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# The Highlands Voice

The Monthly Publication of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

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## THE DEATH OF A GIANT

By Dave Cooper

An American hero has passed away. Larry Gibson, the "Mountain Keeper" from West Virginia who fought to save his family's ancestral land on top of Kayford Mountain for over 25 years died of a heart attack on Sunday on his beloved mountain. A public memorial service will be announced at a later date on Larry's Keeper of the Mountains Foundation website. Please visit the site and make a donation in memory of Larry.

When I first met Larry in March, 1998 I wasn't too sure what to think of him. But we hit it off, and he ended up changing my life. I visited Larry's mountain shortly after hearing him speak at a Kentucky Sierra Club meeting, and I'm still working on the mountaintop removal issue 14 years later. He changed many other lives, too.

I wanted to write something to you all because I knew that many people across the country still may have not heard the news about Larry - and I've struggled about what to write.

Larry was such an

inspiring, complex, awesome, dogged and determined person that writing a proper tribute to him is really difficult. So I've decided to just let Larry's words speak for him.

I called Larry's answering machine today, and it was good to hear his voice one last time:

*We are the keepers of the mountains.*

*Love them or leave them, just don't destroy them.*

*If you dare to be one, too, call (304) 542-1134 or email larry.gibson@mountainkeeper.org*

*Thank you very much.*



Although he never got a lot of formal education, Larry could be almost poetic sometimes. When we toured together on the Mountaintop Removal Road Show, he would always ask his audience:

"What do you have in your own circle of life that is so precious that you cannot put a price on it? What would it be? And if someone tried to come and take it from you, what would you

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## Ramblin' the Ridges

By Cynthia D. Ellis

### HAUNTING

My fellow hikers and I trudged uphill, through a hollow. We were in the Kanawha City section of Charleston for a trail club outing in the 60 acre Wallace-Hartman Preserve. Fellow hikers said there was a Dunlap cemetery at the edge. Dunlap is my maiden name and Daddy's home place was not too far away. After about 2 miles we came alongside a municipal landfill, with its artificial knolls and hillocks covered over and with methane collecting apparatus. Nearby was a small clearing with a few new headstones and a sprinkling of old ones. The graves faced east, in the traditional way, to be ready for the second coming.

None of the names were any I recognized from what I know of that side of the family. But they were intriguing still. One showed, "Sultanna Dunlap, 1864-1947," --- she lived from war to war. For me, as for many, there is this upwelling of interest in the older generations as we become older ourselves. We wonder how their chapters ended as we pass through the middle ones of our own.

It doesn't even matter that "my" family cemetery was near a landfill. I have been able to visit a number of old family graves. Two lie alongside highways near Buckhannon, where cars and trucks thunder by. Two more are in sight of Interstate 79. Another burying ground has been enveloped by a country club, where great-grandparents never heard of such a thing. Now the thunk-splat of tennis balls and the lights of the court are adjacent to the graves. Grandma Dunlap's grave is near quieter Kanawha Terrace. She had eleven children; one infant died. She had the little bones moved from the home place grave on Davis Creek to a place next to her final one. At any rate, nearly all our family plots have somewhat less-than-peaceful setting.

I was lucky enough to know all four of my grandparents. There are some family pictures and other records. I can imagine the lives of those who came before. In Appalachia, many of us cherish memories and locations.

So we have a special tenderness for any who wish to honor the past and are hindered in that desire.

The recent eviction of families at the coal town of Rita, in Logan County, made me think of my good fortune to be able to see old cemeteries, and of the grief for some regional families who can no longer do that. How sad---to have your family cemetery isolated, locked off, or "relocated." Sadly too, a number of mountain people, such as Larry Gibson and Dustin White, called "heroes" by some, have had to fight to try to save their graveyards. Legislation enacted in 2010 increased family access to cemetery sites, but extractive activities may still occur within 100 feet of the graves. We, in WVHC, have tried to help and will continue.

Nowadays people look to new traditions. There may be cremated ashes or no engraved stone to sit upon or contemplate. There may be a "Green Burial," which would preserve the feeling of a location with a special connection to a loved one.

Today, some of us are very fortunate. There are those new choices, but also, although highways, landfills, and golf courses may intrude, we can still visit a grave---and remember. Our ties to family history have not been blasted, bulldozed, or drilled away.

Here's one last thought--- because Larry Gibson and I were about the same height, I could look him in the eye. But I will never match his stature when it comes to opening the eyes, minds, and hearts of people toward saving cemeteries...and mountains.

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## CITIZENS JOIN TO DEFEND EPA .... AGAIN

By Cindy Rank

On September 28, 2012 seven citizen and environmental groups represented by Appalachian Mountain Advocates and Earthjustice filed papers to appeal the National Mining Association (NMA) court decisions in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

WV Highlands Conservancy joined Sierra Club, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, Coal River Mountain Watch, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Southern Appalachia Mountain Stewards and the Statewide Organizing for Community Empowerment in filing as Defendant Intervenors in support of the appeal filed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on September 27<sup>th</sup>.

The debate revolves around EPA's conductivity guidance and the EPA-Corps joint permit review procedure known as the Enhanced Coordinated Process or ECP.

The ECP memorandum was issued in June 2009 and the Guidance was first proposed in April 2010 and later finalized July 1 2011.

Both EPA actions have been challenged from the get-go by the National Mining Association, individual coal companies and none other than the state of West Virginia among others.

The litigation has been written about in previous editions of *the Highlands Voice* (— most recently John McFerrin's page 3 article in September 2012). And positions advanced by industry in the litigation have been used as part of the excuse for the outrageously deceptive cries about the imaginary "War on Coal".

At the heart of this legal challenge is an ECP interagency review process that EPA and the Corps are conducting in partnership, along with a policy guidance issued by EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson in April 2010. The interagency review and policy guidance aim to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act and to strengthen the role of science in reviewing applications for mountaintop removal coal mining permits. The guidance also provides scientific information to help regulators prevent irreversible damage to Appalachian watersheds at risk from mining.

On July 31, 2012 the district court ruled against the EPA saying that the agency exceeded its authority under the Clean Water Act by providing statements on these issues to its staff via guidance, instead of (1) issuing a federal water quality standard [for conductivity] under section 303 of the Clean

Water Act; and (2) issuing a federal rule requiring that a reasonable potential analysis happen before a 402 NPDES water permit can be issued.

We are now asking that the appeals court reverse the district court's ruling and reaffirm EPA's authority to issue this guidance and flex its muscle in providing much needed protection for the waters of the nation that have been buried, bruised and otherwise abused by the coal mining method that blasts apart mountains and pollutes streams.

[It should be noted that the July 31<sup>st</sup> decision did not address or undermine the science on conductivity or harm to water quality, and did not undermine EPA's ability to continue following the basic requirements of the Clean Water Act themselves. The main outcome is that this court decided that EPA needed to issue a formal rule rather than a mere guidance, guidance which we continue to believe is within the authority granted by the Clean Water Act.]

Previous to this latest court decision the same Judge in a January 13, 2011 ruling in related motions in this litigation wrote:

*"While it may be true that the challenged EPA actions were "designed to significantly reduce the harmful environmental consequences of Appalachian surface coal mining operations, while ensuring that future mining remains consistent with federal laws." these environmental interests — the actual environmental impact of surface mining — are not currently before the court.*

*"It may well be that [EPA's actions] are necessary to protect the environment, especially considering the assertion made by counsel for the defendant intervenors [environmental groups] that the substantive requirements of the Clean Water Act were essentially ignored by the prior Administration, but the Court need not make that assessment now.*

*"Whether the current or the prior Administration's actions are in compliance with the APA and the Clean Water Act is an inquiry that can be left for another day."*

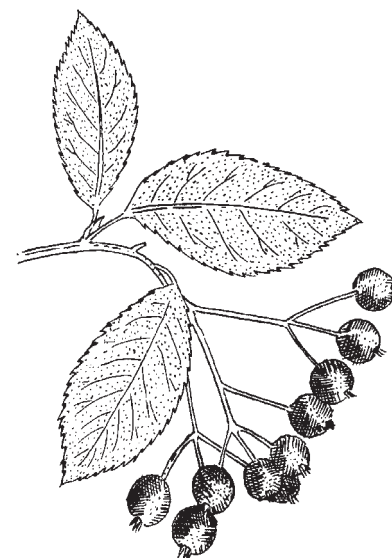
As stated in a previous article, when science indicates harm is being done to streams below valley fills throughout the region it is time... no past time, to heed the

sage warnings of another judge, Fourth Circuit Judge Wilkinson, who noted in his dissent in a closely divided Fourth Circuit decision involving our earlier litigation about particular individual mountaintop removal mining permits [OVEC v. Aracoma Coal Co., 567 F.3d 130, 133 (4<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2009) (Wilkinson, J., dissenting from denial of rehearing):

*"West Virginia is witnessing in the Appalachian headwaters the long, sad decline that Virginia and Maryland have seen with the Chesapeake Bay. Once the ecologies of streams and rivers and bays and oceans turn, they cannot be easily reclaimed. More often than not, the waterway is simply gone for good."*

In this the 40<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the Clean Water Act it's particularly frustrating to watch industry continue to fight science and clean water protections required by the Act. Originally intended to minimize harm to the environment and in turn prevent harm to people and communities near mining operations, the CWA, and other federal environmental laws that address coal mining, appear to be unable to stop the devastation and prevent further harm to human communities near these operations. .... There are now increasing numbers of scientific studies and bundles of anecdotal evidence that not only document significant harm is being done to the streams and environment, but also indicate that those mining operations are also a likely cause of some of our communities' sickness, disease and other unexplained health impacts.

