachian Highway System?"

"Not in West Virginia."

"Can we expect more new signs?"

"You bet. Once we realized how

confusing it was for the truckers, we began to think of the ordinary citizen. There's the Robert C. Byrd Industrial Park, Technology Center, Aerospace and Technology Center, Hospitality and Tourism Center, Cancer Research Center, Hardwood Center, Visitors Center, Community Center, High School, and Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing. And many more parks, centers, schools, institutes, and federal buildings to come. Not to mention the statues. People need to be reassured that it's all one thing, really."

Mr. Arbogast turned on the monitor. Immediately, a set of signs in authoritative hues of deep blue, brown, and black appeared on the screen: "Robert C. Byrd Economic System." "Robert C. Byrd Educational System." "Robert C. Byrd Financial System."

We agreed that the signs looked smooth and reassuring. Mr. Arbogast said they weren't finished. "By the end of the week, we have to decide whether to add 'Appalachian,' for consistency. What do you think?"

We sympathized with the difficulty of his work. "Robert C. Byrd Appalachian Financial System" conveyed a certain ambiguity.

Our shadowy escort was becoming impatient. He was so shadowy we could not glimpse his face no matter how quickly we turned our heads. "That's what comes of leaving these things to narrow-minded technocrats," he said.

"What would you suggest?"

"Skip the small stuff. Go direct to the 'Robert C. Byrd System of Life As We Know It'."



### Don's Comments:

This is now clearly the law. Citizens suits were felt necessary in the 1970s when these laws were written, and they have proven to be so. Some congressmen are now trying to change the law. Find out if yours are representing your interests. Warn the Clinton Administration not to let this happen. ✦

## Supreme Court Upholds Citizens Suits Against Polluters Submitted by Don Gasper

(This note is from the March 2000 issue of the "Bay Journal," a 20-page monthly newspaper available for the asking from Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, 6600 York Road - Suite 100, Baltimore, MD 21212)

The Supreme Court in January upheld the right of citizens groups to sue alleged polluters for violations of federal law.

The 7-2 decision gives environmentalists one of their biggest legal victories of the past 20 years. The ruling is expected to have a major impact because citizen suits against alleged polluters often exceed the positions government regulators have pursued.

Ruling in a Clean Water Act suit filed by Friends of the Earth against a South Carolina hazardous waste incinerator now owned by Safety-Kleen Corp., the court rejected the argument of business groups and conservative legal organizations that only government agencies can enforce the law. The groups also said such cases should be dismissed if a company has stopped the alleged violation.

The court returned the case to a lower court, overturning an appeals court decision that had dismissed the suit.

Writing for the court, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said cases could only be dismissed if it were clear the alleged illegal conduct could not reasonably be expected to reoccur.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice Antonin Scalia said the Clean Water Act's citizen suit provision 'turns over to private citizens the function of enforcing the law.' He said the court's decision 'has grave implications for democratic governance.' Justice Clarence Thomas joined in the dissent.



*The exploiters of West Virginia's natural world are rich and powerful. They have no qualms about destroying our beautiful state in the name of greed. To save as much as we can of West Virginia, we need your help. Won't you become a member of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and do YOUR part to help us? Please take time right now to write your membership check and send it to us*

Category	Individual	Family	Organizational
Senior/Student	\$12	-	-
Regular	15	\$25	\$50
Associate	30	50	100
Sustaining	50	100	200
Patron	100	200	400
Mountaineer	200	300	600

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/ State/ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

- Membership Benefits**
- ★ The Highlands Voice each month
  - ★ Special weekend programs held around the state -- days filled with field trips, hikes, workshops and just plain fun.
  - ★ Representation through WVHC efforts to monitor legislative and agency activity
  - ★ A chance to make new friends with values you share.
  - ★ Knowing you are doing your part to protect West Virginia's natural heritage.

Make checks payable to: the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. Mail to: P. O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321

**West Virginia Highlands Conservancy**  
Working since 1967 to protect our lands, our waters and the rich natural heritage of West Virginia.

## Calendar

**April 14 thru 15** - Plan to join thousands in protest in Washington, DC, against the IMF and the World Bank. The International Forum on Globalization will sponsor a teach-in at the Foundry United Methodist Church, 1500 16<sup>th</sup> St, NW from 10 AM to 10:30 PM. Call 888-629-9269 for information.

