



# The Highlands Voice

The Monthly Publication of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

Volume 39 Number 8/9 August/September 2006

## 2006 GARDEN PARTY A HUGE SUCCESS

from Dave Saville

The 5<sup>th</sup> annual Garden Party at Walnut Farm was another festive celebration of Wild Wonderful West Virginia and a very successful fund raiser for the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition.

Over 200 people came to the farm outside Morgantown despite the weather forecast calling for possibly severe thunderstorms.

Jon Leyton began the event with tethered Hot-air Balloon rides, but the agitated weather conditions only allowed him to keep the balloon up for an hour.

Corey Bonasso and Kate Jaworski serenaded us with their sweet harmonies of popular Appalachian classics. Roasted corn, barbecued ribs from Archies, lots of salads and other great food – topped off by Whitegrass Café brownies and Sharon Goodman cheese cakes – kept our tastebuds sweetly pleased as well.

Congressman Mollohan joined the afternoon event and made some brief comments to the group. The Morgantown Theatre Company presented an original skit performed by students of the school's summer sessions. Keith McManus and members of the Rounders, Woodticks and Wolf Creek Session entertained us later in the afternoon.

*Rain fell over most of the state that day,  
but not on the party.*



*watercolor print of Walnut Farm  
by Peggy Isaac*

Volley Ball games broke out; folks participated in the raffles and auctions and toured the gardens of the working farm where cut flowers are raised for sale at the Morgantown Farmers market every Saturday morning during the summer.

Many thanks to all who helped with the event and to those who came and participated or sent in contributions for our work to protect more of the Monongahela National Forest as Wilderness.

from Hugh Rogers

As the rain held off, the sun beat down, and a whole lot of folks enjoyed the planned events and each other's company at the annual Garden Party at Walnut Farm. I'm no estimator, so I can't give you a figure, but if you've been to the Party in previous years, add a bunch to the crowd you saw then.

Add a giant balloon as well. It slowly inflated on top of the hill where rows and rows of cars were parked. The food was delicious, the microbrews were cold, there were auction items for every taste — but really, how could Dave could go wrong bringing such a group together on that beautifully-cared-for hilltop?

I know he worked his butt off organizing all the volunteers and contributions. Now that I think of it, I ought to thank him. "Work" was the last thing on my mind when I was there, though. Way ahead of that was concern that my cheeks would seize up from smiling.