It is unconscionable that things have come this far.



# CONFERENCE SHOWS CONNECTION BETWEEN MINERAL EXTRACTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH

By John McFerrin

On September 8, 2012, the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, and the Sierra Club (WV Chapter) sponsored a conference in Morgantown on Wellness and Water: Health Impacts of Fossil Fuel Extraction. About 100 people attended.

The conference was a combination of scientific presentations about health impacts and eyewitness accounts of what it is like to live near mining or drilling operations.

The keynote speaker was Wilma Surber. She is a scientist, with degrees in microbiology and chemistry and president of a company that does environmental testing.

After a brief overview of how hydraulic fracturing works, she dove into the heart of her presentation: what one is likely to find when testing air and water near drilling sites. She also discussed the health effects of exposure to these chemicals.

The information in the presentation was grim. She said that the Wastes generated by the exploration, development and production

of crude oil and natural gas are "exempt" by Federal law from being regulated as hazardous waste. Yet 10 to 70% of the large volume waste and 40 to 60% of the toxic associated waste are Hazardous by analysis.

Her presentation included a listing of the contaminants that are present in what are known as "produced water" or "produced fluids." This is the water that is present along with the gas and is brought to the surface as part of the producing the gas. They included organic chemicals, heavy metals, sulphur containing compounds, salt water minerals, and radioactive materials.

Although there is much contention among people and companies, she listed several items where there is agreement. She said that the oil and gas industry admits that there are spills and leaks which contaminate Surface water, ground water resources, soils, and air. The industry also admits that there are failures of casing and cementing that cause these impacts upon water, soil, and air. Casing is a series of metal pipes that extends from the surface to the producing formation. Cementing is the cement that is inserted between the casing and the rock it passes through. It is supposed to seal off the casing from the surrounding rock and any groundwater it might contain.

The industry stops short of admitting contamination of groundwater as a result of fracturing.

She also discussed surveys of health impacts felt by people who live close to gas wells or compressor stations. She presented a list of some forty two conditions which people had reported.

Her conclusion was that shale gas development has resulted in human health impacts to a large number of individuals living and

working in the areas of shale development as well as large quantities of environmental damage and disruption

She further concluded that state regulatory programs are not adequate to regulate and control the rapidly developing shale technologies being implemented within the individual states.

In addition to the keynote speaker, the conference featured experts and academics Jill Kriesky, Ben Stout, and Michael Hendryx.



**Michael Hendryx, Jill Kriesky, and Ben Stout** Photo by Chuck Wyrostock

Dr. Kriesky, of the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, talked about the health impacts of hydraulic fracturing. She included discussion of a recent legislation that inhibits physicians from sharing information about possible health impacts of fracking. She recommended that there be more studies of potential impacts, implementation of air and water monitoring regulations at fracking sites, strong chemical disclosure regulations, and a health registry and public health education programs.

Mr. Stout talked about the importance of data collection. He recommended that anyone in a fracking area test their water daily for conductivity. If the water becomes

contaminated there will be an immediate and dramatic increase in conductivity. He is also building a database of background water quality data. This makes it possible to know what the water was like before fracking.

Dr. Hendryx talked about the health impacts of mining, particularly mountaintop removal mining. He said that he has authored or co-authored more than twenty studies in peer reviewed journals that documented public health problems for people living near mining operations. He said that the health risks are greater for people living near the mines. This is true even after considering other health risks such as smoking, poverty, obesity, age, or access to health care. He called the epidemiological data of health impacts "overwhelming" and said that mountaintop mining should be stopped.

The most moving part of the conference was the descriptions of the problem by people who live near mining or drilling. Theirs were stories of ordinary people, just minding their own business, living their lives when they were intruded upon by drilling, mining, road dust, or a compressor station. They were of choking dust, noise that makes sleep impossible, and illnesses that they and their families had never had before.

If you missed the conference you can see most of it by going to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=vjDBCyf8Ypo&feature=endscreen>. That takes you to one of the presentation as well as links to other presentations. Follow all the links and you will have seen the whole conference (minus introductions, question and answers, directions to the bathrooms, etc.)

# IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT BUGS

By John McFerrin

Four years ago we were treated to a series of television ads featuring dancing bugs, the bugs that critics of mountaintop removal strip mining were supposedly dedicated to saving. The ads made the unsupported claim that valley fills do nothing to permanently damage the habitats of aquatic insects. The subtext of the ads was ridicule of regulation of this kind of mining. Who in their right mind, the ad implied, would jeopardize the foundation of the state's economy to save a bunch of bugs? As cute as the bugs (or at least their TV commercial dancing version) might be, why should society do anything to try to help them?

In addition to their factual inaccuracies (the bugs reported that valley fills didn't cause them any hardship), the commercials were based upon a false assumption. They assumed that the bugs existed in isolation. Even were they to be wiped out, the commercial implied, there would be no great loss to society. Why bother regulating mountaintop removal strip mining just to save a bunch of bugs?

Such an assumption ignores the basic principal of ecology: it is all connected. Natural systems only work when they have all their parts. Start eliminating some parts—be they bugs, birds, bees, whatever—and the rest of it won't work.

The Environmental Protection Agency recognizes this. In the Mountaintop Mining Valley Fills in Appalachia Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement it said:

*Most of the streams discussed in this PEIS are considered headwater streams. Headwater streams are generally important ecologically because they contain not only diverse aquatic assemblages, but some unique aquatic species. Headwater streams also provide organic energy that is critical to fish and other aquatic species throughout an entire river.*

The judicial system recognizes this, treating it as a fact accepted by all sides. In one of the cases on the legality of one aspect of mountaintop removal strip mining, one of the judges remarked *Today's decision will have far-reaching consequences for the environment of Appalachia. It is not disputed that the impact of filling valleys and headwaters streams is irreversible or that headwater streams provide crucial ecosystem functions.*

At the time the commercials came out, there was a reaction from those who lived in communities where the mines were located. Typical was that of James Tawney, a West Virginia Highlands Conservancy member who wrote to *The Highlands Voice*:

*I want to let everyone know that the other habitat that we're fighting for is our habitat. You know, those of us who live with a valley fill in our backyard, or a slurry impoundment hovering above our communities, homes and schools, or have lost our well water because of blasting. That's whose habitat we're trying to save!*

Now, four years later, the research has caught up with what the people knew all along: it is not just about bugs. The scientific evidence is piling up associating living near mountaintop removal

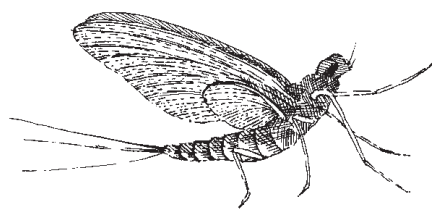
sites with birth defects, low birth weight births, cancer, poor physical health, poor mental health, cardiovascular difficulties, and pulmonary difficulties. This may not be news to the people who live there.

What is new is the nature of the evidence. For years, if not decades, people in mining communities have been sitting around in their living rooms saying, "Sure is a lot of cancer around here." Now we have careful study by serious researchers confirming that, yes, there is a lot of cancer around here, more than there is in communities not occupied by mountaintop removal mining. The same is true for the other health effects. The studies are published in academic journals, the kind of journals where articles are reviewed by other qualified researchers, a process designed to weed out reports of flawed studies or unsubstantiated claims. One of the more prominent researchers, Dr. Michael Hendryx, calls the epidemiological evidence of adverse health effects "overwhelming." (See story on the facing page).