**April 15 & 16** - Annual Meeting & Workshops of the Forest Watch Coalition at High Rocks Academy near the Cranberry visitors Center. The weekend will include the usual business meeting, required in the Coalition's by-laws. But the majority of the schedule will be devoted to initiating work on a Citizens' Plan for the Monongahela National Forest. The existing Plan for the Mon will be revised in 2001, and we must take the opportunity to develop our own vision of the future for the Mon National Forest. Joining us will be Brian O'Donnell of the Wilderness Support Ctr in Durango CO, and Kristen Sykes of the American Lands Alliance in Washington, DC.

**April 15** - Dave McMahan will try to get you muddied up in the Cranberry Wilderness area on this adventuresome mountain bike outing. See page 8.

**April 16** - Second annual Earth Day Festival sponsored by The Shepherd Environmental Organization. The event will take place on a field on the campus of Shepherd College. Educational, informative and fun. There will be live entertainment all day from 10:00-6:00 consisting of Jazz, Bluegrass, Blues, and much more. Food (including vegetarian) and drink will be available. There will be a large tent in case of rain.

**April 19** - Earth Day event at Marshall University in Huntington. Noon to 3 PM.

entertainment, interactive events, and display tables on the plaza.

**April 28 thru 30** - West Virginia Highlands Conservancy's "Spring Review." Held at the Cheat Mountain Club which is located on the banks of the Shavers Fork River in the heart of the Monongahela National Forest. Call Dave Saville at 284-9548 for details.

**May 13** - Hike with Carter Zerbe in the Cranberry backcountry. See page 8.

**May 19 & 20** - Mid-Atlantic Land Trust Staff Retreat & Conference. US Fish & Wildlife Service, National Conference & Training Center, Shepherdstown. For further information, call 1-877-514-7900 or visit <www.lta.org>

**June 3** - Day hike on East Fork of Greenbrier River with Peter Shoenfeld. See page 8.

**June 10** - Otter Creek day hike in Tucker County with Susan Bly. See page 8.

**June 24** - Day cave trip with Barnes Nugent. Wet and requires moderate exertion. See page 8.

**July 8th, 2000 (Saturday)** - WVHC Board of Directors meeting, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, location to be announced later.

**July 15** - A "peak experience" excursion with Ruth Blackwell Rogers. See page 8.

**July 17 thru 19** - Cranberry Wilderness backpack trip with Jack Slocumb. See page 8.

**October 13th, 14th, & 15th, 2000** - WVHC Fall Review (Board of Directors meeting on Sunday the 15th). Location and other details to be announced later.

✦

## Trout Stream Study to be Conducted to Measure Impact of Acid Rain

*An Invitation to Assist in this Project*  
By Rick Webb

I would like to call your attention to VTSSS 2000. During the last week of April of this year, a near-census sampling survey of western Virginia's native brook trout streams will be conducted to determine the status of this biologically defined class of streams relative to the problem of atmospheric acid deposition (acid rain).

Perhaps the Highlands Conservancy can contribute to the success of this effort.

VTSSS (the Virginia Trout Stream Sensitivity Survey) was initiated in 1987 as a cooperative effort involving the Department of Environmental Sciences at the University of Virginia, Trout Unlimited (TU), and a number of government agencies with natural resource responsibilities. At that time, almost 400 stream sites were sampled in a 13-day period. The sample collection effort, involving 165 sample collectors, was organized and coordinated by Virginia TU leaders. Analysis of the samples and interpretation of the data was performed by watershed scientists at the Department of Environmental Sciences at UVA.

VTSSS 2000, will serve to establish the current acid-base chemistry of Virginia's native brook trout streams and allow examination of changes that have occurred during the last 13 years. The information obtained through VTSSS 2000 may prove critical to the long-term well being of these streams and the forested mountain landscapes in which they occur.

Virginia TU has again taken the leadership role in organizing the sampling effort.

It is, however, a very large undertaking and TU is reaching out to other environmental, conservation, and civic groups for help in enlisting sample collection coordinators and volunteers.

For more information on VTSSS 2000 and how to become involved please visit the website established to support the project.

