



# The Highlands

# Voice

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## Corridor H Lawsuit Settled !

### Highway Broken up

By Hugh Rogers

Corridor H Alternatives, the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, and our thirteen co-plaintiffs have reached a settlement agreement in federal court with state and federal agencies. The proposed highway will be broken into nine separate projects--some could be built soon, others won't see the bulldozers for years to come and not at all if resistance is successful. The state does not have the money to build even a third of the total now. The battle will continue over each project's funding and environmental impacts. As a single \$1.5 billion project, Corridor H is dead. Here are the important details:

(1) From Kerens to Davis, through the Monongahela National Forest, the highway department (WVDOT) must start all over. It has agreed to study new alignments to avoid Corricks Ford Battlefield, in the valley of the Shavers Fork, and the Blackwater Canyon from Hendricks to Thomas. The environmental impact studies (EIS) will take two years or more.

(2) From just west of Wardensville to the Virginia line, there will be no construction for twenty years, unless Virginia reverses its decision not to build Corridor H to I-81, or traffic increases dramatically on WV 55. The latter exception must meet specific standards. Wardensville will receive \$1 million over five years to help it prepare for the transition.

(3) There could be another realignment around Greenland Gap, whose eligibility for increased protection will be decided by the Keeper

of the National Register of Historic Places. That process will require further delay.

Altogether, the delays affect close to 40% of the Corridor.

(4) North of Elkins, construction will resume immediately as far as Kerens. Elsewhere, historic-site studies are continuing, but new construction is likely soon from Moorefield over South Branch Mountain to Baker. Those projects can't be challenged on the issues already decided in court. However, if new issues come up involving other environmental laws or future actions by the highway department, they may be litigated.

(5) This year, WVDOT will study the necessary improvements on US 50 from the Keyser area east, and will publicize its findings and plans. That highway carries much more traffic than the roads to be replaced by Corridor H. It is an obvious rival for the "matching" money the state plans to spend.

(6) Other points covered in the agreement: complete avoidance of Big Run Bog's watershed; release at last of funds for the rail-trail through Randolph, Tucker, and Grant counties; better enforcement of truck weight limits on US 219 - traffic has increased as truckers avoided the better-policed routes; removal of the "Build-It" signs from highway right-of-way; redesign of an unsafe Corridor H intersection at Kerens; and publication of projected schedules and other information.

From the beginning of this controversy, WVDOT has had a single-minded idea on how to improve transportation in the Highlands region: Just build Corridor H. Our opposing view has recognized many factors, including environmental, historic, economic, and broader transportation issues. In the same way, while they have one view of the settlement, we know it is a complex document.

They say the agreement is all about removing obstacles to construction. However, we settled only the pending litigation. We got as much as we could reasonably expect from our 4(f) lawsuits: protection for the Shavers Fork and Blackwater Canyon areas, further study of Greenland Gap, and breathing space for Wardensville. We held on to the right to sue if necessary over the Kerens-to-Davis environmental impact statements, the outcome at Greenland Gap, the Wardensville delay, and other commitments in the agreement. Issues that come up in the future may be brought to court as well. We specifically reserved the right to sue under the Endangered Species Act.

Delay is built into the agreement, from the EIS preparations in the west to the moratorium in the east. Delay is important to us because it allows time for more reasonable decisions on how to spend our limited tax dollars. Polls we have seen over the past two years show support for our position increasing. The agreement should launch us into new efforts to protect the Highlands. ❖

## Action Alert! The Hand of Byrd?

### Clinton-Gore Administration in an Anti-Environmental Move

(Adapted from a message sent by Ami Grace at <cleanwaternt@igc.org>)

The Clinton Administration is considering both regulatory changes and litigation positions that would undermine the laws that protect the streams, mountains and forests across the country, including those of Appalachia.

Instead of accepting the decision of the court and enforcing the law, the Clinton Administration has filed an appeal and is proposing to change the one of the important regulations on which the court decision was based.

The Court held that mining spoil is

"waste" whose disposal in mountain streams cannot be authorized by the Corps of Engineers under section 404 of the Clean Water Act. So the Environmental Protection Agency and the Corps are planning to change the definition of "fill material" under section 404 to redefine mining waste as fill material, thereby giving the Corps authority to permit the wholesale destruction of Appalachian streams.

The Justice Department has also appealed the Court's decision. The Justice Department's

Notice of Appeal indicates it will take the position that regulations implementing the Clean Water Act and the Surface Mining Act allow the destruction of Appalachian streams, even though the Court held that the plain language of the regulations protects the streams. Instead of supporting regulations that were intended to protect the environment, the Administration appears to be preparing to argue that those rules

See ACTION ALERT on page 9

## From the Western Slope of the Mountains

By Frank Young

# Ups and Downs

In October a federal judge issued a ruling upholding nearly all our claims that mountaintop removal mining and related valley fills seriously violate federal environmental laws. Nine days later that same judge granted a stay of his earlier ruling. Three weeks later we were scrambling to the nation's capital to prevent a legislative end run around current mining and Clean Water Act laws that would be effective if only they were followed. "Victory" turned to disappointment, then to anxiety, all in a matter of weeks.

Last year we sued a private corporation to prevent destruction of endangered species and their habitats in the Blackwater Canyon region. We were granted the right to enter private property in the Canyon for investigation. But when we asked the court to stop another suddenly announced logging operation in the Canyon until those studies could be completed, we were rebuffed by the court. Apparently the court thought the studies were important, but just not as important as the logging, which could kill the endangered species and destroy their habitat. Again, "victory" turned to disappointment.

During the summer and early fall several environmental, industry and regulatory groups held "stakeholders" meetings to try to negotiate implementation policy for regulatory compliance with anti-degradation provisions of the federal Clean Water Act. By fall it appeared that agreement might be imminent. But by late December that hope had all but disappeared when industry apparently decided to "pull up stakes" and put it's chips in the political basket at the statehouse, rather than on the negotiations table. Optimism turned to disappointment. So we have ups and downs -- lots of them. Who gets the credit? Who gets the blame? Sorry -- no answer. Why? Simple. Those are the wrong questions.

We should expect lots of ups and downs. We should avoid arrogance and excessive credit taking when things go well; and we should avoid excessive finger pointing when we have setbacks.

Medicine is not an exact science. Conservation and environmental protection are not exact sciences.

In medical settings folks get sick and folks get well. They may get well because of good doctors. And sometimes they may not get well in spite of good doctors. And they may get well in spite of bad doctors. Many dynamics affect the outcome of medical procedures. Having a poor medical result does not necessarily mean that malpractice has occurred.

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# With Your Help

## A Day of Celebration Coming for the Blackwater Canyon

By Judith Schoyer Rodd

### A Walk in the Woods

John Crites, a wealthy timber company owner, has threatened to bring criminal charges against people who walk on a popular hiking trail through the Blackwater Canyon. I recently joined forty other hikers to peacefully defy Mr. Crites' threats. We hiked ten miles of the Blackwater Canyon Rail-Trail, through the heart of the Canyon. What we saw was saddening.

At the trail entrance, Mr. Crites' huge "No Trespassing" sign dwarfs the Forest Service notice that welcomes foot travelers to enjoy the Canyon trail. Fresh, jagged tree stumps flanked our path. We hiked past steep hillsides where sturdy, maturing trees were crashing to the forest floor – to await the clatter of helicopters that will haul the trunks away to a sawmill.

We felt angry and ashamed. Our "Crown Jewel" is being tarnished and sacrificed for private profit. How did we get into this mess – and how can we get out of it?

### How We Got Here

For over four generations, the Blackwater Canyon has lain undisturbed, recovering from devastating turn-of-the-century logging. Today, after eight decades of regrowth, the trees in the Canyon are just beginning to create a diverse, maturing forest habitat. But like sleek year-old livestock, these now "marketable" trees, many with centuries of life remaining to them, are also ripe for profitable, commercial logging.

During these decades of healing and restoration, the winding hillside trails and paths of the Canyon – its remote glens and hollows, its crashing waters and limpid pools – have been open to public access and use by hunters, fishermen and fisherwomen.

The Canyon has been a Mecca for biking, kayaking, birding, caving, hiking, picnicking, and more. About ten years ago a national conservation group even paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to buy the right-of-way on the same hiking trail that Mr. Crites is now trying to close.

Three years ago, there were active negotiations about buying the power company's land in the Canyon for the Monongahela National Forest. But in the middle of the negotiations, the utility company abruptly sold their land to a private broker, who immediately re-sold it to Mr. Crites.

Now a good portion of West Virginia's Crown Jewel is in the hands of a company whose goal is to make profits. A company with sawmills to feed, a company with international orders for prime West Virginia hardwoods.

And a company that can see even more profits and "commercial potential" in this unique and desirable landscape. Mr. Crites has filed plans to build private condominiums on the pristine Canyon rim. He also wants to build a private, permanent, fifty-foot-wide access road in and through our own Blackwater Falls State Park.

This is what happens to land when the profit motive is paramount, and this situation is unacceptable for the Blackwater Canyon.

### Where Do We Go From Here?

I remember standing on a broad stone ledge several years ago at the Coopers Rock Overlook, outside of Morgantown, when we celebrated the state's acquisition of the Overlook Viewshed. This visionary land deal was one of then-Governor Gaston Caperton's greatest single acts of leadership for our State.

I also remember another inspiring day, standing on a tuft of wet moss at the National Wildlife Refuge in Canaan Valley. I recalled how Congressman Alan Mollohan, Senators Byrd and Rockefeller, and other state leaders had joined with grass-roots people in helping protect this wonderful ecosystem for us all.

These land preservation efforts were built on the same kind of overwhelming public sentiment and pressure that is calling for the public protection of the entire Blackwater Canyon. As Congressman Mollohan and many experts have observed about wise economic development in special natural places like the Canyon, "you don't build on the unique resource – you protect it, and you build in the communities around it."

"Conservatives" and "liberals" alike support public acquisition of the entire Canyon. Several state newspapers have spoken out for moving the entire Canyon into public ownership.

Where the people are speaking, the politicians will follow. West Virginia Congressman Bob Wise, a gubernatorial candidate, has called for an end to logging in the entire Canyon, and its protection as a public resource. So have gubernatorial candidates Jim Lees and Denise Giardina, and Charleston House of Delegates candidate Perry Bryant. The public pressure to preserve the Canyon is growing. And given that support, I believe that a day is coming – next year, a year later, or however long it takes – when a plan that protects the entire Blackwater Canyon is in place.

When that day comes, we will gather together at the Canyon, as we did at Coopers Rock and Canaan Valley, to inaugurate and celebrate our new public treasure.

Perhaps we will gather on a sunny fall day, around a great stone outcrop, under a cloud-dappled blue sky, ringed by brilliant, multicolored foliage. Or perhaps we will gather in a meadow on a soft spring morning, watching a river of swirling white fog slowly roll and turn and twist, deep in the folds of the dark green Canyon walls.

On that day, we will look out over West Virginia's Crown Jewel, knowing that it is protected for future generations. We will know that the Blackwater Canyon is no-one's to "own." It is entrusted to all of us – to care for and to cherish.

We will know that the Blackwater Canyon is not an object of commerce, where the highest bidder calls the tune. It is our sacred land.