The studies do not answer the question of the exact mechanism by which the mining causes the health effects. They don't say whether the disease is a result of bad water, bad air, noise, all of these, or something else. They just say that people who live near mining are less healthy than similar people living in similar communities where mining is not present.

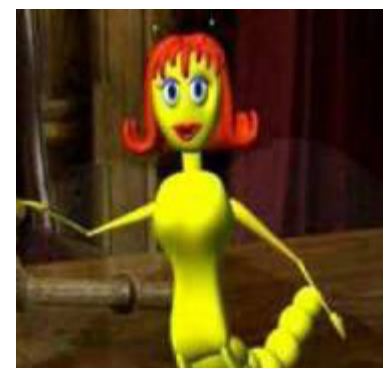
In other words, what people have said all along is true: opposing mountaintop removal strip mining is not just fighting to save bugs.

Old commercials never die; they just move to Youtube. To see the bug commercials, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&NR=1&v=8ahRleExjY4> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxsg601tuA>. The Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition has collected studies on the health impacts of living in a community occupied by mountaintop removal mining. For links to the studies, go to [http://www.ohvec.org/issues/mountaintop\\_removal/articles/health/index.html](http://www.ohvec.org/issues/mountaintop_removal/articles/health/index.html).



## Mayfly

Of the Order *Ephemeroptera*, from the Greek *ephemeros* meaning short-lived and *pteron* meaning wing. In its adult form it may live only a day or two, although in the immature, larval stage it can live for a year.



## Bug

Of the Order *Phonius*. It has a lifespan, thanks to Youtube, of four years and counting.

## Join Now !!!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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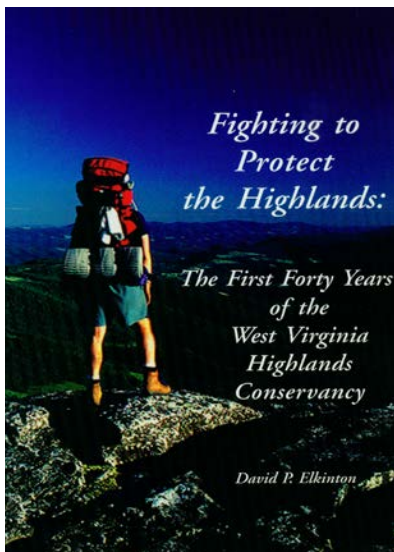
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Senior	\$ 15		
Student	\$ 15		
Introductory			
Other	\$ 15		
Regular	\$ 25	\$ 35	\$ 50
Associate	\$ 50	\$ 75	\$ 100
Sustaining	\$100	\$ 150	\$ 200
Patron	\$ 250	\$ 500	\$ 500
Mountaineer	\$500	\$ 750	\$ 1000

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**West Virginia Highlands Conservancy**  
Working to Keep West Virginia Wild and Wonderful!

### GREAT HISTORY BOOK NOW AVAILABLE



For the first time, a comprehensive history of West Virginia's most influential activist environmental organization. Author Dave Elkinton, the Conservancy's third president, and a twenty-year board member, not only traces the major issues that have occupied the Conservancy's energy, but profiles more than twenty of its volunteer leaders.

Learn about how the Conservancy stopped road building in Otter Creek, how a Corps of Engineers wetland permit denial saved Canaan Valley, and why Judge Haden restricted mountaintop removal mining. Also read Sayre

Rodman's account of the first running of the Gauley, how college students helped save the Cranberry Wilderness, and why the highlands are under threat as never before.

With a foreword by former congressman Ken Hechler, the book's chapters follow the battle for wilderness preservation, efforts to stop many proposed dams and protect free-flowing rivers, the 25-year struggle to save the Canaan Valley, how the Corridor H highway was successfully re-routed around key environmental landmarks, and concluding with the current controversy over wind farm development. One-third of the text tells the story of the Conservancy's never-ending fight to control the abuses of coal mining, especially mountaintop removal mining. The final chapter examines what makes this small, volunteer-driven organization so successful.

From the cover by photographer Jonathan Jessup to the 48-page index, this book will appeal both to Conservancy members and friends and to anyone interested in the story of how West Virginia's mountains have been protected against the forces of over-development, mismanagement by government, and even greed.

518 pages, 6x9, color cover, published by Pocahontas Press To order your copy for \$14.95, plus \$3.00 shipping, visit the Conservancy's website, wvhighlands.org, where payment is accepted by credit card and PayPal. Or write: WVHC, PO Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321. Proceeds support the Conservancy's ongoing environmental projects.

### SUCH A DEAL!

#### Book Premium With Membership

Although *Fighting to Protect the Highlands, the First 40 Years of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy* normally sells for \$14.95 plus \$3.00 postage. We are offering it as a premium to new members. New members receive it free with membership.

Existing members may have one for \$10.00. Anyone who adds \$10 to the membership dues listed on the How to Join membership or on the renewal form will receive the history book. Just note on the membership form that you wish to take advantage of this offer.

### HATS FOR SALE

We have West Virginia Highlands Conservancy baseball style caps for sale as well as I ♥ Mountains caps.

The WVHC cap is beige with green woven into the twill and the pre-curved visor is light green. The front of the cap has West Virginia Highlands Conservancy logo and the words West Virginia Highlands Conservancy on the front and I ♥ Mountains on the back. It is soft twill, unstructured, low profile, sewn eyelets, cloth strap with tri-glide buckle closure.

The I ♥ Mountains The colors are stone, black and red.. The front of the cap has I ♥ MOUNTAINS. The heart is red. The red and black hats are soft twill, unstructured, low profile, sewn eyelets, cloth strap with tri-glide buckle closure. The stone has a stiff front crown with a velcro strap on the back. All hats have West Virginia Highlands Conservancy printed on

the back. Cost is \$15 by mail. West Virginia residents add 6% tax. Make check payable to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and send to James Solley, P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321-0306



# ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS CALL FOR MARCELLUS DRILLING MORATORIUM

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has joined with Sierra Club, West Virginia Chapter; Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition; West Virginia Environmental Council; Friends of the Cacapon River; Christians for the Mountains; Eight Rivers Council; Greenbrier River Water Association; SaveTheWaterTable.org; West Virginians For A Moratorium On Marcellus (WV4MoM) and Coal River Mountain Watch in calling for a moratorium on drilling for gas in the Marcellus shale until certain conditions are met.

The groups did not request a permanent end to all drilling. They recognize the possibility (only theoretical at this point) that natural gas drilling could be done right. Today, however, it is not being done safely. It has to stop until changes are made which would make this possible.

To reach this goal, the groups asked that no new permits be issued until there are several changes in the way the drilling is done. The groups recognize that the Legislature enacted some drilling requirements in December, 2011. Those requirements are not, however, remotely adequate to provide the basic protections needed by West Virginia citizens.

These are the steps that the groups requested be taken:

1. No new permits should be issued until Department of Environmental Protection inspections of drilling operations and gas wells become mandatory. The WV DEP must determine the number of active wells that an inspector can effectively oversee and limit the number of permits issued to the corresponding number of inspectors on staff.
2. No new permits should be granted until tracers are added to the hydraulic fracturing fluids so groundwater contamination

from drilling operations can be identified.

3. No new permits should be issued until a closed-loop process is mandated for drilling and hydraulic fracturing. In order to protect the state's surface and groundwater, no waste or flowback, solid or liquid should be applied to or buried on the land.

4. No new permits should be granted until all hazardous materials are disposed of in hazardous waste facilities.

5. No new permits should be issued until Home Rule is honored. Local towns and counties must be allowed to control whether, where and when hydraulic fracturing is done in their communities, including control of the roads and hours where trucks hauling drilling equipment and supplies are allowed to operate.

6. No new permits should be issued until air pollution emissions are monitored and regulated and pollution controls are required on all gas facilities.

7. No new permits should be issued until West Virginia citizens are guaranteed a permanent replacement if their source of clean water becomes contaminated at any time within 1 mile of a natural gas drilling operation unless another source of pollution can be proven.

The groups' request was delivered in September, 2012, to Governor Tomblin and to Jeff Kessler, President, West Virginia State Senate, and Richard Thompson, Speaker, West Virginia House of Delegates, who were at the Capitol for interim meetings.