The website address is:

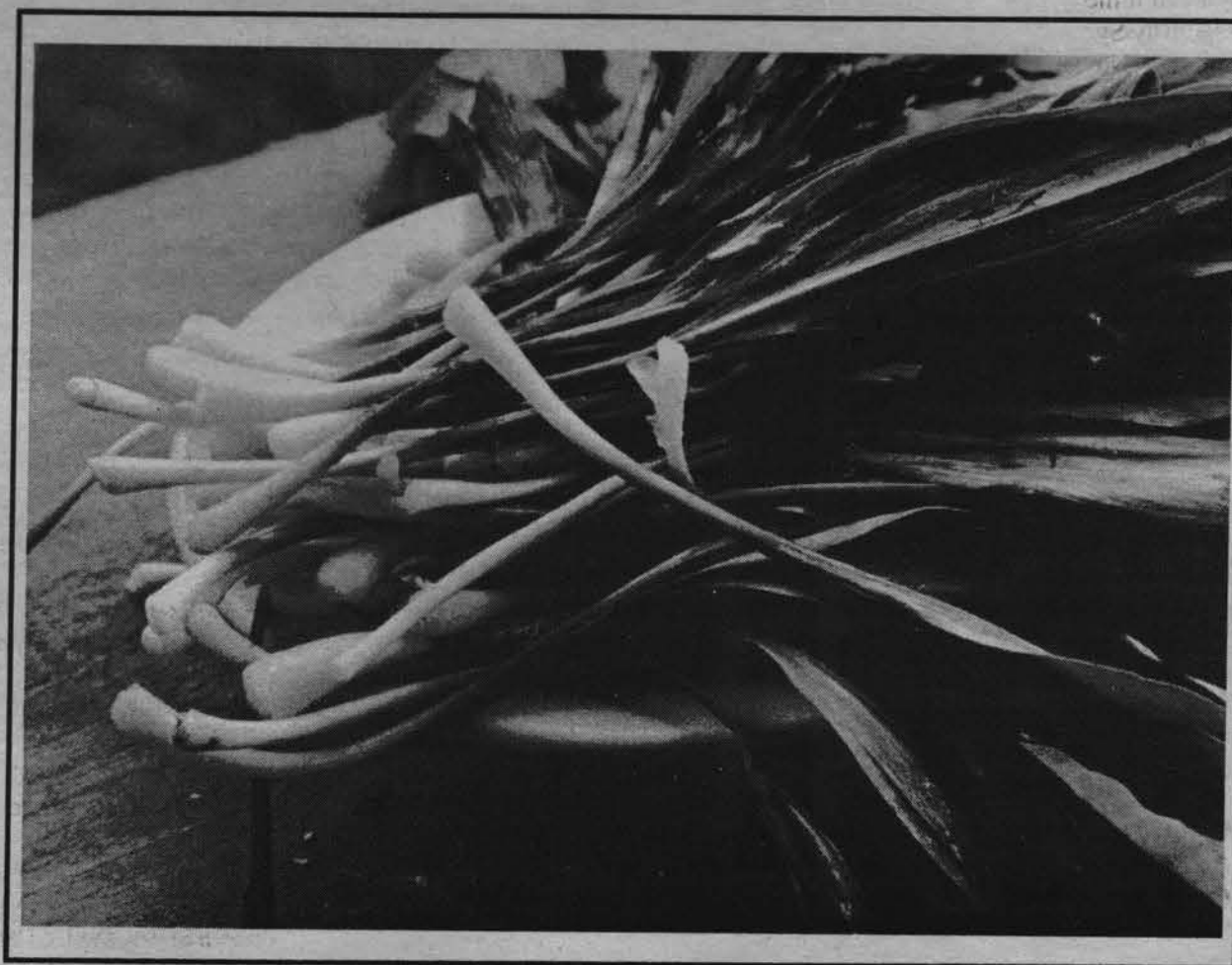
<http://www.his.com/~mwaters/VTSSS2000.html>

Please forward this email to others in the organization and do what you can to help pub-

licize the effort. We need your help.

Please don't hesitate to contact me directly if you like.

(Rick Webb, VTSSS Project Coordinator, can be contacted at the Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903; 804-924-7817 - Office, 804-982-2300 - Fax, 540-468-2881 - Home, <[rwebb@virginia.edu](mailto:rwebb@virginia.edu)> <<http://wsrv.clas.virginia.edu/~swasftp>> )



From the Archives

## National Park Study of Blackwater Canyon

### Senator Jay Rockefeller Comes Through!

(From press release of April 7 by Judy Rodd)

Senator Jay Rockefeller, D.- WV, has expressed his support for a National Park Service study of the Blackwater Canyon in Tucker County, according to leaders of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. Rockefeller met with Conservancy leaders on Thursday, March 31, when a delegation from West Virginia visited Washington to drum up support for public protection of the scenic Canyon.

"We are extremely grateful that Senator Rockefeller has expressed support for the National Park study process," said Judy Rodd, Senior Vice President of the Conservancy.