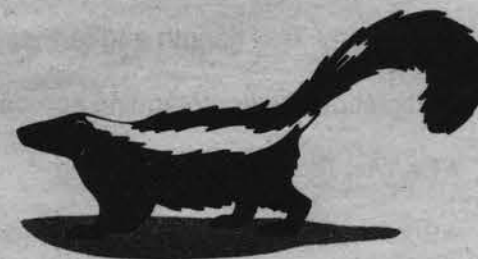
### The Time to Speak Out is NOW!

The public campaign to Save the Blackwater Canyon continues to gather momentum. National conservation groups with money and expertise stand ready to help move the Blackwater Canyon into protected status. The year 2000 will be crucial in this effort. Please act now! Write or call your elected officials, especially members of Congress and the Governor. Write to local newspapers. And contact the Save the Canyon Campaign [(304) 345-7663] to learn about more that you can do. Speak out – and your voice will be heard!

Judith Schoyer Rodd is Senior Vice President of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy ✦



"Protest logging with our feet" – Walk thru Blackwater Canyon, Jan. 15, 2000. Chuck Merritt, Lori Haldeman and unknown abettor to the "crime." Photo: Judy Rodd



## editorial

## The Enemy Within

Just got a message from Rupe Cutler on notes he took at a forestry conference in Virginia. Reading his notes only reinforced my conviction that the world-wide crunch is on – earth's ecosystems are in an accelerating crash into oblivion. We in the US are the world's chief villains in that we are the prime consumers. We cannot take refuge in the fact that we have the best environmental laws and controls.

Rupe's notes emphasized that the demand (as opposed to need) for forest products is rising exponentially. On the other hand in the decade of the nineties we have reduced by 70% the logging on national forests. That's good, you say. Okay, but let's temper that with the first statement. The crunch increases on the world's forests in countries where they have little or no environmental regs.

Whether we like it or not, we have to deal with the given that the world's ecosystems are all tied together. What happens on the planet affects all of us to some extent. The ravishing of Amazonia is affecting world climates and we can only surmise in a very negative way -- increasing global warming, the severity of storms, more flooding and more severe and long lasting droughts. (In my microcosm here at Zukata my spring and only water source for my living place has been dried up since mid August. Although my creek is full of flowing water now, nothing coming from spring. I have a strong hunch that this problem of mine is related in some degree to clearcuts in Indonesia and/or Amazonia and/or British Columbia.)

It boils down to this, folks – we have to finger ourselves, American citizens, as the villains. In the words of Pogo, "We have met the enemy and he is us." We cannot continue to scapegoat

the out-of-control corporations who are in a frenzy trying to feed OUR frenzy. If the earth and its creatures are to survive in any way which is tolerable to most of us treehuggers, we are going to have to bite the bullet and also get the word out to get others to bite that bullet. Recycling as I understand it is about 50% for the benefit of those who want to feel like they are doing something to save the earth while at the same time being heavily into consumption.

Another thing that came out of Rupe's notes – a greater problem than overpopulation is the consumption of the rich. This fact doesn't get the press. WE, all of us Americans, are the rich in terms of a world view, and unfortunately, the rest of the "teeming hordes" of the so-called third World want to emulate our riches.

This is an even stronger reason for having a world view. Some folks think the Voice does not stress West Virginia issues enough, especially those of the Monongahela National Forest. Others say it is "too dark." Your current editor thinks he's right to bring in these other issues because they are overriding, and that things are even darker than we might dare to think. If we save the Mon from clearcuts doesn't mean diddley squat unless we can plug into the whole scene of what is happening to the planet and act accordingly. It is too easy to bury one's face in Mon issues and do one's daily bit of recycling and think that is enough.

I've said it and I'm glad! But the depth of our planet's problems is incalculable and defies solution. And the key to such solution lies in generating the political will to overcome our materialistic addictions and concomitant denial of the true reality.

✦

### Allen DeHart's Selections of Outstanding Hiking Trails in the Mon Forest

Here's a Mon-Athon 2000 tip for planning your hiking outings in the Mon National Forest this year! Allen de Hart, co-author with Bruce Sundquist of the WVHC's Hiking Guide to the Monongahela National Forest, has listed, just for us, some of his favorite hiking trails, and the reasons he finds these trails outstanding. Try some of these out, and see if you agree with Allen's assessment -- and don't forget to report on your hike, to Mon-Athon 2000!

- ★Allegheny Trail (length and farthest through the MNF);
- ★Plantation Trail (outstanding spruce forest);
- ★Canyon Rim Trail (outstanding scenery);
- ★Blackwater Canyon Railroad Grade

- Trail (history, scenic beauty flora and fauna);
- ★Otter Creek Trail (wilderness, blue crayfish, fishing, camping);
- ★Shaver Mountain Trail (remoteness, hardwood forests);
- ★South Haddix Trail (remote, black bears);
- ★Cranberry Glades Botanical Trail (short but exceptionally special for bog observation);
- ★Fork Mountain Trail (long and full of wildlife);
- ★Laurel River Trail (long near streams, wilderness, wildlife);
- ★East Fork Trail (great for botanical study);
- ★West Fork Trail (a must for long old railroad hiking space, plenty of wildlife);
- ★Strip Mine Trail (not so much for internal scenery, but the access areas are lessons in strip mining);
- ★Hosterman Trail (swinging bridge and scenic old road, particularly in autumn);
- ★Tea Creek Trail (a combination of

- history, streams and scenic value);
  - ★North Fork Mountain Trail (although parts are on private property, the scenic value is astonishing);
  - ★Seneca Rocks Hiking Trail (probably among the most five highly used on the Mon);
  - ★Seneca Creek Trail (waterfalls, spring, history);
  - ★High Meadows Trail (isolated, but with unforgettable views of Seneca Valley during the autumn colors the first two weeks of October);
  - ★Whispering Spruce Trail (short but with panoramic views ... probably in the high five most visited on the Mon);
  - ★Red Creek Trail (now overused, once among my favorites);
  - ★Flatrock Run Trail and Roaring Plains Trail (a combination for interest in geology and botany ... and the highest elevation climb likely on the Mon);
  - ★Lake Sherwood Trail (frequently used and the longest lake trail on the Mon).
- ✦

## Joe Gatski, West Virginia's Poet of the Highlands

By Tom Rodd

Joe Gatski is a painter, poet, craftsman, and singer/songwriter who lives and works in the Morgantown area. Gatski's multifaceted creative art reflects his love of hunting, fishing, canoeing, horseback riding, wild herbs, edible plants, and mushrooms. He has published three volumes of poetry -- *Promontory*, *Annie's Stick*, and *Cranberry Way*.

I first met Joe Gatski when I moved to our farm outside Grafton in 1977. He was then in his early 20s. "Joey" introduced me to the Otter Creek wilderness. I remember a snowy fall day on Otter Creek in the late 70s, Joe and I creeping up over the bank of a tiny fishing hole. Keeping low so our shadows were off the water, we snuck our lines into the pool. I remember the crisp cold, the wet snow, a sharp exciting tug on the line, the glistening body of a native brook trout in my hand.

Joe's poems are similar to my memory of that fall day in the woods -- spare, vivid, and charged with an unforgettable awareness of the mystery, grandeur, and tragedy of the natural world.

Joe's poems are not fanciful. They are rooted in his life -- his solo

treks along the spines and hollows of the Alleghenies, his evenings around a wood stove, strumming tunes with old-timers.

I have selected three poems that I think exemplify Joe's best work. The first, "High Country Morning," is an evocative poem that reminds me of Gary Snyder's work.

The second poem is "Anthem." Again, I make a comparison -- this time to the poet Robinson Jeffers. Here the narrator vents his anger at human abuse of the natural world.

Finally, there is the title poem of Gatski's first book, *Promontory*. I like the poem in part because it leaves me confused -- what is the poet's

"little bird?" And I recall the promontories I have stood on in my life.

Joe's books of poems are available from the Greenmont Company, 219 Kingwood St., Morgantown WV 26505-6033. Thanks, Joe Gatski, for your art.

### High Country Morning

High country morning  
in fall  
you can tell where the  
rivers are by the fog  
The thickest bands  
are as snakes  
winding through valleys  
out of these mists  
we must return  
to threads of darkness  
as each sun sinks  
to be received unto  
another  
ever and ever  
over and over  
the cyclic void  
from which we sprang  
play your heart strings  
for all your worth  
give freely  
with all your soul. \*

### Anthem

Say goodbye to the good earth  
from Virginia to Alaska  
the country is dying.  
Say goodbye to fresh clean streams  
the trout therein  
the raptor on the wing.  
Say hello  
to the holy human right  
there's a stranger  
in the forest  
a face I've never seen. \*

### Promontory

There's a rhythm in walking  
Joy and sorrow  
listless leaves are seething  
raincrows mournful tune  
Seasons are flyin'  
Faceless and dyin'  
the plover in the meadow  
Killdee!  
Killdee!

From this airy place  
Looking down upon  
the flight of eagles  
a lamb's pitiful cry  
so helpless . . .

Sheep look so peaceful  
In their pasture  
a peasant naps,  
a cattle cane across his waist,  
day dreaming, unaware of  
the summer squall.

The flock is scattering  
Among the rocks and heather  
I stand till I fade  
protecting my tiny bird  
So she might fly at all  
Gaia's long forgotten song  
blue mountains like whales  
unpretentious  
waters  
leap \*



## HOLY EARTH!

By Michael Hasty

# Potemkin Democracy: Fascism in America

In 1787, while delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia were hammering out a democratic government for these United States, Catherine II, Empress of Russia, was taking a tour of her regime's colonizing efforts in the Ukraine. She had advanced lavish sums to her lover, Prince Grigory Potemkin, to finance this ambitious undertaking.

Potemkin was renowned for his extravagance, and he spared neither manpower nor materials to turn the scheme he had promoted to the empress into a reality. Yet he had greatly underestimated the cost of this huge enterprise; and when Catherine wanted to see the progress for herself, the story is told that Potemkin had his men build artificial villages along the route to convince her that her money hadn't been wasted. To this day, the term "Potemkin village" is used to refer to "any pretentious façade designed to cover up a shabby or undesirable condition."

Now that the US presidential campaign is finally underway, after a seemingly eternal preliminary buildup, it's hard to escape the impression that what we have witnessed in the early contests in Iowa and New Hampshire is merely an exercise in "Potemkin democracy." All the media hyperbole about "retail politics" and "grassroots democracy," set against a nostalgic backdrop of rural simplicity and quaint town meetings and artfully orchestrated TV images of salt-of-the-earth millionaire candidates hobnobbing with just plain folks, is meant to evoke a romantic sense of America's wholesome political traditions. But it's actually nothing more than an effort to disguise the shabby truth that the democracy of "we the people" has become the victim of a hostile corporate takeover.

The Buying of the President 2000, the latest publication of the watchdog group, Center for Public Integrity, is a devastating in-depth study of exactly who has inherited American democracy — and it's not the meek. It is, with a disturbing modern intensity, the rich and powerful. The book gives a listing of who is contributing to whom, and is filled with accounts of what they are getting in return. And what it calls "the dirty secret of American presidential politics" is that "before

the first vote is cast in a presidential primary, a private referendum has already been conducted among the nation's financial elites as to which candidate shall earn his party's nomination."