## BUMPER STICKERS



To get free *I ♥ Mountains* bumper sticker(s), send a SASE to Julian Martin, 1525 Hampton Road, Charleston, WV 25314. Slip a dollar donation (or more) in with the SASE and get 2 bumper stickers. Businesses or organizations wishing to provide



bumper stickers to their customers/members may have them free. (Of course if they can afford a donation that will be gratefully accepted.)

Also available are the green-on-white oval *Friends of the Mountains* stickers. Let Julian know which (or both) you want.

## MORE ABOUT LARRY GIBSON (Continued from page 1)

do - how far would you go to stand for it? For me it was my land. For me, it was my mountain."

In the excellent ABC Nightline episode "Digging Deep: The Cost of Cheap Energy" that aired in 1999, Larry met with ABC's Barry Serafin and took him to the edge of his mountain, and with tears in his eyes, gazed out on the destruction:

"I don't care if it's a coal company, oil company or chemical company - I'll go anywhere and talk against the destruction of what's happening here. I'll go anywhere ... how can you do this to your own back yard? Where you gonna play? I used to play here. Used to..."

Larry could also be charming and funny. I heard him once tell a pretty West Virginia girl "You're as pretty as a shiny new nickel" He could make people laugh, and on a good night he could make his audience cry. Sometimes he came across to his audiences as an angry or bitter man, but he always had something interesting to say, he was just full of energy - and sometimes he could be quite profound.

Larry took Nashville filmmaker Jeff Barrie on a tour of his family cemetery on Kayford for the film "Kilowatt Ours," when suddenly a blast went off on the nearby mine site. Hurrying to the edge of the mountain, Jeff captured with his camera the huge cloud of dust rising above the moonscape as Larry pondered his situation.

"People, a lot of people ask me if I have a picture of the mountain before it was destroyed. For one, you can't take a picture of a mountain while you're on it, but for two, Lord have mercy, why should you take a picture of a mountain? It's gonna be there forever. At least I thought ..."

Larry said some things that I never could figure out. He would say "Golly nez" as an expression of wonderment or surprise - it was a mild curse that he used instead of "Gosh darn." I've never heard anyone else, anywhere use that expression. Golly nez, Larry was an original.

For years, coal companies tried to intimidate Larry and to run him off his land because he had 37 or 38 seams of coal in the mountain below his cabin. Someone shot up his cabin, and someone tried to hang his dog. Massey coal thugs would come and try and disrupt his family picnic gatherings on the mountain. He'd say, "I've had 137 acts of violence on my land" and I would wonder, "Why are you keeping count?"

Occasionally when he was feeling really tired or frustrated, Larry would let loose and curse, like the time when he saw that a bulldozer

operator had driven a dozer through the old Stover Cemetery (on land adjacent to Larry's). I can't remember who was there when Larry first saw this - I think it was one of the Mountain Justice members touring Kayford with her father and mother. But she told me that Larry was so angry at the dozer operator for his desecration of a known West Virginia family cemetery that he almost went and got his gun.

One of the most important figures in Larry's life was Ken Hechler, the legendary former Congressman and West Virginia Secretary of State who has been a lifelong crusader against strip mining abuses. Ken is very well-respected in West Virginia - and he was the only member of Congress who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King while

in office. Ken was Larry's mentor, and Larry once told me that when Ken told him something, "You better believe I listen." Ken inspired Larry and he taught him lessons from the civil rights struggle about the importance of non-violence in the campaign against mountaintop removal. And over the years Larry became a much better speaker and community leader.

He walked across West Virginia with Julian Martin of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy in 1999 to bring attention to the MTR issue. Larry was a constant presence at rallies, meetings and gatherings, from DC's "Appalachia Rising" to the Sierra Club National Board of Directors meeting in San Francisco. He even went to South America to talk to people about his mountain, and he reached out to people everywhere he went to help build the movement. He was even invited to New Guinea.

Early in the fight against mountaintop removal, Larry was once criticized because his bumper sticker said "I am the Keeper of the Mountains," like he was a lone

warrior in the cause. Larry changed it to "We are the Keepers of the Mountains" to be more inclusive, and over the long run probably did more than any other one individual to bring people into the anti-MTR movement and make them feel welcome and valued. He would call and chat just to say hello. I was always glad to talk to him.

Larry fought the good fight. He fought longer and harder against mountaintop removal than anyone else ever could, and he went down swinging. Some people said Larry reminded them of "The Lorax" from the Dr. Suess book, and I think they are right - the Lorax spoke for the trees, and Larry spoke for the mountains - and they both had that same little white moustache ...

Larry was so generous with his time, and he always treated everyone who came to visit his mountain equally, whether it was a



**Larry Gibson being toted off to the hoosgow in March, 2007. He and about a hundred citizens had been at the Governor's office protesting a coal processing facility close to an elementary school in Raleigh County, West Virginia. Larry and twelve others were arrested on non-violent civil disobedience related charges.**

**(More on the next page )**



## THE REST OF THE STORY (Continued from the previous page)

group of 10 high school students from a local school, or whether it was Mike Wallace of 60 Minutes.

Right now, Larry is happily roaming the green, unscarred mountains of West Virginia of his youth - "the mountains with no boundaries, no limits" as he described them in the film "Mountaintop Removal." Larry is in a better place, and he probably has a baby squirrel in his pocket.

I'm especially happy that Larry was able to find some peace of mind late in life - he met a gentle and wonderful lady named Carol, and they were happily married for years. They were so sweet together.

What do we do now without Larry? We will keep on fighting to save the land and people of Appalachia "for everyone that comes after me and after you."

And this is an incredibly important struggle. When you look at the issue of global warming, some of the predictions are very dire indeed. Burning coal is at the heart of the climate crisis, and if some experts are right, we are fast approaching a "tipping point" beyond which rising global temperatures cannot be reversed, no matter what we do. The earth will just keep warming and warming until...

Who are the people that are trying to stop this madness? There really aren't very many of them, and there are even fewer that are actually willing to put their own life and safety on the line to help stop the destruction - the destruction of the very life support systems that are keeping us all alive.

Larry was one of those people. He was fearless and he was tireless.

I think that if the human race is able to survive runaway global climate change, there will one day be statues and monuments to the heroes of the planet like Larry Gibson, Judy Bonds, Laura Forman, Ken Hechler, Al Gore, James Hansen, Bill McKibben, Harry Caudill, John Cleveland and so many more - who have devoted their lives to stopping the worst ravages of coal. All of these people will be in the history books, and future students will read about them wonder why more average people didn't try and help stop mountaintop removal and runaway climate change. They will look at the photos of RAMPS and Mountain Justice activists being arrested for non-violent civil disobedience with the same sense of wonder and disbelief that we feel today when we see the photos of civil rights protestors being attacked by Sheriff Bull Connor's dogs. They will wonder - how could so many people have stood by and let the mountains be destroyed? Why didn't more people get involved?

Will you join us? We need more Mountain Keepers, like Larry - do you dare to be one, too?

### MOUNTAINTOP REMOVAL—UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Visit Kayford Mountain and/or Mud River Mountain south of Charleston to see mountain top removal (MTR) up close. Bring lunch for a picnic on Kayford mountain. Call in advance to schedule. Julian Martin (304) 342-8989; martinjul@aol.com or

## CELEBRATING LARRY GIBSON: THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF THE KEEPER OF THE MOUNTAINS

There will be a memorial service for Larry Gibson on Sunday, October 14 from 2 to 6 p.m. at the Charleston Municipal Auditorium, located on the corner of Virginia and Truslow Streets, across from the Town Center Mall in downtown Charleston, W. Va.

The program will feature family, friends, prominent activists, southern West Virginia residents, musicians and preachers.

Larry, 66, died of a heart attack on Sunday, September 9, while working on his family's land on Kayford Mountain, which he spent the last decades of his life protecting from mountaintop removal. On September 13, Larry was laid to rest in a private funeral on the mountain that he loved. He is survived by his wife, Carol, two sons Cameron and Larry, Jr. and his daughter, Victoria.

Larry's family has requested that those wishing to express condolences make donations to the Keeper of the Mountains Foundation. Cards and letters to family can be mailed to the Keeper of the Mountains Foundation office at 179 Summers St, Suite 234, Charleston, WV, 25301.