"Senator Rockefeller has consistently worked for protection of Blackwater Canyon," said Rodd. "He spoke out early about the desirability of protecting the entire Canyon -- and we wish that his advice had been heeded at the outset."

The proposed National Park Service study, which still must be approved and funded by Congress, was recently announced by Senator Robert C. Byrd, D.-WV. In his announcement, Byrd said that the Blackwater Canyon is a "one of West Virginia's most cherished natural treasures."

"Blackwater Canyon is the 'Crown Jewel' of West Virginia's scenic resources," said Rodd. "The Rockefeller family has been in the forefront of land protection all over the nation, and we hope that the Senator will be able to play a role in protecting this precious landscape in his own backyard."

Protection and public acquisition of the entire Canyon has been endorsed by Congressman and gubernatorial candidate Bob Wise, D-WV. Democratic gubernatorial candidate Jim Lees and Mountain Party hopeful, Denise Giardinia, also support public acquisition of the Canyon.

Republican Governor Cecil Underwood has so far only supported public acquisition of 200 acres of the 3,000 acre tract in the Canyon, that was recently purchased by timber magnate John Crites. Crites is a major political supporter of Underwood. Underwood is being sued by the Highlands Conservancy over a proposal to give Crites an access road through Blackwater Falls State Park. †



### A Plea from Julian Martin

We need volunteers to help get out newsletters, etc., on Blackwater Canyon at our office in the Asbury Methodist Church in Charleston. Contact me through email or call me at 342-8989(home) or 345-7663(Office number) if you can help.

Judy Rodd, the driving force behind the Blackwater Canyon campaign, needs help paying the rent on the office at Asbury. Currently she is paying the rent from her own pocket. The rent is \$100 per month. I just pledged \$25 a month. Anyone wanting to contribute any amount to the rent send your pledge and contributions to Judy Rodd, Asbury United Methodist Church, 501 Elizabeth Street, Charleston, 25311 WV. Make checks out to Judy Rodd and indicate it is for office rent.

(Julian Martin is a board member of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and the Director of the WVHC Speakers' Bureau.)



### Blackwater Bear Comes out of Hibernation Looking for a Home:

Retired Division of Natural Resources Bear Man, Joe Riffenberger, has donated this hand carved bear to the Blackwater Campaign of the West Virginia-Highlands Conservancy. Joe wants you to join with him in protecting the Blackwater Canyon and getting it into public ownership. Please help by bidding on this friendly bear made of cherry wood by calling (304) 345-7663 before June 1, 2000. We will give you the latest bid and call you during the final week to see if you want to go higher. The bidding can also be done on our website: <[www.wvhighlands.org](http://www.wvhighlands.org)>. The bear will be on display at the WV Highlands Conservancy Spring Review at the Cheat Mountain Club from April 28-30, 2000.

Help Save Blackwater Canyon...Buy the Blackwater Bear. Bidding starts at \$500.

### Tucker County Citizens Want Blackwater Canyon to be a National Park

Results of Year 2000 Citizen Poll in the 14th Senatorial District (Sen. Jon Blair Hunter)

Blackwater Canyon is in Senator Hunter's district.

On the statement "Encourage developing Blackwater Canyon into a National Park" citizens responded:

Agree	252
Disagree	79

Thus we have a margin of over 3 to 1 among the local people in Tucker and surrounding counties in favor of permanent protection of Blackwater Canyon according to this poll.

(Source: Sen. Hunter's summary of his 2000 citizen poll results.) †

### What's Inside

Page 1 ... WV Clean Water Campaign - Pam Moe-Merritt

Page 2 ... Guest columnists, father and son Rogers, "Another Path to Activism" // roster

Page 3 ... Hasty column, "Inconspicuous Consumption"

Page 4 ... Editorial, "Environmental Education - Spiritual Transformation?// hiking guide order form//

Page 5 ... Karpan ousted// quotation fr. Gary Gardner

Page 6 ... Slocomb on environmental education

Pages 8 & 9 .. Mona-Thon 2000

Page 10 .. Gates poem

Page 11 .. Coal River 6<sup>th</sup> most endangered river in America

Page 12 .. Sign-on sheet for WV Clean Water campaign

Page 13 .. Granny D// Letters

Page 14 .. Ubiquitous Robert C Byrd name// Supreme Court upholds citizens' right to sue// WVHC enrolment form

Page 15 .. Calendar// Trout stream study - Webb

Page 16 .. Rockefeller for BWC NP study// Auction for Riffenberger bear// Martin plea// Tucker Cty poll on BWC