Of course this isn't news to the majority of the American public, who have become largely disillusioned with the political process. Participation in elections and other forms of democratic action has steadily declined, to the point where actual voters are now a minority. (And that minority, like the electorates of Iowa and New Hampshire, is both whiter and more conservative than the general population.) A recent bipartisan study found that 54 percent of Americans no longer believe that "this is a government of, by and for the people." About three-quarters of people surveyed regularly tell pollsters that corporations and special interests have too much power. How is it then that an increasing number of Americans also say that they are satisfied with the direction in which the country is moving?

Any political scientist can tell you that the system the nation's founders devised is not a democracy, per se, but a republic. In fact, the system of checks and balances James Madison designed was intended above all to protect private property and keep the democratic impulses of the mob under control.

During the constitutional deliberations, wealthy merchants and landowners — former revolutionaries who had primarily pledged their sacred fortunes to be liberated from British tax and trade laws impinging on their profit margins — outmaneuvered radical populists like Ben Franklin. The Federalists, including Washington, Hamilton and closet monarchist John Adams, were the ideological ancestors of today's Republicans — a thoroughly pro-business party.

The majority whose tyranny they feared so much was all the people who weren't as rich as they were. Their fear was not baseless. Because, as Alexis de Tocqueville so cogently observed, the "classless" nature of early American society was based on the widely-held presumption

that a democratic system would eventually lead to an equal distribution of wealth.

Under the circumstances, where 90 percent of enfranchised voters — white male property owners — were economically independent farmers, merchants and craftsmen, that presumption didn't seem as ridiculous as it does today in our age of corporate serfdom. But it points to an important fact: our political democracy was based on a foundation of economic democracy that we have subsequently lost.

How far we have strayed from that original egalitarian vision becomes obvious when you look at the simple fact that the US now has the greatest disparity between rich and poor in the industrialized world. The richest one percent of Americans, who have doubled their share of the national wealth in the last two decades, now own more wealth than the poorest 95 percent of their fellow citizens. Significantly, they also contribute 80 percent of all political campaign funds.

While it is true that the idea of a classless American society has always been a myth, an honest assessment of the preamble to the US Constitution reveals the stark failure of the nation to live up to another of its founding ideals. Can we say we have established justice when one of every five children in the world's wealthiest nation lives in desperate poverty, and a quarter of all the world's prisoners are in the American penal system? Can a nation with the highest murder rate in the developed world claim to have insured domestic tranquility? Does the US military really provide for the common defense? Or are taxpayers protecting the interests and investments of multinational corporations?

When soil, water and air are everywhere pumped full of poisons, and plant and animal species are disappearing at a faster rate than during the dinosaur extinction, and every American carries residues of hundreds of synthetic chemicals in their blood, can we truly say we've been successful at promoting the general welfare? And after family farmers have been driven off their land, and mom and pop store owners have been driven out of business, and

**HASTY continued on next page**

**HASTY from preceding page**

American workers have found themselves working longer hours than the workers of every other industrial nation for a smaller real wage than they made a quarter-century ago, how can they still believe that their government secures for them the blessings of liberty?

Two of the most canny analysts of totalitarianism, authors George Orwell (1984) and Aldous Huxley (Brave New World), both recognized that the totalitarian state of the future would not depend on crude force to keep its citizens in line. "In an age of advanced technology," Huxley wrote, "a really efficient totalitarian state would be one in which the all-powerful executive of political bosses and their army of managers control a population of slaves who do not have to be coerced, because they love their servitude."

No system of government, democratic or totalitarian, is in practice a perfectly realized form of its ideal. But certain general characteristics may serve to define that system. So if a "democracy" is defined as a "government by the people" characterized by "equality of rights and privileges," yet a majority of its citizens no longer believe either that the government represents their interests or that they have an equal voice in its politics, is it still a democracy?

On the other hand, if the interests of government and corporations are united in a virtual "corporate state," which draws its support primarily from economic classes "seeking to maintain the economic and social status quo," and uses "aggressive nationalism" and "racism" and, when necessary, "violence" to keep "order," does that meet the definition of "fascism?" The turning point for American democracy came relatively early in its history, and was also, ironically enough, "a new birth of freedom." Although economic elites dominated politics from the beginning of the nation's history, prior to the Civil War their power was mostly local and decentralized. Corporations were strictly limited to public works projects and to specific time frames.

But the victory of the industrial northern states coincided with an international industrial revolution, and antebellum local allegiances were replaced in the postwar era by a new sense of national identity. The resulting national mood of unlimited opportunity and "manifest destiny" led to a period of optimistically unrestrained capitalism. Fortunes were made; a business-friendly Supreme Court gave corporations the same rights as "persons;" wealth and power became more concentrated.

Naturally this produced a backlash among the farmers and laborers who were

feeling squeezed in this new economic game. But they too were influenced by the "bigger-is-better" spirit of the times, and the turn-of-the-century progressive reformers who represented their interests made a deal with the devil: instead of limiting the growth of corporations, they expanded the power of "the people's" government to keep corporate power in check. Obviously, it didn't work.

As American power expanded internationally over the course of the twentieth century, the increasingly concentrated power and wealth of the nation's ruling elites grew along with it. On the international scene, it became more difficult to make the distinction between national security and business interests. Corresponding developments aided the concentration of corporate power: explosive growth in the national population created new markets; and advances in transportation and technology, especially communications technology, gave rise to mass media and popular culture.

By mid-century, sociologist C. Wright Mills had detected a shift in the fundamental nature of American democracy, wherein a "power elite" make decisions they pass along to politicians at "the middle level of power." Mills called politics "a semi-organized stalemate," and described the "bottom level" of the societal pyramid as "a mass-like society which has little resemblance to the image of a society in which voluntary associations and classic publics hold the keys to power." This level is "fragmented, and in truth, impotent." Mills' book was widely admired and influential — to little effect.

Given this decades-old awareness of the rot at the core of American democracy, it makes sense to wonder how it is that an outraged public has not arisen to throw off the chains of oligarchy. The answer is another important twentieth-century development, perhaps the greatest influence of the century on media, commerce and politics: the twin sciences of psychology and public relations.

The pioneer of public relations was (not by coincidence) the nephew of Sigmund Freud, a pioneer of psychology. His name was Edward Bernays, and he used his uncle's insights into the human mind to design advertising campaigns to sell commercial products for major corporations, and to pitch both US government policies and politicians. In his book Propaganda, Bernays wrote that "if we understand the mechanisms and motives of the group mind, it is now possible to control and regiment the masses according to our will without their knowing it." He called this "engineering of consent."

Bernays also maintained that "the conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses

is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country. In almost every act of our daily lives, whether in the sphere of politics or business, in our social conduct or our ethical thinking, we are dominated by the relatively small number of persons who understand the mental processes and social patterns of the masses. It is they who pull the wires which control the public mind."

A patriotic American, Bernays was horrified when he learned that his theories had been adopted wholesale by Hitler's Third Reich.

In ancient legends, to know someone's name is to have a certain power over that person. Perhaps the reason that American democracy has slipped out of our grasp is that we can't bring ourselves to name what our system of government has really become. Perhaps we activists don't wish to wake from our dream of democracy, because so many of our activities depend on convincing people that their votes do make a difference. Perhaps we worry that years ago we were too easily caricatured because we spelled Amerika with a "k."



**Michael Hasty**

But is this a political system where the interests of government and corporations are virtually inseparable? Yes. Is this system primarily supported by a class of people who want to maintain the social and economic status quo? Yes. Is this a system that demonstrates aggressive nationalism? Yes. Do our politicians play the race card to keep the working class divided? Yes. Do our police use unnecessary violence to keep order? Ask any black inner city resident. Or remember Seattle.

**HASTY concl. on page 13**

# West Virginia Highlands Conservancy's Spring Review 2000

## April 28-30 Cheat Mountain Club

For over 100 years known as a great place for hunting, fishing and wilderness adventure.

Cheat Mountain Club is located along the banks of the Shavers Fork River, one of West Virginia's finest trout streams, and is surrounded by the Monongahela National Forest.



Mark your calendars and be sure not to miss this special event.

Friday, April 28, evening social reception

Saturday, April 29,

Field trips,

Exploration of the Upper reaches of the Shavers Fork River and its tributaries with the Shavers Fork Coalition and the Mountaineer Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Join Conservancy members and biologists from the Forest Service and West Virginia University and learn about stream restoration and improvements underway. Celebrate the conservancy's joining in their efforts.

Join Larry Pittis on a hiking expedition of the "Mower Tract" Get a first hand experience of one of the largest contiguous portions of the Monongahela National Forest.

Other outings to be announced.

Evening Banquet

Updates on Conservancy Activities

Meet Monongahela National Forest Supervisor Chuck Myers and the District Rangers as they talk about their vision for the National Forest.

Sunday, April 30, Highlands Conservancy Board meeting, 9am-3pm at the Cheat Mountain Club.

Field Trips, to be announced!!

Look for more complete details and registration information in upcoming correspondence.

Questions? Contact Dave at 304-284-9548 or [daves@labs.net](mailto:daves@labs.net)



## Forum? ? Or Free for All? !

By Viv Stockman

Cindy Rank, who drove through a snowstorm, and Norm Steenstra, who was so sick he went to a doctor that day, deserve medals for sitting through "The Future of Coal Forum" on Jan. 25.

WSAZ Channel 3, the Charleston Daily Mail and the University of Charleston sponsored the event, intended to be a debate on the future of coal in our state. A Logan County contingent, refusing to listen and learn, jeered and shouted at anyone who disagreed with them, turning the event into an ugly "The Future IS Coal" rally. On January 31 WSAZ aired a highly edited, sanitized one-hour version of the two and one-half hour smear-fest.

Environmentalists were shouted down as miners, coal operators, coal lobbyists and regulators vented their anger that they should have to (gasp!) follow the law and think about the decline of coal. The pro-mountaintop removal group's lack of vision and planning for the future created a brain-draining vacuum in the air. You could almost smell the denial, the fear of the change that is bound to come.

Panelists on the forum were Cindy Rank, mining chair of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy; Norm Steenstra, executive director of the West Virginia Citizens' Action Group; Mike Castle, director of the state Division of Environmental Protection; Roger Calhoun, director of the Charleston field office of the Office of Surface Mining; Corky DeMarco, the governor's assistant for operations; Ben Greene, president of the West Virginia Mining and Reclamation Association; and Terry Vance of the United Mine Workers.

## Clean Air, Cars And Changes

By Don Gasper

On December 21, 1999 President Clinton announced regulations that will cut auto pollution by three-fourths. The many sport utility vehicles (SUVs) will have to meet the same emission standards as cars. Also the sulfur in fuel will have to be reduced. The President noted, "These will bring about the most dramatic improvement in air quality since the catalytic converter was first introduced a quarter century ago....With more cars on the road each year driving more miles, the tougher air quality measures were needed. Otherwise, air quality in many parts of our country will continue to worsen."

For the first time, cars and light trucks, SUVs, minivans, vans and pickup trucks would all meet the same emission standards. Nearly half the

See CLEAN AIR on page 15

Ken Ward, of the Charleston Gazette, wrote of the panelists, "Representatives of the U.S. Office of Surface Mining and the state Division of Environmental Protection, however, sounded more like industry boosters than regulators."

The majority of the audience wouldn't listen to Cindy, Norm or any of the speakers who disagreed with them. They spouted off the industry's propaganda. They turned the event into a pissing contest of who had been in West Virginia the longest. Cindy explained that she had lived in West Virginia for 27 years.