## REYLAS MINE CHALLENGE RUNS INTO ROADBLOCK

By Cindy Rank

When we last reported on the proposed Reylas Mine and valley fill in Bandmill Hollow of Dingess Run in Logan County (June 2012 Highlands Voice) mining was on hold while we awaited final briefing and closing arguments in our litigation challenging the adequacy of the 404 fill permit.

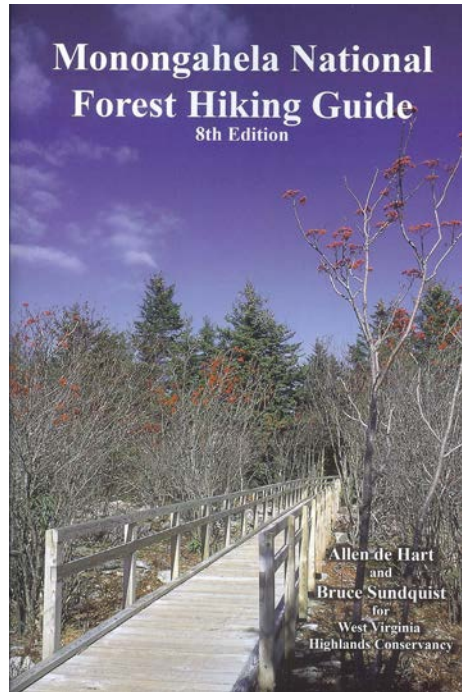
Since then court documents were filed, hearings held and the court denied our challenge and refused to block the permit.

It should come as no surprise that we've filed an appeal with the 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals. However, without an injunction to prevent the company from mining before the appeal is heard, it is conceivable that mining could begin at any time. If the stream is disturbed our appeal is basically lost... made moot.

We (plaintiffs West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, Coal River Mountain Watch, and the Sierra Club) went back to the U.S. District Court for Southern West Virginia in Huntington to request an injunction while our appeal is pending.

On September 13<sup>th</sup> Judge Chambers issued an Order denying our request for an injunction to block Alpha Natural Resources and its subsidiary Highland Mining while the 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit considers our appeal. The Order did, however, allow 14 days for us to go to the 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit to request an injunction and put a hold on mining while that court considers the facts in the case.....

Deadline for this issue of the Voice precludes reporting on anything beyond that so stay tuned.



## The Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide

By Allen de Hart and Bruce Sundquist

Describes 180 U.S. Forest Service trails (847 miles total) in one of the best (and most popular) areas for hiking, back-packing and ski-touring in this part of the country (1436 sq. miles of national forest in West Virginia=s highlands). 6x9" soft cover, 368 pages, 86 pages of maps, 57 photos, full-color cover, Ed.8 (2006)

Send \$14.95 plus \$3.00 shipping to:  
**West Virginia Highlands Conservancy**  
 P.O. Box 306  
 Charleston, WV 25321  
 OR  
 Order from our website at  
[www.wvhighlands.org](http://www.wvhighlands.org)

### New 8TH Edition Now Available on CD

WV Highlands Conservancy proudly offers an Electronic (CD) version of its famous Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide (8th Edition), with many added features.

This new CD edition includes the text pages as they appear in the printed version by Allen deHart and Bruce Sundquist in an interactive pdf format. It also includes the following mapping features, developed by WVHC volunteer Jim Solley, and not available anywhere else:

- All pages and maps in the new Interactive CD version of the Mon hiking guide can easily be printed and carried along with you on your hike
- All new, full color topographic maps have been created and are included on this CD. They include all points referenced in the text.
- Special Features not found in the printed version of the Hiking Guide: Interactive pdf format allows you to click on a map reference in the text, and that map centered on that reference comes up.
- Trail mileages between waypoints have been added to the maps.
- ALL NEW Printable, full color, 24K scale topographic maps of many of the popular hiking areas, including Cranberry, Dolly Sods, Otter Creek and many more

Price: \$20.00 from the same address.

## PROJECT APPROVED FOR UPPER GREENBRIER NORTH

By Dave Saville

The Upper Greenbrier North project, a large project area at over 80,000 acres, has been designed to be implemented over a long time period, ten years. While the project area is large (landscape (watershed) scale), activities planned in the project will touch only 10% of this area. Analyzing the entire watershed allows the agency to do a better job on cumulative and watershed effects. It does not mean that the entire area will have projects occurring. The project has been broken up into three parts to make it easier to understand and plan for. 1- Watershed and Recreation, 2-Timber, 3-Spruce restoration.

The first decision (watershed and recreation) was signed August 15<sup>th</sup>. The timber and spruce restoration portions are to follow. The Highlands Conservancy has been partnering with the Forest Service on the spruce restoration planning and the decision for that part of the project has not been made yet. We do not think what the Forest Service is planning is unwise. In fact, most of what the project is proposing is fully supported by the WVHC including recreational improvements, road decommissioning, spruce restoration, wildlife habitat improvements and more.

The timber decision is planned to be made later this year, but the project does not plan to log in any northern West Virginia flying squirrel sites. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the agency responsible for protecting the squirrel, was consulted on the project and has concurred with the plan. While some WVHC members may object to the relatively small amount of logging that will take place in this project over the next ten years, the agency is doing its job by implementing the Forest Plan, which the Highlands Conservancy was intimately engaged in developing, and did not appeal or challenge, when it was developed. The Forest Service manages the National Forest for "multiple-uses" which includes timber, as mandated by Congress. Compared to historical standards, the timbering component of this project is minimal.

The Forest Service personnel developing this project are dedicated professionals and include wildlife biologists, recreational planners, soil scientists, ecologists, fisheries biologists and others. This planning team has been working for over 6 years to study the area, gather input from the public, and develop this proposal. They are very interested and receptive to the public's concerns and would welcome anyone to help monitor or be involved with the project. I suggest that anyone interested in learning more contact Jack Tribble, the Greenbrier District Ranger, who is the Forest Service official responsible for developing and implementing this project. I am sure that he would be happy to discuss the project or even take you for a site visit to look over the actual areas. He can be contacted at 304-456-3335 ext. 116 or at [jtribble@fs.fed.us](mailto:jtribble@fs.fed.us). The agency encourages the public to get involved and we need you to care!!

# WATER TRAIL FOR THE CHEAT RIVER UNDER DEVELOPMENT

The Cheat River Water Trail committee, working under the guidance of Friends of the Cheat, was formed in April 2012 with the goal of developing a state-designated water trail on the Cheat River. Although the larger goal is to develop a water trail over the entire length of the river, the team felt the best way to achieve the goal was to develop the trail in sections. The first section that the team is seeking to designate as a water trail, the Upper Cheat River Water Trail, begins just above Parsons, in Hendricks, and continues approximately 38 miles downstream to Rowlesburg.

What is a Water Trail? Simply put, it is a trail for boats. Water trails are recreational corridors and routes on rivers and lakes that provide adequate access points used for planning trips of various lengths and difficulty. A water trail may also provide access to riverside campgrounds, primitive campsites, and amenities such as shelters and restrooms in city, county, or state parks.

A water trail has a detailed map showing access points and river mileage and may also provide information on history and area culture, wildlife viewing opportunities, and other supplemental information to foster a holistic outdoor experience. Water trails help connect visitors to the history, heritage, geology and wildlife of the area. A water trail promotes an ethic of caring that makes users more aware of their surrounding environment and serve as a passive educational venue. Whether they are used for relaxation, health and fitness, education, or just for spending time with family, water trails provide in-state destinations for recreational river users that help boost local economies.

Potential access points have been identified and surveyed to determine what property owners should be contacted and what signage and improvements may be needed to create a user-friendly access. Research is being done on historical and other interesting places along the river including key businesses to market to trail users patronize. The development of maps, brochures, and a water trail website are in preliminary stages.

Peggy Pings, Outdoor Recreation Planner with the National Park Service's Rivers & Trails Program, says "I commend the Friends of the Cheat's Water Trail Committee for pursuing development of their waterway for public use. There is also a new national System of Water Trails program, and the Cheat River will likely qualify. The Upper Cheat is a beautiful, easy section of river to make available to the world."

Frank Jernejcic, District Fishery Biologist with the West Virginia Dept. of Natural Resources, says "A water trail on the Cheat River will allow individuals of limited paddling abilities to experience one of West Virginia's most scenic rivers. The Cheat smallmouth bass fishery has improved significantly during the past 30 years and can provide fishing opportunities for neophyte and experienced anglers alike".

A key ingredient to the project planning is public input. Town hall meetings are being planned as well as meetings with local county commissions and other government entities. Copies

of the Upper Cheat River Water Trail draft designation document, submitted to the West Virginia Recreational Trails Advisory Board, have been posted at the following locations, Tucker County: Tucker County Courthouse; Tucker County Commission Office; Five Rivers Public Library; Parsons City Hall; Hendricks Town Hall; Hambleton Town Hall; Davis City Hall; Thomas City Hall; Mountaintop Public Library; Tucker County Development Authority Office; and Tucker County Visitors Information Center. In Preston County: Preston



County Commission Office, Kingwood; Preston County Courthouse, Kingwood; Kingwood City Hall; Kingwood Public Library; Rowlesburg Town Hall; Rowlesburg Post Office; and Albright Town Hall. The document is also available online at [www.cheatriverwatertrail.org](http://www.cheatriverwatertrail.org).

Funding for the development and marketing of the water trail is expected to come from grants and donations. The team hopes to complete the designation process for the first section of the water trail by May of 2013.

Comments, questions, and involvement from community stakeholders are encouraged. For more information, visit the water trail website at [www.cheatriverwatertrail.org](http://www.cheatriverwatertrail.org), join the group's Face book page at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/cheat.river.water.trail/> or contact the Cheat River Water Trail Committee Chair, Dave Cassell, via e-mail at [mtbikewv@comcast.net](mailto:mtbikewv@comcast.net).

Some relief for spinning heads**MINING LITIGATION: WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT**

By Mark 'Buzz' Belleville

A confluence of events over the past few years has reduced coal consumption in the United States to its lowest levels in decades. A recent string of court victories, however, has provided a lifeline to surface mining operations (commonly referred to as mountaintop removal) in Appalachia.

For years, about half of the electricity generated in the U.S. came from coal combustion.

That number has dropped, somewhat staggeringly, to about one-third over the past two years. Appalachian coal companies have countered by nearly doubling the amount of their coal exports over the same time period. Reasons for the drop in domestic coal use are many, probably the greatest being the somewhat sudden abundance of cheaper and cleaner natural gas.

Industry also argues that regulatory efforts under the current federal administration have significantly contributed to decreased use of coal in this country. A handful of major new air quality standards that were delayed under the Bush administration have been proposed and/or implemented; there has been increased enforcement of mine safety standards after a 2010 disaster at the Upper Big Branch mine in West Virginia killed 29 miners; and there are continuing proposals to treat fly ash, a byproduct of coal combustion, as a "hazardous substance" under federal law.

But it is the EPA's attempt to utilize the Clean Water Act to make it nearly impossible for surface mining operations to dispose of the earth they displace into nearby valleys that directly targets surface mining operations prevalent in Appalachia.

The EPA purports to base its increased Clean Water Act enforcement on reports showing that Appalachian sites downstream of mountaintop-removal operations have significant increases in conductivity and hardness as well as sulfate and selenium concentrations. The coal industry pushed back, challenging the EPA's Clean Water Act authority in federal court. In a series of three decisions over the past nine months, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia has sided with industry.

In the first decision, the court found that the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers could not, by a memorandum of understanding, lay out a procedure whereby the EPA determines which discharge permit applications should be subject

to enhanced environmental review.

The second decision focused on a particular permit that the Army Corps had issued to the Mingo Logan Coal Co. in West Virginia; the court found that the EPA lacked the authority to "veto" the permit once the Corps had issued it. And the final decision, rendered just recently, held that the EPA's attempt to impose a "conductivity" water quality standard could not be done by a series of "guidance" papers.

A bit of background is needed to understand the recent court decisions' impact on surface mining in Appalachia. The Clean Water Act, one of a series of major environmental laws passed in the early to mid-1970s, prohibits discharges into the waters of the United States without a permit. The EPA has authority over permits for the discharge of "pollutants,"

while the Army Corps of Engineers has authority over permits for the discharge of "dredge" or "fill" material.

This makes sense. The act contemplates that the EPA is in charge of pollution-causing discharges (section 402), and the Corps is in charge of earth-moving discharges (section 404).

The problem for mountaintop removal is that while the displaced earth is clearly fill material under the CWA's definition, it also contains pollutants that reportedly cause downstream contamination when the material is pushed off the mountain edges.

The U.S. Supreme Court, in a couple of decisions that have provided fodder for countless scholarly analyses, has determined that section 404 applies to, and that the Army Corps is the primary permitting authority for, disposal of earth from surface mining operations.

But the EPA still has a role to play. First, the EPA shares responsibility with the states to establish water quality standards, which in turn inform permitting authorities as they consider discharge permit applications. Moreover, the EPA has authority to prevent the Corps from issuing a discharge permit for a particular site when the EPA determines that it will have an adverse effect on municipal water supplies or wildlife or recreational areas. Importantly, the

recent decisions do not undermine these aspects of EPA authority.

What the EPA cannot do, according to the recent decisions, is set water quality standards or determine enhanced environmental review by something less than formal rulemaking, or veto a section 404 permit after it has been issued by the Corps.

So, is Appalachian surface mining out of the woods after these recent decisions? No. First, the appeals process needs to run its course. Second, even if the district court decisions survive -- undoubtedly a win for Mingo Logan, which already has its permit in hand -- it does nothing to undermine the EPA's authority to stop future permits before they are issued. If anything, these recent decisions affirm the authority of the EPA to prevent, based on environmental concerns, the Corps from issuing such permits, so long as the EPA intervenes before their actual issuance.

Moreover, nothing in the decisions prevents the EPA from enacting regulations that codify both the conductivity water quality standard and the enhanced environmental review agreement between the EPA and the Corps.

Finally, and most important, the economic realities of natural gas abundance and renewable technologies, as well as the scientific realities of climate change, will determine coal's (and surface mining's) future far more than anything the EPA does.

Whether the EPA aggressively intervenes in section 404 permit issuance or engages in the rulemaking process to codify the conductivity water quality standard or the enhanced environmental review process for discharges into environmentally susceptible Appalachian streams will likely depend on the discretion of the occupant of the White House. But the truth is that there are forces far more powerful than EPA regulations driving the future of coal in Appalachia.

*Mr. Belleville is a professor of sustainable energy law at Appalachian School of Law at Grundy, Va.. This article previously appeared in The Charleston Gazette.*

**Editor's note: The cases Mr. Belleville discusses have all been covered at one time or another in *The Highlands Voice*. It's just that there are so many cases flying around that it is hard to keep track of them and hard to see how they all fit together. In this article Mr. Belleville provides help doing this.**





West  
Virginia  
Highlands  
Conservancy

PO Box 306 Charleston, WV 25321

## West Virginia Seed Source Conifer Seedlings

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy continues its efforts to conserve and restore the High Elevation Red Spruce Ecosystem in West Virginia, and the Central Appalachian Mountains, by offering high quality seedlings grown from seed collected locally by volunteers.

**All proceeds support red spruce ecosystem restoration efforts in West Virginia.**

### Red Spruce

10-18 inches, these are a 2 inch plug 6 inches deep.

#### Spring 2013

Thru August 31, 2012	1,000 minimum
\$0.85 each	
Beginning September 1, 2012	1,000 minimum
\$0.95 each	
Beginning September 1, 2012	100 minimum
\$2.00 each	

#### Spring 2014

Thru August 31, 2012	1,000 minimum
\$0.80 each	
September 1, 2012 - August 31, 2013	1,000 minimum
\$0.85 each	
Beginning September 1, 2013	1,000 minimum
\$0.95 each	
Beginning September 1, 2013	100 minimum
\$2.00 each	

## Canaan Valley Balsam Fir Seedlings

14-20 inches, these trees, are a 1 year plug grown in a transplant bed for 2 additional years.

#### Spring 2013

Beginning September 1, 2012	100 minimum
\$2.50 each	
Beginning September 1, 2012	1,000 minimum
\$1.25 each	

25% deposit will reserve your trees.

Flexible availability from late March thru early May.

Quantities Limited

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For more information visit [www.restoreredspruce.org](http://www.restoreredspruce.org) or contact:

Dave Saville, Program Coordinator

304-692-8118

daves@labyrinth.net

## Hummingbird

Hummingbird,  
you buzz and chirp  
zooming on urgent errands  
about the yard

You can stop on a dime  
to hang in the air  
like an unfinished thought

Then zip away, an arrow  
flown from yeoman's bow  
your wings so blurred  
I wonder if I imagined them

Do you use magic  
not feathers  
for flight?