"I heard you was from Ohio," an audience member told her, disbelieving her statement of fact. Laura Foreman explained that the "Ohio" in "Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition" refers to the Ohio River Valley. Ninety percent of OVEC's membership is from West Virginia. That didn't seem to matter.

Fear-filled folks will just go on believing whatever lies the coal industry feeds them. As someone said to me,

"When you get that close to Coal's jugular vein, they are going to do everything in their power to control the people that they can control to fight their battles for them. And that's what they are doing."

Of course, everyone is sympathetic about miners losing their jobs. Still the United Mine Workers representative there didn't acknowledge the deep miners losing their jobs due to market conditions, or the surface and deep miners losing their jobs to mechanization. Nope, it's all the fault of those "out-of-state extremists" who want to tell us what to do with our land. (Never mind that Arch Coal is based in St. Louis. Never mind how

### ACTION ALERT from page 1

should be read to actually authorize the devastation of mountains, forests and streams to continue.

The Justice Department's Notice of Appeal also indicates that it will appeal citizens' rights to sue state officials in federal court for their failure to enforce federal environmental and other laws. A Justice Department argument that the Eleventh Amendment bars such citizen suits even when they are explicitly authorized by Congress goes beyond even what the most conservative members of the Supreme Court have so far been willing to do. If such an argument were to prevail, citizens would lose one of their most important means of assuring that federal environmental laws are enforced by the states. No responsible administration would even threaten to take such a position.

### What to Do:

Call the White House (202) 456-1414 and demand that the Administration abandon its appeal and its proposed rule changes and instead join with environmentalists in enforcing the laws that

extreme it is to flatten mountains and annihilate mountains communities and ecosystems.) Why, said Vance, those mountains aren't good for nothing unless they are flattened.

Unable to come up with meaningful arguments, Greene pompously derided Cindy and Norm saying they, "give new meaning to the term dual airbags." That was typical of the evening -- the pro-coal forces had to berate and lie about the people who care about the future. Some audience members believed that West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is profiting financially from its lawsuit about mountaintop removal. They questioned Cindy as to her qualifications. "U.S. Citizen," Cindy replied, though most were too busy booing to hear her.

Greene said coal companies are focused on overturned Judge's Haden's ruling, rather than focusing on finding ways to operate within the law. Norm reminded Greene that Judge Haden was hardly an extremist, but a man of integrity, upholding the law. Greene said working within the law would be too costly for coal companies.

According to Brian Bowling of the Daily Mail, "Norm Steenstra said this assertion by the coal industry is the 'Big Lie' the industry pulls out whenever it wants to fight a regulation.

"Instead of buying into the industry's position, the state should recognize that coal mining's economic power is on the wane and take steps to ensure it has enough money set aside to offset the damage coal mining will leave behind, such as subsidence, acid mine drainage and lost jobs, he said."

Though the forum accomplished nothing in terms of educating the attendance about the future of coal, it did serve some purpose. Logan County people got to vent their spleens. The coal industry got to spread more hate and lies. And everybody else got to ponder the greed and ignorance the coal industry musters as it resists the changes it will have to make. ❖

protect our stream from obliteration by mining wastes.

Send a letter to the President and to the Attorney General asking them to withdraw the appeal and not make changes to the rules to make these illegal, highly destructive valley fills lawful.

President Clinton  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Janet Reno  
Attorney General of the United States  
Main Justice Building  
10th and Constitution Ave., NW  
Room 5111  
Washington, DC 20530 ❖

# MON-ATHON 2000



*Celebrating Our* **MONONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST** 

**WEST VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY**

## What Is "Mon-Athon 2000"

*Why Must Everyone Drop What They Are Doing, and Study this Article Intently?*

By Tom Rodd

"Mon-Athon 2000" is a corny name for a new West Virginia Highlands Conservancy (WVHC) project. The purpose of Mon-Athon 2000 is to: a) celebrate and enjoy our Monongahela National Forest (affectionately known as "The Mon") in the year 2000, and b) to stimulate, coordinate, and celebrate outdoor recreation in The Mon.

Mon-Athon 2000 is a good project for the WVHC, for several reasons: (1) we publish the esteemed *Hiking Guide to the Monongahela National Forest* (deHart and Sundquist, editors); (2) our organization has its deepest roots in the fight to protect The Mon; (3) The Mon is one of the great public resources of our State and Nation; -- and (4), IT'S A WAY TO HAVE FUN! [let's not go overboard, Tom! Ed.]

And, of course, there will be fabulous prizes for all participants!

In Mon-Athon 2000, WVHC members and friends -- and other outdoor groups and individuals -- will make a special effort, in the year 2000, to get out and hike, bike, bird, botanize, camp, paddle, ski, and otherwise enjoy the Mon. There will be a number of outings that are especially organized for Mon-Athon 2000. And we want to include and promote outings

organized by other groups, besides the WVHC.

Additionally, anyone who does any sort of outdoor recreational activity in the Mon can report it, and have it included as part of Mon-Athon 2000. All Mon-Athon 2000 activity participants will be entered in drawings for cool prizes like outdoor gear, meals and tours in the Mon, and more. T-Shirts with the Mon-Athon 2000 outdoor recreation silhouette logo (shown above, and created by Brad Basil of the Art Medium in Elkins) will be distributed to Mon-Athon 2000 participants.

Mon-Athon 2000 participants will be asked to report on trail and other Forest conditions, and otherwise on their experiences (especially the funny parts!), and to submit photos of their activity. There's a good chance that reports and photos will be excerpted in the Highlands Voice. And again, they may be a resource for updating the WVHC's *Hiking Guide*!

Tom Rodd is currently acting as overall coordinator for Mon-Athon 2000 -- and many others have agreed to help out. Look for more information on Mon-Athon 2000 as it progresses in each subsequent issue of the Highlands Voice. See You in the Mon!

Right Now, People Need to Know Four Things about Mon-athon 2000:

1. Go Ahead and Sign Up for An Outing, or Start Planning Your Own!

The proof is in the pudding! Let's get off our duffs! There are already a number of Mon-Athon 2000 Outings scheduled for this Spring, with enthusiastic leaders and splendid locations. (See dates and locations below). These are "public" outings and all are welcome -- this means YOU! So pick out one or more, and call, write, or e-mail the outing leader. You're on your way to a good time!

Or, get out that hiking guide, and start planning your own private excursion in the Mon. If you'd like some assistance in planning your own outing in the Mon, we can offer expert, free, consultation and advice. Call, write, or e-mail us (current contact is Tom Rodd, addresses and number below), and you'll be referred to a Mon-Athon 2000 volunteer, who has experience in planning outings in the Mon in your areas of interest -- be they hiking, fishing, paddling, biking, birding, or whatever.

2. Think About Leading A "Public" Outing in the Mon In 2000.

Coordinating and leading an outing is easy - a couple of people can work on it together. You have to be available for people to call you, advise them about conditions, arrange a meeting place, etc. We will publicize the outing and help it participants. If you think you might be able to do this, call, write, or e-mail Tom Rodd (address and numbers below). There's no commitment necessary -- we'll discuss the possibilities. Maybe someone else will have called in, and they will lead an outing, if you'll help!

### 3. Get Your Mon-Athon 2000 Activity Reporting Forms Now, So You Can Report on Your Own Outdoor Recreational Activities in the Mon.

We want everyone (who we can reach) who does any sort of outdoor recreational activity in the Mon Forest in 2000, to have a chance to complete a Mon-Athon 2000 Activity Reporting Form. (It's a very simple form). And in an fit of promotional excess, (some may call it genius), we have created incentives for completing the forms.

Incentive number one is: everyone who is listed on the form as participating in

the Mon-Athon 2000 activity will be entered in drawings for fabulous prizes -- gear, meals, trips in the Mon, all provided by cooperating businesses).

Incentive number two is: we give a free Mon-Athon 2000 T-shirt to the person submitting the form (and we give an extra shirt for photos!)

All this, plus having your activity on a roster of enjoyment and celebration, to honor our great natural treasure -- the Mon!

So -- if you have any idea at all -- about hiking, biking, paddling, birding, camping, skiing, fishing, hunting, leisurely strolling, or whatever, in the Mon Forest area, this year -- **GET OUR MON-ATHON 2000 REPORTING FORMS!** (Maybe you've already been out cross-country skiing -- we want to include your activity and report in Mon-Athon 2000, and get you in the hopper for the fabulous prizes.

To get your reporting forms, write, call, or e-mail Tom Rodd (addresses and numbers below). Leave a message if you like and give your address, phone, and e-mail. We'll send the forms pronto.

### 4. Help Network, Develop, and Spread the

### Word about Mon-Athon 2000.

We want to develop this project in all possible ways. We want to get materials about Mon-Athon 2000 in the hands of outdoor recreational and related businesses around the Mon. We want to network with other groups - scouts, camps, schools, outdoor recreation businesses, advocacy and other groups, who might be interested in having their activity be included as a part of Mon-Athon 2000. What are your ideas, suggestions, offer, ideas, and other notions? Call, write, or e-mail Tom Rodd (address and number below).

For more information, and to request Mon-Athon 2000 activity reporting forms, contact: Tom Rodd, c/o WVHC, PO Box 306, Charleston, WV, 25321. E-mail: thomasrodd@hotmail.com. Phone: 304-345-7663 (WVHC Charleston Office); 304-265-0018 (home). [Whew, Tom, I'm all outta breath! Ed.]

Tom Rodd is the co-chair of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy Publications and Outreach Committee ❖

## Mon-Athon 2000 Spring Public Outings

### The Initial List

(There likely will be more outings listed in the next Highlands Voice, but this should get you started!)

**Saturday, March 18** -- "March Madness" Kickoff Day Hike, Blackwater Canyon Rim Trail, Tucker County. Easy to moderate level. Leader: Ruth Blackwell Rogers, Moon Run Farm, Kerens, WV 26276, 304-636-2662, ruthbr@wvhighlands.org. This stunning trail is at risk due to proposed development in the Blackwater Canyon. Ruth and her husband Hugh have been active in Corridor H Alternatives, and they love this trail.

**Saturday, April 1** -- "April Fool Frolic" Day Hike, Otter Creek Wilderness, Tucker/Randolph Counties. Moderate level. Leader: Rich McGervey, 2181 Grafton Rd., Morgantown, WV 26508, 304-291-8149, mcgervey@hotmail.com. Rich McGervey is the Vice-Chair of the Morgantown Sierra Club group. This is also a Sierra Club outing. Rich is a law student and worked on the mountaintop removal case. Otter Creek is one of the gems of the Mon.

**Saturday, April 8** -- "Down by the Riverside" Day Hike, Greenbrier River near Hosterman, Pocahontas County. Easy to moderate level. Leader: Leslee McCarty, HC 64, Box 135, Hillsboro WV 24946, 304-653-4722, current@inetone.net. Leslee runs the Current, a bed and breakfast and is active in protecting the Greenbrier River. This trip is co-sponsored with the Greenbrier River Trail Association.

**Saturday, April 15** -- "Pedaling to Escape the IRS" Mountain Bike Day Trip, Cranberry Area, Pocahontas/Nicholas Counties. Easy, single track. Leader: Dave McMahan, 1624 Kenwood Rd., Charleston WV 25314, 304-344-3620, wvdavid@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.)