One September dawn your bright gaze  
will set upon a point unseen  
memory of a home  
you may have never known

In less time than it takes  
to blow a kiss  
you'll be gone  
parting the air before you  
like a curtain to promise

Hummingbird,  
no heavier than a cracker  
fueled by nectar and gnats  
power yourself to the nation's edge  
and take your leap of faith:  
non-stop flight across the Gulf  
God willing  
and the winds don't turn against you

Unlikely as it seems  
impossibly ordained  
we'll meet again in April  
by the back porch door.

E.R.

# ACTIVIST REMEMBERS AFRICA

By Hugh Rogers

"In March, 1961, the day after President Kennedy announced he was forming the Peace Corps, I called Washington and volunteered." Julian Martin, our Vice-President for State Affairs, recalls those days in his newly published memoir, *Imagonna*. What he tells about his motivation—his activities in the Wesley Foundation at West Virginia University, his discovery of certain heroes—only begins to explain that leap into the unknown. Some people are just born radical, although it helps if you're born into a family of altruistic Christians and union activists. In 1961, a Peace Corps was a radical idea.

It's still a miniscule program. The number of volunteers who have served over the past fifty years, 200,000, is less than ten percent of the number of active military and reserves serving just this year. Our military personnel are stationed in 150 countries. At one time or another, Peace Corps had projects in 139; currently, about 8,000 PCV's are working in 77 countries. Coincidentally, they are no longer in the countries where Julian and I went, Nigeria and Korea.

Among RPCV's (Returned Peace Corps Volunteers), *Imagonna* will bring up lots of stories. Let me mention two more coincidences. The title of Julian's book comes from his students' puzzlement at a particular word he used—which turned out to be his pronunciation of "I am going to." Similarly, my wife Ruth had to overcome her North Carolina accent so her *students* could be understood. Like Julian, who married a fellow PCV in Nigeria, we had a baby in Korea. In both places, strangers were curious (and direct) about the babies' sex. His girl's diaper was pulled off. Ruth learned to say, "Yes, he has a chili pepper!" while yanking our boy away from probing fingers.

Julian was not only the first volunteer from West Virginia; he was one of the first from anywhere in the country. Peace Corps' fledgling bureaucracy couldn't help but make annoying mistakes. The telegram that arrived a few months after his call said he was being sent to Nicaragua. That was easy to correct, but the trainees rebelled at the pervasive pseudopsychology that was supposed to reveal character weaknesses. The language Julian was taught, Hausa, was useless in the Igbo region where he was sent. Fortunately, he was expected to teach chemistry, and coach track, in English, the language of education in the former colony; he learned Igbo on his own.

Instead of dealing with English colonials, he had to cope with Irish priests. His boss at the missionary school was a throwback in a long white cassock. He calls him Headmaster:

For two years I would witness Headmaster's vow of humility being tested daily by the power he possessed to lord it over, abuse, and degrade the hired help and the three hundred teenage boys under his control. He usually failed the test.

And not only the vow of humility. Reconcile the vow of poverty with the cook, two houseboys, well-furnished house, new Peugeot, ample

foreign food, etc. Headmaster's irritable temper and bigotry seemed to indicate he'd overstayed. The plush situation might help to explain why he didn't leave.

Julian would learn that even his hero in Africa, Albert Schweitzer, was an appalling racist. His Peace Corps friend, William Shurtleff, who had worked for Schweitzer at the Lambarene hospital, could only shrug and quote the great man's biographer: "A man does not have to be an angel to be a saint."

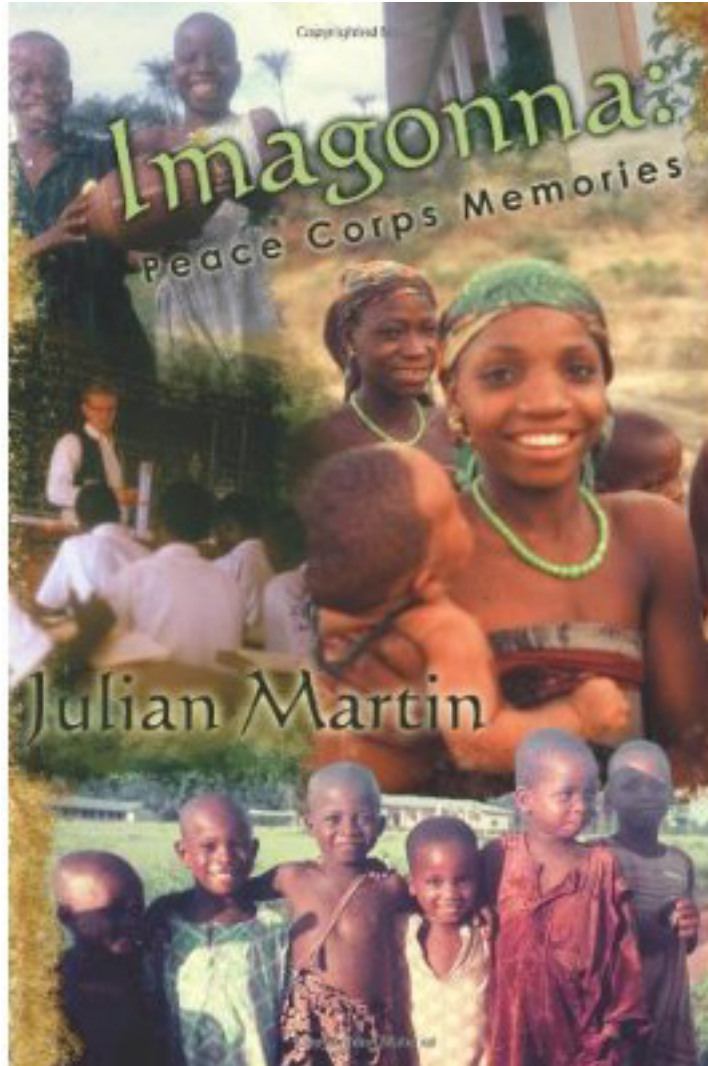
"Culture shock" had to do with more than poverty, strange food, and mysterious customs. While trying to answer his students' questions about faraway American racism, Julian became aware of local animosities between Igbos, Hausas, and Yorubas. The Biafran War, in which up to a million Igbos died, began shortly after he left. The neighboring country of Cameroon was already seething with insurrection. On vacation there in what he had thought was a safe mountain region, he had an AK-47 stuck in his face, and ate dinner beneath "fencing that swooped from the roof to the street" to divert hand grenades.

Nevertheless, it was a happy vacation: "Dispositions become flowery in a cool climate." Perhaps he was missing West Virginia. Back at school, his thoughts of home turned to practical help. Friends from his chemical engineering class at WVU arranged donations of more than four hundred books, not only badly needed textbooks but a diverse collection for the school library. Plus a wall-sized periodic chart of the elements, courtesy of Charleston Catholic High School.

Julian's letters, saved by family and friends, and a journal he kept intermittently, were sources and "memory joggers" for the book. We get a double perspective, the eager 25-year-old and the reflective 75-year-old. Brief sections, some less than a page long, carry the story forward with no dilly-dallying. Yet it doesn't seem hurried or thin; there's a lot to savor.

There are moments when the full import of what he did appears in a startling image. His best student grew up in a mud hut with a thatched roof where his mother pounded yams into fufu. It looked exactly like a picture in the encyclopedia illustrating family life in 3000 B.C. Now Edwin Igbozurike could figure out, with a piece of zinc and a copper sulfate solution, the equivalent weight of copper. Julian writes, "Edwin made a five-thousand-year leap."

[*Imagonna: Peace Corps Memories* is available from [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), from Taylor Books in Charleston, or straight from the horse's mouth: Julian Martin, 1524 Hampton Road, Charleston, WV 25314. Ones from Julian cost \$14, \$10 for the book plus \$4 for a mailer, postage, and driving it to the post office. The ones straight from Julian are autographed.]



## ***Full Planet, Empty Plates: The New Geopolitics of Food Scarcity*** by Lester R. Brown

(reviewed and briefed by Don Gasper)

For decades now, climate scientists have been telling us that global warming would affect all of us. They warned of more extreme weather events. Droughts would spread. There would be more intense heat waves, more wildfires. And the combination of drought and heat could shrink harvests. Today the Earth's climate is in a state of constant flux.