**Saturday, April 29** -- WVHC Spring Review, Cheat Mountain Club, Randolph County. There will be several day outings in the Mon at the Spring Review -- see details in the Highlands Voice. This is also the day of the 14th Annual Great Greenbrier River Race, which begins at Marlinton. Attending/participating in this Race (bikes, canoes, and running) is a feasible outing from the WVHC Review location (about an hour). Contact Leslee McCarty, above, for more information about the race.

**Saturday, May 13** -- 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 Conservancy stalwart, a prodigious hiker, and other things. ❖



# The Narrows

## Cumberland, Maryland

By Jack Slocomb

"He-l-l-l, if it wasn't fer the piss in it, there wouldn't be any water in Wills Creek a'tall."

Once in a while you hear things like this in Kline's. Little perorations. Scraps of Alcohol fortified Appalachian hyperbole drifting over the din of conversation while you're shoveling in supper. Kline's is the only dining establishment along the old Route #40 National Highway as it snakes through the looming Cumberland Narrows in western Maryland's Alleghenies.

This kind of parlance usually has a more serious current in it somewhere - an uneasy consciousness, a festering apprehension maybe. I'm Appalachian to the bone. I sense these things.

The Narrows is an at least 400 million year old 1000 foot deep water gap separating Will's Mountain to the north from Haystack Mountain on the south. These two mountains define the western limit of Cumberland's tight sprawl. And Kline's is an iteration of the slightly seamy genre' community eatery found in western Maryland and neighboring parts of West Virginia and Pennsylvania - just clean enough to pass for a family place, yet despoiled enough to tolerate a good dose of boisterous commentary after pouring down a few brewskis. There's nothing phony about it. It's the real McCoy. Kind of murky and crowded and noisy with Country and Western juking in the Lover's Leap Lounge. A cultural lyceum of my neck of the woods.

Kline's is representative. Especially located where it is, in the literal shadow of these towering hunks of Paleozoic sandstones. It is in its obliviousness to this geography, in its wearied fried chicken and beer cured human architecture in the midst of the overwhelming, that it is emblematic. It bespeaks a kind of fatalistic mindset that is imbedded in much of the Central and Southern Appalachians - where heart stopping landscape has become passe', and the awareness of the failing integrity of local and global ecosystems has been recast into well honed cynicism or outright denial. Something like that.

But Will's Creek, the aforementioned public urinal which flows almost at the back door of Kline's, is, in reality, a liquid blade.

Over the years, the unassuming stream bisected what was at one time a single continuous ridge. While I'm sure the stream does have its share of piss in it, it was once a clear torrent spurring out of the Alleghenies destined to rendezvous with the North Branch of the Potomac River. And as the Appalachian crests were heaved into position, it bored out the almost two mile long fissure which now serves as the back and front drops for Kline's.

I doubt that much in the way or this larger picture works into conversation in the Lover's Leap Lounge. Maybe your marriage giving out, the brake shoes getting thin, your blood pressure climbing up, the fucking government, the fuckinhippie environmentalists destroying the economy, always

being on the ass end of the opportunity mill. Not the long deathless conian history. The vast geological canon. Not the mighty wheels of the Gods grinding away right outside the doors.

Nothing of the ilk of Kline's was there 250 or so years ago when the Ohio Land Company built an outpost named Fort Cumberland (after a rather bloody British General who never once set foot in the New World) at the confluence of Will's Creek and the North Branch of the Potomac - about a mile and a half east of the Narrows. The bottom land of the Narrows was swampy then. Too swampy to build any kind of road through it. In fact, it was for this reason that when the ill fated British General, Edward Braddock, arrived at the fort with the intention of marching westward on the French who held Fort Duquesne, he would not consider going through the narrows. Instead, his cobbled together army of smartly uniformed soldiers and whisky soaked locals built a roadway up on the hard ground slightly to the South through a mini gap depression in Haystack Mountain. This saddle would undoubtedly have become a colossal incision like the Narrows, had not Wills Creek "captured" its lost stream millions of years ago and diverted it through the Narrows.

George Washington and Daniel Boone were among the company. Boone high tailed it just about the time the French and their Iroquoisan allies, who had been hiding in the trees along the road, were finishing off routing Braddock's army about a day's march from Fort Duquesne. Enough of these fur trade campaigns, thankyou.

Many years later, after the massacre was consigned to history, 19th century engineering technology was eventually brought to bear, and rock talus from the slopes was piled on either side of Will's Creek to build parallel roadway and railroad beds through the Narrows. The road originally blazed by Braddock, like the stream, was captured and channeled through the narrows. Later the road was improved by Congress to become part of the National Highway system.

And the gap, due to the increasingly heavy flow of westwardly bound people, wagons, and animals along the National Road, got to be known as the Gateway to West. I think, also, that it was sometime during this period that people began calling it the Narrows. As the Narrows became more of a well known landmark, it frequently got confused with the Cumberland Gap, which is on the Kentucky/Tennessee border. And if memory serves, Boone did walk through that opening.

But to fully experience the raw physiography of the Narrows, away from the Kline's-always-congested National Highway rail line conglomeration, I have to hoof it to the top. The best view is from the Will's Mountain side. After meandering up past an injection molding plant and the weed wracked remains of a turn-of-the-century spa, I can work my way to the edge. From there, I follow it along to an outcropping called, what else, Lover's Leap.

It seems like every small town with high escarpments nearby has a some kind of Lover's Leap. In the case of the Narrows, the story goes that the lovers were a hunter named Jack Chadwick and a Shawnee Indian princess of surpassing beauty. In an enraged encounter with her chieftain father, who objected to the liaison because he felt Indian blood was getting too thin, he managed to jab him with his hunting knife, inflicting a mortal wound. As a result of this, his princess was dishonored among the Shawnee - whose numbers had been whittled down considerably by then. And, of course, she had always been despised by the settlers since the affair began. There was but one choice left for her. So she met her suitor at the summit of the overhanging rocks, explained her dilemma, and then before he could stop her, over she went.

Jack, being faithful to the bitter end, and also, probably more importantly, being the person directly responsible for her situation in the first place, unhesitatingly followed after, flinging himself to his own death. So goes one of the versions. Nowadays the only people who fall off the ledges are adventure starved teenagers and drunks - an increasing number of which may be both.

But I hike up to the Lover's Leap vantage point now and then not to enact the final resolution for a recent love affair's *denouement*, but to get perspective. To have the Eagle's eyes. To sense the plunging abyssal verticality of time beneath the rough surface tension of the brick and asphalt. For here is where the immensity of the Narrows and its proper significance in the cosmos comes into play. I especially like to hit these heights when the atmosphere is clean and lucent in the early spring and late fall days. Then the Narrows almost rings. Something akin to the crisp pellucidity of Mozart piano sonatas. I also have grown to like days that are more blustery and dark when it seems like the grounding centripetal pull of Bach's *Pasacaglia & Fugue* is rising from the bowels of the chasm. From this ledge, Kline's and the roadway recede into the far down reaches of the huge womb of the canyon. Only the faint vwooooo-m-m-m now and then of a truck engaging gears carried up by the drafts reminds me at all of the Lilliputian life I temporarily discarded below.

Sometimes I have a sense of hovering. Suspended over the edge of this massive quiet, this great void, bounded on either side by jagged exposed Devonian quartz and Tuscarora sandstone strata on the upper 300 feet of the canyon and by sparsely timbered slopes and crumbled rock scree on the lower 700 feet. And it all converges down on the muddy strand of the creek which has finally worked its way into the Ordovician times, dating from about 460 million years ago. (The Ordovician layers were revealed when the B&O Railroad built its line through the Narrows and blasted into the

**NARROWS concl. on next page**

**NARROWS from preceding page**

Juniata Formation at the base with its distinct rusty hue of Iron Oxides - evidence of the change to an oxidizing atmosphere from a reducing one).

Not a whole lot of people come up here. Although not a very far distance to walk, there as yet is no established public access or overlook. It's mostly those like myself, who feel like picking their way along who get the view. Maybe it's better this way, because the experience is more solitary in nature. On the other hand, in not having this opportunity easily available, I have a hunch that folks in Cumberland are robbed of a rich and sacred dialogue that exists *in media res*, smack in the middle of ordinary life. Lately, however, there has been some talk of building a public park surrounding Lover's Leap.

I hope it's not just rumor. For I have a soulful comfort in knowing that in Cumberland there is a place you can get to - Lover's Leap, or anywhere along the Narrow's ledges, for that matter - and reverse figure and ground. In imagining that, in the future, even though a community's range of view may be frighteningly entrapped in all the redundant fabrications of structure and thought it has to operate within every day, just as quickly as people can skulk into Kline's, they can also secret their way to this one particular place of such unyielding sweep and power.

And from there, it's a helluva lot more than just a piss in the river. ✪

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**HASTY from page 7**

Is this fascism?

Yes.

In recent weeks I've read quotes from leading progressives like Ralph Nader and William Greider, speculating on the possibility that only some kind of political or economic or environmental crisis will be able to penetrate the profound apathy of the American people and spur them to action. Indeed, many of us are waiting to be rescued by apocalypse.

But maybe we can be that crisis, we dedicated few, by naming the name of the demon who has captured our democracy, and speaking truth to power. And maybe if we're loud and convincing enough, our voices will ring like a clarion call through the white noise of the information blizzard, and remind Americans once again that there's more to self-government than endless circus and daily bread.

And if we're really lucky, maybe we can get enough of our fellow citizens to join us, and together we can tear down the artificial walls of this archaic Potemkin democracy, and build ourselves a real one. ✪

**YOUNG from page 2**

Likewise, in environmental protection endeavors many dynamics are at work. Things like: effective laws, or the lack thereof; political clout held by corporate environmental anarchists; financial resources of our adversaries, and the determination of the respective parties in disputes to "win at all costs" all affect the outcomes of our battles.

So when we "win" a battle it does not mean that we and our advocates are geniuses. It may mean simply that the law is on our side and therefore the other side lost.

Conversely, when we suffer setbacks, it does not necessarily mean that we suffer from poor strategy and poor leadership. It may simply mean that Goliath won today and that tomorrow is another day.

So in the day to day ups and downs we can keep our aim on the long term goals. We can let the disappointments of today become tomorrow's past. Tomorrow is always a new day.

In religion, non-believers help keep believers honest by constantly goading them to re-examine their beliefs, and vice versa.

Likewise, in our work our setbacks goad us to find the error of our arguments and our philosophy. And that's healthy, for both our mental health and for our strategic activities.

Bask in success, but only for a day!

Suffer in setback, but only for a day! ✪

## The West Virginia Native Plant Society Symposium: Using Native Plants in The Landscape -- Issues And Opportunities

Dates: March 22 & 23 with a pre-conference workshop on March 21 at 7 pm.

Where: Canaan Valley Resort & Conference Center (Canaan Valley State Park).

(They are saving a block of rooms for the conference, singles start at \$40/night. Call for reservations at 1-800-622-4121.)

### Program

Pre-Conference Workshop - Tuesday, March 21, 2000

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Propagation of Native Plants --  
Peter Heus, Enchanter's Garden Nursery

Day 1 - Wednesday, March 22, 2000

7:30 - 8:45 Registration  
8:45 - 9:00 Welcome & Introductions -- Kiena Smith &  
Emily Grafton  
9:00 Historical Perspective on Forests of the Allegheny  
Highlands -- Dr. Kenneth Carvell  
9:30 Native Plants With Potential for Cultivation --  
Bill Grafton  
10:00 Break  
10:30 NRCS Plant Materials Center --  
John Vandevender  
11:00 Local Ecotypes, How Important Are They --  
Rodney Bartgis  
11:30 Who, What Where and When to Plant --  
Calvin Ernst  
12:00 - 1:30 Lunch  
1:30 The Role of Corridors in the Movement of  
Invasive Species -- Ron Fortney & Neil Corte  
2:00 The Good, the Bad and Ugliest of The Invasive  
Plants -- P.J. Harmon  
2:30 - 3:30 Panel Discussion "How To Manage Invasive  
Exotics"  
3:30 TBA  
4:00 - 6:00 Poster Session and Social  
6:00 Dinner on Your Own

7:00 - 8:00 Optional Work Group Sessions TBA  
8:30 Evening Entertainment - Medicinal Plants  
-- Diane Enestis

Day 2 - Thursday, March 23, 2000

7:45 - 8:30 Registration  
8:30 Opportunities for Environmental Restoration --  
Jim McKenzie  
9:00 Use of Warm Season Grasses in Restoring  
Disturbed Areas -- Gwen Meyer  
9:30 Heritage Ecosystem Restoration -- Jenny Beeler  
10:00 Panel Discussion "What Defines A Native  
Plant?"  
10:30 - 11:30 Concurrent Sessions  
Landscaping Your Lawn  
With Native Plants -- Peter Heus  
Riparian Corridor Restoration -- Mike Hollins  
11:30 - 1:00 Lunch  
1:00 - 2:00 Concurrent Sessions  
Critical Area Restoration -- Bob Glennon  
Soil Bioengineering -- Jim McKenzie  
State/Federal Laws of Plant Material  
Transport -- Gary Gibson  
2:00 Golden Seal, Ginseng and Other Herbaceous  
Forest Products -- Andy Hankins  
2:30 Closing Remarks -- Emily Grafton  
3:30 - 3:45

*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            |

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

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- ★ 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.

## Old Growth Forest of West Virginia

By Bill Grafton

In Pre-Colonial times, the 15 million acres of West Virginia were almost entirely forested. A few prairies existed along the bigger rivers. Some open bogs were in the high mountains and a few grass balds grew on exposed mountaintops. There might still be a dozen or so old growth tracts totaling 2500 acres. The remainder has been cut if not once, several times. Four of these old growth areas occur at Gaudineer Knob, Koontz Bend, Cathedral State Park, and Carnifax Ferry State Park.

Gaudineer Knob is located in Pocahontas County and is a pie-slice shaped area of 140 acres caused by a surveyor's error. The old growth area once consisted of a beautiful stand of virgin red spruce (18-30 inches in diameter and over 120 feet tall), large beech and some yellow birch trees. Blowdown and timber salvage had affected 2/3rds of the area before US Forest Service set Gaudineer aside as a natural/recreation area in 1964. In the late 1980s, the dreaded beech bark disease spread to the area and soon the large beech were rotting on the forest floor. This change affected the red spruce, and by the 1990s most of them had died and fallen or were giant dead snags. A beautiful monument to the original red spruce forest was in disarray.

Koontz Bend is a large horseshoe bend in the Gauley River in Fayette County. A railroad crosses the river on the north side of the bend and immediately tunnels through the mountain. This tunnel and several cliffs have made access to the mountainside virtually impossible. Among the dense rhododendron thickets are several giant hemlock, red maple and black birch trees that escaped the ax and saw at the turn of the century.

**This from the Union of Concerned Scientists.** There are eleven actions that would make a significant difference to the environment if many folks carried them out. These include:

- ◆ Choosing a place to live that reduces the need to drive.
- ◆ Choosing a fuel-efficient, low polluting car.
- ◆ Walk, ride a bike or take public transportation whenever practical.
- ◆ Eat less (or no) meat.
- ◆ Buy certified organic foods if they are available.
- ◆ Install efficient lighting appliances.
- ◆ Write letters to the editor or to your members of Congress demanding correct environmental action.
- ◆ Make financial contributions to environmental causes.
- ◆ Carpool whenever possible.
- ◆ Recycle as much as you can within the realms of practicality.

These and other ideas can be found in The Consumers' Guide to Effective Environmental

Cathedral State Park in Preston County is 126 acres of virgin hemlock with scattered beech, yellow birch, white oak, red oak, and black cherry. Dense rhododendron thickets form the understory in many areas. The forest once contained horseback riding trails for the popular Brookside summer resort. Branson Haas, a resort laborer, eventually bought the area in 1922. He sold it to the state to protect the forest from the "galdarned timberman" who wanted to cut the 7 million board feet of timber. It contains West Virginia's largest hemlock tree and is a monument to the deep love and concern of Branson Haas for the trees he so revered.

Carnifax Ferry State Park is known for the Civil War battlefield. Hidden along the eastern boundary in Pierson Hollow is a 50-plus acre area of virgin forest. The largest trees are mostly hemlock, but there are several beautiful yellow poplar, white oak, and red oak. Dense rhododendron thickets are along the stream and

trail. This is one of the nicer virgin areas left in West Virginia.

Other known old growth areas are:

- ◆ North Fork of Anthony Creek - white pine stand
- ◆ Lick Creek near Danville - yellow poplar woods
- ◆ Laurel Run on Coopers Rock State Forest - hemlock stand
- ◆ Murphy Preserve near Morgantown - mixed oak forest

Are there others? Will you write a paragraph or two and let us know? Send to:

William Grafton  
456 West Virginia Ave.  
Morgantown, WV 26501

[wgrafton@wvu.edu](mailto:wgrafton@wvu.edu)

*Bill Grafton is president of the West Virginia Native Plant Society and West Virginia University Extension Forester.*

### CLEAN AIR from page 9

vehicles on the road are now light trucks, and they produce 3-5 times as much pollution as the average passenger car. The regulations would also dramatically reduce the emissions of nitrogen oxides from automobiles. Nitrogen oxides are a key component of smog, and it will be cut by 74%. Soot will be reduced by 80% by the year 2030 when car and light truck fleets have fully turned over in the United States.

It is necessary to reduce the sulfur content of gasoline because the sulfur reduces the efficiency of catalytic converters that clean auto

emissions. The sulfur in gasoline would be reduced by 90% by the year 2006.

By 2009 new light trucks would be up to 95% cleaner and cars would be 77% cleaner than they are today. This is equivalent of removing 164 million cars from the road. The US Environmental Protection Agency estimates the cost per gallon would go up by about two cents. This would begin to address the nation's costly health and environmental problems caused by air pollution. Is it enough or quick enough? These slow and incremental improvements accommodate the schedules of automakers and the oil industry.

The much more urgent schedule of the informed American citizen is becoming more obvious to politicians and industry. This initiative by the President is broadly supported. Citizens demand clean air and environmental protection. The President and other perceptive politicians may be aware of this. Even the industrial group that lobbies against climate change, presenting until now a unified front of denial, may begin to realize it cannot do business as usual. The Ford Motor Company has quit. Ford says "Its membership in the coalition was something of an impediment to our ability to move forward credibility with the company's agenda of environmental responsibility." As we approach the wall of sustainability even industry is beginning to realize today it cannot be business as usual. "The times, are they a-changin'?" We'll see in this election year.

Choices by Warren Leon of the Union of Concerned Scientists. This book should be available in bookstores. It can be ordered through UCS publications by calling (617) 547-5552.

### Clinton initiative political

**greenwash.** According to Ray Vaughn in the latest "Forest Advocate," the Clinton roadless policy initiative for the national forests is mostly a political move to help out Al Gore in Gore's bid to become president. He says, "This proposal will not provide real protection to the national forests' more than 50 million roadless acres. Nothing in this initiative - assuming it does anything at all - is safe from being reversed in short order by a later president, which is exactly how it will be used in the 2000 campaign ... Clinton and his administration have made it clear that this proposal will not limit logging, mining, ORV use and other destructive practices in the national forests."

To really protect the national forests Vaughn urges the citizenry to get behind the National Forest Protection and Restoration Act being pushed by Cynthia McKinney (D-GA) and Jim Leach (R-IA) in the House which would stop all commercial logging on the national forests.

*Ray Vaughn is the Executive Director of Alabama-based Wildlaw, and one who is not taken in by political hogwash. He and Lamar Marshall have been holding their fingers in the dike for some time against the ravages of the timber exploiters and their most "generous" Forest Service minions in Alabama.*

## Garden Variety Environmental Heroes

### Grassroots Activism at its Best.

(This article adapted from one in the Fall 1999 issue of the National Institute for Chemical Studies (NICS) News and used here with permission)

In early December almost 15 years ago, a world tragedy gave birth to an activist group that has since helped weave the fabric of life in the Kanawha Valley.

The group, People Concerned about MIC (PCMIC), started agitating in the spring of 1985 for chemical companies to reduce their use of toxic chemicals. Their aim was to make chemical plants safer for those who live near them.

PCMIC confronted the companies after methyl isocyanate leaked from a plant at Bhopal, India, on Dec. 3, 1984. As the world knows, the gas killed thousands and injured thousands more. A plant in the Kanawha Valley also produced MIC.

PCMIC focused on getting the companies to share information about the chemicals they made and stored at plants along a 25-mile stretch of the Valley. The group also wanted to know the chemicals' possible effects on public health.

At the time, chemical companies said little about their operations. The plants had employed thousands of people since the early part of the 20th Century. They also supported community projects, but people outside the plant gates knew almost nothing about what went on inside.

Today, the companies are more open, thanks in large part to PCMIC. The group's effort helped shape current state and national community right-to-know laws. The effort also has led to greater trust, through better communication, between the public and chemical industry.

Four PCMIC members met one evening to reflect on some of the group's accomplishments, the state of the organization and its future. They leafed through newspaper clippings and their memories to put events into perspective.

Present were: Pam Nixon, now the environmental advocate for the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection; Mildred Holt, the group's current cochair, a citizen, longtime human rights and environmental activist and a NICS board member; Dr. Paul Nuchims, the group's secretary and professor of art at West Virginia State College, and William Anderson, longtime human rights and environmental activist and retired school teacher.

In the mid 80s, all lived at Institute, WV, near a major chemical production site. Today Rhone Poulenc, FMC Corp., Lyondell, and Union Carbide have operations there. In 1985, Union Carbide produced MIC at the site, as it did in Bhopal, but later sold the MIC unit to Rhone Poulenc.

Before Bhopal, the public cared more about dust from the plants and cancer-causing chemicals than it did about poisonous gas, Nuchims observed.

After Bhopal and a leak of aldicarb oxime from Union Carbide's Institute plant in August 1985, PCMIC revved up its efforts. The group voiced public concern during a series of leaks, explosions and operating accidents. Various chemicals leaked, including MIC, although some of them were confined to plant sites.

Nixon had a very personal interest in the situation: she was one of those injured by the aldicarb leak.

Early in 1985, a group of Valley leaders formed the National Institute for Chemical Studies (NICS) to promote communication between the public and chemical industry.

"When we asked for information, the companies let us know that what went on inside the plant was none of our business," Nixon said. "They trivialized our concerns," Holt added.