World agriculture is now facing challenges unlike any before. Producing enough grain to make it to the next harvest has tested farmers ever since agriculture began, but now the challenge is deepening as new trends-falling water tables and grain yields, and rising temperatures-make it difficult to expand production fast enough. As a result, world grain carryover stocks have dropped from an average of 107 days of consumption a decade ago to an estimated 65 days this year, and the world population last year grew by 8 million.

World food prices have more than doubled over the last decade. Those who live in the United States, where only 9 percent of income goes for food, are largely insulated from these price shifts. But how do those who live on the lower rungs of the global economic ladder cope? They are already spending 50-70 percent of their income on food. Many were down to one meal a day before the price rises. Now millions of families in countries like India, Nigeria, and Peru routinely schedule one or more days each week when they will not eat at all.

This will lead to political instability and possibly a breakdown of political systems. Some governments may fall. High food prices help fuel the unrest in the spring of 2011. The world is now living from one year to the next, hoping always to produce enough to cover the growth in demand. Farmers everywhere are making an all-out effort to keep pace with the accelerated growth in demand, but they are having difficulty doing so.

Feeding the world's hungry is now a complex undertaking. It involves the ministries of energy, water resources, and health and family planning, among others. Because of the looming specter of climate change that is threatening to disrupt agriculture, we may find that energy policies will have an even greater effect on future food security than agricultural policies do. In short, avoiding a breakdown in the food system requires the mobilization of our entire society. On the demand side of the food equation, there are four pressing needs- to stabilize world population, eradicate poverty, reduce excessive meat consumption, and reverse bio-fuels policies that encourage the use of grain to produce fuel for cars. We need to press forward on all four fronts at the same time.

On the supply side of the food equation, we face several challenges, including stabilizing climate, raising water productivity, and conserving soil. Stabilizing climate is not easy. It will take a huge cut in carbon emissions, some 80 % within a decade, to give us a chance of avoiding the worst consequences of climate change. This means a wholesale restructuring of the world energy economy. This is evidenced most clearly in some of the more affluent grain-importing countries—led by Saudi Arabia, China, India, and South Korea—buying or leasing land long term in other countries on which to grow

food for themselves. Most of these land acquisitions are in African countries where millions of people are barely being sustained.

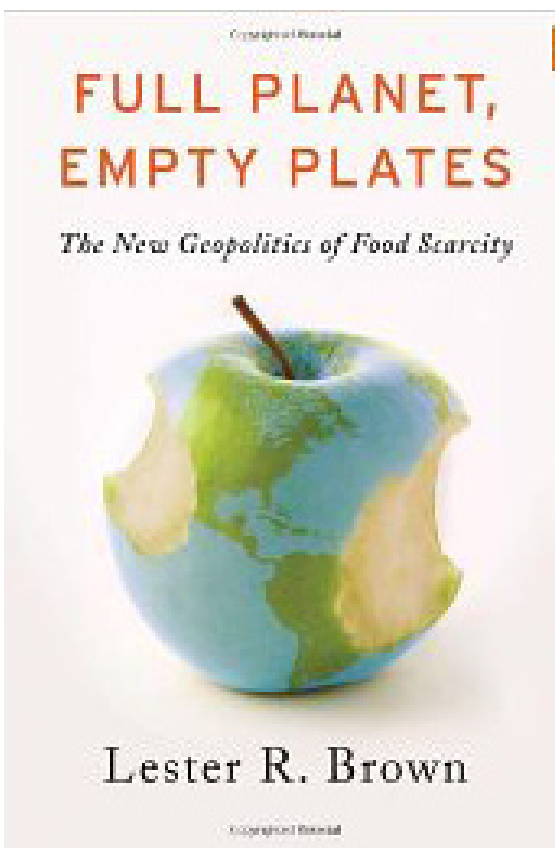
As of mid-2012, hundreds of land acquisition deals had been negotiated or were under negotiation, some of them exceeding a million acres. A World Bank analysis of these “land grabs” reported that at least 140 million acres were involved—an area that exceeds the cropland devoted to corn and wheat combined in the United States. This onslaught of land acquisitions has become a land rush as governments, agribusiness firms, and private investors seek control of land wherever they can find it.

At the same time that water shortages and crop-shrinking heat waves are making it more difficult for farmers to keep pace with demand; and as grain and soybean prices were soaring in 2007-08, grain-exporting counties restrict exports to keep their own food prices down, and importing counties panicked. In response, many began buying or leasing large tracts of land in other countries to grow food for themselves. The potential for conflict is high. Many of the land deals have been made in secret, and much of the time the land involved was already being farmed by villagers when it was sold or leased.

The world is in serious trouble, but there is little evidence that political leaders have yet grasped the magnitude of what is happening. The gains in reducing hunger in recent decades have been reversed. Feeding the world's hungry now depends on new population, energy, and water policies. Unless we move

quickly to adopt new policies, the goal of eradicating hunger will fail.

We must ourselves be aware of our common food crisis and share it's since of urgency. In this respect there is a new book “Full Planet, Empty Plates,” by Lester Brown. It is available from his “Earth Policy Institute,” 1350 Connecticut Ave. N.W. Suite 403. Washington D.C. 20036 as well as on Amazon.



**Send us a post card, drop us a line,  
stating point of view**

Please email any poems, letters, commentaries to the VOICE editor at [johnmcferrin@aol.com](mailto:johnmcferrin@aol.com) or real, honest to goodness, mentioned in the United States Constitution mail to WV Highlands Conservancy, PO Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321.

**West Virginia Highlands Conservancy**

**2012 FALL REVIEW**

October 19-21, 2012

Canaan Valley State Park

***Where the Wind Blows***

***~ Continuing the conversation ~***

**Friday, October 19<sup>th</sup>**

7 p.m. – Evening gathering, Canaan Valley State Park Lodge

-- light snacks, presentation: “Telemetric Surveys of Golden Eagles” with Dr. Trish Miller, wildlife biologist, WVU

**Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup>**

8:00 a.m. (?) – Birdwalk

Early morning – Breakfast, walks, committee meetings, etc on your own

11a.m. – 2:30 p.m. --- Leave State Park 10:15 a.m. for CVI [below]

-- Meet at Canaan Valley Institute (CVI) -- in nearby Davis, WV ...off Rt 93

-- Tour and introduction to CVI facilities and property --- trails, research, etc....

-- Lunch at the Conference Center

-- Evan Hansen re: Downstream Strategies & Mountain Institute Wind Report [http://www.downstreamstrategies.com/documents/reports\\_publication/DS\\_wind-technical-report-final.pdf](http://www.downstreamstrategies.com/documents/reports_publication/DS_wind-technical-report-final.pdf)

4:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. – reconvene at Canaan Valley State Park Lodge

-- Brad Stephens (Allegheny Highlands Alliance): Wind energy and the grid -- and the relevant legal structure

-- dinner in the Lodge Dining Room

-- “Birds and Wind Energy: Federal Laws” with Kelly Fuller, Wind Campaign Coordinator, American Bird Conservancy

9:00 p.m. - until whenever ..... Socializing as desired....

**Sunday, October 21<sup>st</sup>**

8:00 a.m. – Birdwalk

9 a.m. – Annual membership meeting Canaan Valley State Park Lodge,

-- election of officers and at-large members

-- review of past year and planning for 2013

10 a.m. – Quarterly Board Meeting

Noon – Lunch and ongoing Board discussions

2 p.m. – Adjourn

PLEASE RSVP ASAP if you plan on attending all or part or none of the weekend

Marilyn Shoenfeld - [marilyn.shoenfeld@gmail.com](mailto:marilyn.shoenfeld@gmail.com), 304-866-3484

Cindy Rank - [clrank2@gmail.com](mailto:clrank2@gmail.com), 304-924-5802

or Cindy Ellis - [cdellis@wildblue.net](mailto:cdellis@wildblue.net), 304-586-4135

**LODGING FOR THE FALL REVIEW**

CANAAN VALLEY STATE PARK LODGE

Friday October 19 and Saturday October 20

Call **1-800-622-4121**

And mention West Virginia Highlands Conservancy when making reservation. (They’ve been putting us in Beaver Lodge)

**LISTEN UP!**

**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT**

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, October 21, 2012, at Canaan Valley State Park at approximately 9:30 a.m.

The board meeting will include the election of at large Board members as well as any other business that may come before the meeting. Such other business will include brief reports on issues in which the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is involved.

Immediately following the annual meeting will be quarterly Board meeting. All members are welcome at the Board meeting and are free to take part in the discussion although only Board members may make motions and vote.