Union Carbide became a favorite target for protestors, especially after the aldicarb leak. Employees and supporters marched in the company's defense in August 1985. Many area residents said they accepted the risk of living near chemical plants. Besides, the plants had provided them with good jobs for decades.

PCMIC did much to raise community awareness about chemical safety. In the fall of 1985, the group called for a second escape route from Institute and nearby West Virginia State College.

The only way out of the area in case of a major incident at the chemical facilities next door was on the two-lane Rt. 25 which parallels Interstate 64. The group wanted the state to build another access ramp to Interstate 64. That one never got built, but an emergency escape route was built from Institute to Dunbar next door.

The group quickly learned the power of publicity and used it effectively. One target was a company in a residential area of West Dunbar that washed the insides of chemical tank trucks. Nixon organized a march to protest the activity as a danger to the neighborhood and alerted the news media about the event. The company elected to move its operations.

The first signs of dialogue between the public and Union Carbide began with roundtable discussions soon after the aldicarb leak. Even so, "They wouldn't give us any details about the chemicals' effect on the human body," Nixon said.

To learn about the health effects, PCMIC did a health survey of residents in Institute, Pinewood Park and West Dunbar. The results were inconclusive but indicated that residents suffered more health ailments than the national average.

Volunteer graduate students from Vanderbilt University in Nashville conducted the survey. "We surveyed every house in the area," Nixon said.

"The community was very supportive, but the plants and college were not." Early on, the students were told they could stay in the dorms, but about the time they got here, the offer was withdrawn," Nixon said. They stayed in private homes.

In 1990, Nixon took her story to a Union Carbide stockholders meeting. With a proxy arranged by a group known as Bhopal Action Resource Center (BARC), she spoke about air quality issues in the Kanawha Valley.

The day before, she was on Wall Street with BARC protesting against the abuse of corporate power.

"The police had busses to carry people off to jail. We sat down in the middle of the streets and did all the protest stuff. They arrested several hundred people. They didn't arrest me because they must have thought the woman I was with, who was white, and I, a black, must have gotten lost and strayed into the crowd. I guess they thought I was there looking after her," she chuckled.

PCMIC leveled other criticism at the chemical firms for stonewalling their information requests. "Every time a plant manager would become part of the community and support some of the community concerns, he'd be moved away," Holt said.

"One plant manager I remember became one of the best guys, and I was sick when they took him out of here. Once we began working together, we just naturally appreciated each other more."

PCMIC wanted independent plant safety audits with public participation. The companies didn't want that for fear of having an accident that was caused by something they hadn't fixed after it had been discovered in an audit, Nixon declared. They also claimed confidentiality, Anderson said.

Mistrust reared its ugly head when a bill came before the West Virginia Legislature. The Self-Audits Bill would have allowed companies to audit their environmental operations and not put themselves in legal jeopardy by having to report their findings. "It was what we called the 'Dirty Secrets' bill" Nixon said.

People who supported the bill "were working behind our backs, promoting a concept that went to the very heart of what we had been working for," Nixon said. "It showed again the mistrust and lack of confidence between us and the companies."

The tide seemed to shift in favor of PCMIC in 1991. Because of her demands for information about worst-case scenarios, Nixon came under fire for creating a bad image of the Kanawha Valley.

**GRASSROOTS continued on next page**



## GRASSROOTS from preceding page

"They said I would cause the plants to shut down, people would leave and no businesses would locate here," Nixon noted.

"I explained that if they could work these plants safely, it would be a plus for the Valley, not something negative," she said. "Well, the LEPC at the time said I would have to submit my demands in writing before they'd consider them. Some friends at the plants helped me make sure I had the wording just right."

On January 2, 1992, Nixon sent her letter asking for the information. Two days earlier, on December 31, 1991, an explosion at Union Carbide's South Charleston plant killed a worker in a unit said to be nonhazardous, Nixon said.

At the next LEPC meeting, Nixon expected a fight over her demands. On the contrary, "they got religion," she stated. "They just couldn't figure

out why anyone wouldn't agree with what I was asking. Yes, they would definitely consider giving a worst-case scenario report to the community," she said. "However, they were concerned about causing a panic or bad community reaction to the information," she continued.

Two years later, in 1994, area chemical companies voluntarily disclosed their worst-case scenarios to the public at an event called *Safety Street*. NICS played a key role in organizing the event. "Of course there was no panic after the disclosures," Nixon said.

Chemical companies had no federal guidelines to follow in 1994 for disclosing accident scenarios. The legacy of *Safety Street* and Nixon's persistence show up in disclosure rules in today's community right-to-know laws. The chemical industry itself has adopted a Responsible Care policy which calls for greater openness with communities.

Even with the progress, PCMIC remains alert to cases where it perceives the industry to be less than forthcoming. The two sides regularly discuss issues at community-industry meetings. NICS was a driving force in getting the meetings started.

During efforts to open the information gates, Nixon says she feared for her personal safety at times. "People wouldn't get in my car with me because they thought it might explode," she said.

"There were times when I would go home and be afraid to go in my house. I had a cat that came to the window when I came home.

"I figured if my cat didn't come to the window, someone would be in the house," she said. "I'd always tell someone when I was going into a plant or somewhere else. People tried to intimidate me."

Fifteen years and events have changed PCMIC. For example, Nixon is in a job that keeps her from organizing community groups, and she is no longer a PCMIC officer. "We do not make as much noise as we used to because we've seen some progress," she said referring partly to fewer leaks in recent years.

The group no longer holds annual remembrances for Bhopal victims.

PCMIC is still the group the news media calls for comments after a chemical accident or on chemical safety issues.

"Things have changed, but not our commitment," says Holt. "I think we are as dedicated now as we were then."

Fifteen years from now, the group would like to see reduced amounts of highly toxic chemicals stored at the plants, Nuchims says. "We would also like to see plants use their products as they produce them," he said.

"We'd like to see West Virginia and the Kanawha Valley with safe air, cancer rates better than the national average and no major accidents," Nixon said.

The group agrees that as long as there aren't a lot of major accidents, public concern about safety issues will remain low and there is less need

for everyday activism. PCMIC still provides active leadership and citizen views when specific issues arise. For example, last spring it invited plant managers to meet with the public at Institute and discuss their Y2K readiness. NICS facilitated the meeting. A follow up meeting is to be held this fall.

Today's PCMIC members got inspiration from their first chairman, Edwin Hoffman, a professor at West Virginia State College. They also admired Estella Chandler, Holt said. "You talk about somebody holding your feet to the fire. She was so intelligent, so intelligent. She always questioned. Activism of this group created threads of change that are still ongoing."

But there are no young members for the current leaders to inspire or to become future leaders. Not to worry, says Nuchims. "We don't really have the next generation of People Concerned. But we are causing a greater awareness throughout the Kanawha Valley, especially in the school system. Teachers pick up a lot from us, and I get a lot of calls from them asking for information.

"Interestingly enough, children have brought a change in attitude in the corporate structure in the Valley. The kids say 'Hey, mom, hey dad, we live here don't we? Shouldn't we be concerned?'"

Says Holt: "I think someone will come out of the communities, maybe not only from the Kanawha Valley but from other states, and take up the cause. Children are much more aware about environmental issues than before. I really think somebody will step in."

Nixon sees hope, too. "It takes something to personally impact you before you become involved," she said. "Several students who have interned at the West Virginia Citizen Action Group were very outspoken on environmental issues while their fathers or mothers worked at the chemical plants."

"What bothers me," Anderson said, "is that people are apathetic. They come out when something big happens at a plant, but where are they in the meantime?"

Nixon thinks people aren't apathetic about environmental issues, they're just too busy making ends meet to be personally active. The interest is there, she said, citing feedback she hears after news reports quote her on an issue.

Getting people fired up takes a lot of work. "I'm going to tell you, I don't have the energy to do it," Holt says. She defers some work to her PCMIC cochair, Dr. Gerry Beller, a professor at West Virginia State College, and to Nuchims. "Paul is really the heart and soul right now."

As she stuffed precious clippings and other papers back into a folder for the trip home after a long day, Holt said: "We've made progress, but there's more to do." ❀



### ~ Important Meeting ~

**If you are interested in Public Lands in West Virginia, please try to attend this meeting!**

**Join Sayer Rodman, Bob Marshall, Don Garvin, Don Gasper and the rest of the Public Lands Committee to help us better interact with public lands managers and policy makers.**

**There are many important issues to deal with including the State Forest Management plans and the Monongahela National Forest Plan revision. We need your help to effectively counteract the forces of shortsightedness and greed.**

**We will meet at the 79er restaurant in Burnsville at 10:30am on Saturday February 19th. Hope to see you there.**

**Questions? Contact Dave Saville at 284-9548 or [daves@labs.net](mailto:daves@labs.net)**

**Conference Announcement****Building Coalitions to Vitalize Community Green Space**

Friday, March 10 - Saturday, March 11, 2000. Hotel Morgan, Morgantown, West Virginia

The Mon Valley Green Space Coalition (GSC) and West Virginia University (WVU) invite you to this conference to address common issues and strategies for achieving community green space goals. If you care about your community, parks or trails, this conference is for you.

This conference, hosted by the GSC, will focus on how to build and maintain coalitions of government, business, non-profit organizations, and community residents to:

- Revitalize parks and trails
- Manage urban forests
- Implement rail-to-trail conversions
- Develop alternative transportation options
- Protect farmland & open space
- Find money to accomplish these goals

Conference participants will learn:

- A. How to bring a community together
- B. How to identify key participants
- C. Real world examples of successful coalition building
- D. How to find funding sources and achieve realistic fundraising goals
- E. How to put your town plan into action

**Friday, March 10th**

8:00 - 8:30 am Registration @ Hotel Morgan

8:30 Welcome: Frank Scafella, Mayor of Morgantown, West Virginia

8:35 Panel 1: Building Coalitions that Work

- Dave Bassage, Director, Friends of the Cheat
- Terri Cutright: Director, Mainstreet Morgantown
- Pam Moe-Merritt: West Virginia Rivers Coalition
- Bill Wonderlin: President, Green Space Coalition

10:00 Coffee Break

10:30 Panel 2: Rescuing our Heritage: Park Restoration and Open Space Protection

- Greg Good: Green Space Coalition
- Jim McClelland: Greater Huntington Parks & Recreation District
- Joyce McConnell: West Virginia Land Trust
- Lavonne Paden: Eastern Panhandle Peoples Empowerment Coalition (EPPEC)

12:00 Lunch Break

1:30 Panel 3: Walking and Biking in a Small Town

- Tim Buskirk: Alternate Transportation Advocacy Committee (ATAC), Parkersburg
- Mary Perry: WV Bike & Pedestrian Coordinator
- Anita Mayer: Mon River Trails Conservancy
- Regina Mayolo: WVU Health Center, Coordinator of Outreach Center for Aging

3:00 Coffee Break

3:30 - 5:00 Workshop No. 1: Your Town Vision

7:30 - 9:30 pm Banquet & Keynote Speaker: "Save Our Lands, Save Our Towns" -- Thomas Hylton

See a slide show presentation by Thomas Hylton, Pulitzer Prize winning author of *Save Our Land, Save Our Towns*. This book challenges land use practices and encourages reinvestment in our towns, thereby helping to reduce sprawl.

Hylton talks about the pressures sprawl is placing on many communities. He shows examples of towns across the country that are "growing smart" to preserve their sense of place.

Hylton is a journalist from Pottstown PA. His editorials advocating the preservation of farmland and open space in southeastern PA won a Pulitzer Prize in 1990. In 1993, he received a fellowship to study comprehensive state planning from Vermont to Oregon. The book is based on his research.

Hylton is also active in coalition building, namely: 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, a coalition of civic groups dedicated to land use reforms and community building; organized Trees Inc, a non-profit that raised nearly \$500,000 to plant and maintain street trees; co-founded Preservation Pottstown, an organization preserving Pottstown's historic neighborhoods and enhancing the borough's quality of life.

(Note: Thomas Hylton's 1995 book, *Save Our Land, Save Our Towns*, will be available at the conference.

<http://www.GreenWorksChannel.org/landuse/saveland.htm> )

**Saturday, March 11th**

8:00 - 8:30 am Tours of Rail-Trail

8:30 - 9:00 Registration @ Hotel Morgan

9:00 Panel 4: Urban Forestry: Public Trees in Small Towns

- Dan Brown: WVU Tree Surgeon
- Bob Hannah: Urban Forestry Coordinator, WV Division of Forestry
- Marilyn Ortt: Marietta Tree Commission, Marietta, OH
- Kasey Russell: Urban Forester, USDA Forest Service

10:30 Coffee Break

11:00 Panel 5: Creative Funding for Parks, Trails, and Trees

- Harold Simmons: Recreational Trails Program, WV Dept. of Transportation
- Kent Spellman: North Bend Rails-to-Trails Foundation
- West Virginia Community Foundations

12:30 Lunch Break

1:30 Workshop No. 2: Implementing Your Town Vision

3:00 Guided Tours of Morgantown Green Space and Caperton Rail-Trail along Deckers Creek and Monongahela River.

5:00 Adjourn

(Note: Speakers' order may vary from program.)

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION:**

The registration fee for this two day conference is \$50 when received by March 1st, and \$55 after March 1st.

The registration fee includes conference materials, lunch on Friday and Saturday, refreshment breaks on both days, and Friday night banquet dinner and keynote speaker.

The registration fee is non-refundable. It is payable by check and should be made out to Mon Valley Green Space Coalition.

If you would like to share a hotel room with someone of the same sex, let us know & we will try to match up roommates.

Limited scholarship funding is available. Please enclose a written request for scholarship with your registration, to be mailed no later than February 15. You will be notified by March 1, 2000. Be sure to include your exact needs for scholarship funding (registration, lodging, travel, etc.).

If you know who you would like to share a room with, let us know.

**TO REGISTER:**

1. Visit our website at <http://www.fsl.wvu.edu/gsc>, or
2. Call (304) 296-3067 to request a registration form, or
3. e-mail us at [MVGREENSPACE@YAHOO.COM](mailto:MVGREENSPACE@YAHOO.COM) to request a registration form.

**Hotel Information:**

The Historic Hotel Morgan, conveniently located in downtown Morgantown, will offer a special conference flat rate of \$85 per night. Room sharing is permitted. Conference participants must make their own hotel reservations in advance. The conference rate is available until February 28, 2000. You must mention the Green Space Coalition group rate.

**GREENSPACE concl. on next page**

## Calendar

**February 19** - WVHC Public Lands committee meeting. Where: the 79er Restaurant in Burnsville. When: 10:30 AM. See boxed announcement in this issue on page 17.

**February 19** - Keystone Coldwater Conference on instream habitat. Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel, State College, PA. Hosted by Pennsylvania Trout, a chapter of Trout Unlimited. Cost to register (which includes lunch), \$20. Call (814) 863-5100 for details.

**February 19** - Ski White Grass/Dolly Sods sponsored by the Sierra Club. Start from White Grass Ski Touring Center. Then ascend Cabin Mountain, to access the Dolly Sods landscape on top - forest, open heaths, more. Ski in the true wilds, far from the signs of civilization. Rentals available. Call Jim Kotcon (594-3322).

**February 25** - Annual West Virginia E-Day at the rotunda of the State Capitol. Themes will be: Water, Wood and Coal. For information and/or to register, contact Denise Poole at the WVEC office, 346-5905.

**February 29** - Granny D rally at Arlington National Cemetery. 9:00 AM. March from there to the Capitol where another rally will take place at noon. Check with car pools that will be organizing around the state.

**March 10 & 11** - Conference on Building Coalitions to Vitalize Community Green Space. This regional conference is hosted by The Green Space Coalition (GSC) and West Virginia University (WVU). See details on page 18.

**March 15** - West Virginia legislative session ends.

**March 18** - A very pleasant hike with Ruth Blackwell Rogers along the Blackwater Canyon Rim Trail. See Mon-a-Thon on page 11.

**March 21, 22 & 23** - Using Native Plants in the Landscape -- Issues and Opportunities. Sponsored by the West Virginia Native Plant Society. See page 14 for full details.

**April 1** - Try and fool hike leader, Rich McGervey, on the Otter Creek Wilderness Trail. See Mon-a-Thon on page 11.

**April 8** - Hike with Leslie McCarty along the Greenbrier River. See Mon-a-Thon on page 11.

**April 15** - Dave McMahan will try to get you muddied up in the Cranberry Wilderness area on this adventuresome mountain bike outing. See Mon-a-Thon on page 11.

**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. See details on page 8.

**May 13** - Hike with Carter Zerbe in the Cranberry backcountry. See Mon-a-Thon.

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

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

### TRUTH from page 20

again for several years or decades. And the provisional estimate is that the population of Logan County dropped almost five percent from 1990 to 1998, before the environmental lawsuit was even filed.

Miners in West Virginia and other states are being laid off for economic reasons, not environmental ones. The same technology that employs fewer and fewer miners to mine more and more coal here is at work elsewhere.

Australia, South Africa and other countries put coal into the world markets. Mines in Wyoming (including Arch Coal operations) are sending more and more coal east. The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy did not create that situation.

The good people of Logan and other coal counties where mountaintop removal mining is prevalent are being force fed a steady stream of coal generated political propaganda that "environmentalists" are destroying their economy. Why don't they ask their politicians why those same counties have been at the bottom of the economic ladder for so many decades? Could it be because coal companies control their economy,

their politics and, ultimately, their earthly destiny?

If Arch Coal or Massey Coal could mine and sell the coal and employ absolutely no one, they would do so. They spend thousands of dollars in advertising their propaganda about preserving jobs, all the while developing techniques to employ fewer and fewer miners, while mining more and more of the coal.

Some folks ask what they should be expected to do to resolve the situation of permits not being issued. That's a fair question. My opinion is that the folks of the coal fields need to demand that the governor, the legislature and the environmental agencies make the coal companies actually follow the laws. Only then will the companies decide to be good, law abiding corporate citizens. Then permits can again be issued and miners can mine the coal.

But if the politicians are permitted to continue to just blame the "environmentalists" for pointing out that the agencies are not enforcing the law, and the coal field residents don't demand more responsibility from government and from coal companies, then it will be a very long time until the situation gets better.

The problem has been in the making for many decades. It will take a major change in governmental and company attitudes for things to get better.

For decades coal companies let their miners be killed and maimed in unsafe conditions. The same companies underpaid the miners and cared nothing for their health care needs and their retirement security. It was only when miners and their neighbors got organized, formed the Union and demanded better treatment that anything better developed. It's time again that miners, their union and their towns, counties and the whole region organized to demand that the agencies and the companies obey the laws so that courts will once again let permits be issued and so that miners can again be proud and productive workers.

*Frank Young is president of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, the organizational plaintiff in the federal court lawsuit challenging practices surrounding mountaintop removal mining and related valley fills.* ❖

### GREENSPACE from preceding page

Presented by: Mon Valley Green Space Coalition with generous support from:

- Canaan Valley Institute
- City of Morgantown
- Conservation and Development Forum
- National Park Service-Rivers,
- Trails Conservation Assistance Program
- USDA Forest Service
- WVU Division of Forestry



Bill Wonderlin, Mon Valley Green Space Coalition

(see our web page at <http://www.fsl.wvu.edu/gsc/>) ❖

# The Truth of the Matter

## West Virginia Highlands Conservancy Answers Critics

By Frank Young

Recently the Internet web site of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy received several letters asking us about our involvement in the federal court litigation relating to mountaintop removal mining and related valley fills. Coal field residents have a right to vent their frustration about the confusion surrounding the effects of the litigation. The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy endeavors to answer some writers' questions and accusations.

But some questions and accusations have no answer because they are not based in reality. For example: "Why have you worked so hard to destroy Southern West Virginia?" is a false question. On the contrary, we contend that it is the coal companies and their political allies who are willing to destroy mountains, streams and sometimes whole towns in the coal fields. They are doing it for some of the oldest motives known: political power and greed.

For over 100 years the coal was mined without the gigantic destruction of the forests, the mountains and the streams that has been practiced only in the past fifteen years or so.

Coal operators have victimized southern West Virginia and its people for decades. The state environmental agencies are supposed to protect the people and their homelands. But too many of our elected politicians who run the agencies have permitted these out-of-state companies to operate with permissive permitting and almost no regulation. Now the companies no longer even try to write good permit applications. They know the agencies will go along with almost anything.

Why does this happen? And why has the

court now decided that so much is too much? Some of us think this is happening because the coal companies manipulate the political system so that the companies control the politicians and the governmental agencies, rather than the agencies regulating the companies.

If the governmental agencies had required the coal companies to follow the law decades ago, the companies would have developed better mining practices, in compliance with the law. But by letting the coal companies make their own rules and do as they pleased, the agencies encouraged company lawlessness to the point that the court now says things cannot go on this way any longer.

This is the same political mentality that lets coal companies shirk tens of millions of dollars of their legal responsibilities to pay workers' compensation premiums for their injured workers. The result is that honest businesses pay higher workers' compensation rates and injured workers are sometimes not fully compensated for their injuries.

And this same political mentality lets overloaded eighty and ninety ton coal trucks destroy our roads without challenge.

This official attitude helps create the "who cares?" atmosphere for other enforcement agencies. The result is that the only guidelines developed are the ones agreed to by coal companies. And if the companies ignore these rules as well, well, that's OK with these politically controlled agencies, too.

The court has now said enough is enough.

So it is the coal companies and the governmental agencies, not the Highlands

Conservancy, that let this situation develop. But the coal industry's propaganda that environmentalists, the court and newspapers are to blame for this situation is believed by some people.

The Highlands Conservancy has not made or changed any environmental laws. We only brought the outlaw environmental practices of industry and regulators to the court's attention.

The newspapers simply reported to the public what was happening.

An honest coal industry would place the blame for this economic disruption where it belongs: at its own doorstep, and at the feet of the politicians who let regulatory agencies look the other way while the coal industry is regulated only by itself. But now that they are caught, the companies and state politicians are desperately trying to focus the blame elsewhere.

And as long as they get by with this, they keep the public from focusing on one indisputable fact: mountaintop removal and valley fill mining has cost the coal fields many times more jobs than it provides. Ask any local union officer if he'd have more miners working with conventional mining, or with mountaintop removal.

Too, economic dislocations associated with the environmental lawsuit appear to be grossly exaggerated. For example, according to the West Virginia Bureau of Employment Programs, the unemployment rate for Logan County has been running about twice the state average for many years — long before the Haden decision. The same agency's reports indicates that average annual income in Logan County has been below the state average, and far below the national average —

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