~ THANKS DAVE ~

~~~~~

see page 11

for pictures from the Garden Party  
and names of many who helped.

Visit us on the web at [www.wvhighlands.org](http://www.wvhighlands.org)

### What's Inside:

|                                 |   |                       |    |                           |    |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------|----|---------------------------|----|
| Thoughts from President Hugh    | 2 | Liberty Gap Decision  | 8  | Bumper Stickers           | 13 |
| Roster of Board of Directors    | 2 | Coal River, 1987      | 9  | Outings Schedule          | 14 |
| WV Wilderness Needed            | 3 | Forest Plan Update    | 10 | Buy the Hiking Guide      | 15 |
| Hiking with Congressman Rahall  | 4 | Garden Party Pictures | 11 | Hiking the Big Draft      | 16 |
| On the Trail of the 8th Edition | 5 | Beech Ridge Decision  | 12 | Seneca Creek Trail        | 16 |
| Lifeboat Earth Launched         | 6 | True Love Found,      |    | E-Council Fall Conference | 16 |
| Mountaintop Removal Brochures   | 6 | Back Bumper Bound     | 12 | Sinks of Gandy Trip       | 17 |
| 40 Years with Senator Byrd      | 7 | Summer Board Meeting  | 13 | Harrison Says Good-bye    | 17 |
| Speakers Available              | 7 | News of John          | 13 | Fall Review Announced     | 18 |

## From the Heart of the Highlands

by Hugh Rogers

### CULTURAL CLASH ?

*It is an English creed that all land requires human supervision. Far from knowing best, nature needs vigilant guidance. The prospect of unmanaged wasteland is utterly repugnant.*

David Lowenthal, "British National Identity and the English Landscape," Rural History Vol. 2, No. 2, 205 (1991)

\*\*\*\*\*

*The founders of the wilderness preservation movement shared a passionate conviction that wilderness is not some luxury but a vital bulwark in our individual lives and the bedrock of our distinctive American culture. . . . These gifted thinkers saw a fundamental human need for wilderness, not principally for recreational use or scientific study but for sustaining the American character shaped by our pioneer encounter with the wild frontier.*

Doug Scott, The Enduring Wilderness 19 (2004)

\*\*\*\*\*

On July 18, when "The Enduring Wilderness Tour" stopped in Elkins, a fervent group of thirty or so cheered author Doug Scott's talk about the history, politics, and continuing growth of the American wilderness system. He emphasized that wilderness is not an issue that separates Republicans and Democrats. In fact, the original wilderness bill was shepherded through the House by Rep. John Saylor, a conservative Republican from Pennsylvania, and through the Senate by Sen. Hubert Humphrey, a liberal Democrat from Minnesota. It has been that way for more than forty years.

We've gotten used to thinking that every question about legislation must have two opposite answers, liberal and conservative, but wilderness cuts along a different grain. What grain is it, though? Check out the quotations above: maybe we can spin it as a native-versus-foreign culture thing. Long live the American Revolution! Down with those fussy English nature-managers, up with the wild frontier!

But you know "culture" is a slippery word, especially in America. Our culture is always up for grabs and no one can hold it all. We still have that English vigilance, most noticeably in the professions and agencies charged with land management, but we also know English Romanticism, as well as Native traditions, contributed to our love for unmanaged nature. Our hardy pioneer ancestors, or most of them, were far more interested in taming nature than preserving its free operation. Only when all-out exploitation succeeded the taming could we anticipate the loss and acknowledge the importance of wilderness.

Today, although defining boundaries may sometimes get sticky, the effort to protect more wilderness has broad support across the country. Doug Scott cites the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE), an unusually large-sampled poll conducted every decade for the Forest Service. In 2000-2001, 70% of respondents supported designation of more wilderness in their own states, and only 12% opposed. The spread between supporters and opponents of more wilderness is remarkably consistent across a variety of national and state polls.

When the researchers sought to find out what "values, uses, and benefits of wilderness...attract such popular support" -- that is, why a large majority favors more wilderness—they were perhaps surprised to learn that opportunities for recreation ranked ninth out of twelve possible values. Protecting water quality, air quality, wildlife habitat, endangered species, rare plants, and scenic beauty, and sim-

(continued on page 6)

## Roster of Officers, Board Members and Committee Chairs

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Hugh Rogers, Moon Run, Kerens, WV 26276, (304)636-2662, rogers@wvhighlands.org  
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT: Peter Shoenfeld, HC 70, Box 553, Davis, WV 26260, (304) 866-3484, (301) 642-2820, peter@mountain.net  
VICE PRESIDENT FOR STATE AFFAIRS: Julian Martin, 1525 Hampton Rd., Charleston, WV 25314, (304) 342-8989, martinjul@aol.com  
VICE PRESIDENT FOR FEDERAL AFFAIRS: Vacant  
SECRETARY: John McFerrin, 114 Beckley Ave., Beckley, WV 25801, (304)252-8733, johnmcferrin@aol.com  
TREASURER: Bob Marshall, 886-Z Divide Ridge Road, Kenna WV 25248 (304)372-7501, woodhavenwva@netscape.net  
PAST PRESIDENT: Frank Young, Rt. 1, Box 108, Ripley, WV 25271, (304)372-3945, fyoung@mountain.net

### DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE (Terms expire October 2007)

Perry Bryant, 1544 Lee St., Charleston, WV 25301 (304)344-1673; Perrywv@aol.com  
Carter Zerbe, 16 Arlington Ct., Charleston, WV 25301, (304)343-3175, scz3667@aol.com  
George Beetham, 2819 Mt. Carmel Ave. #3, Glenside, PA 19038 (267) 252-3748, geobeet@hotmail.com  
Barbara Weaner, Rt. 2, Box 96, Montrose, WV 26283 (304) 478-2123, sweaner@plantwv.net  
Buff Rodman, 32 Crystal Dr., Oakmont, PA 15139; (412) 828-8983; buffrodman@hotmail.com

### DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE (Terms expire October 2006)

Bob Gates, 1117 Virginia St.E., Charleston, WV 25301, (304)342-2624, photonzx@ntelos.net  
Vacant  
Don Gasper, 4 Ritchie St., Buckhannon, WV 26201, (304)472-3704  
Russ McClain, 64 Wilmoth Run Road, Montrose, WV 26283, (304)637-2201  
Bill McNeel, 1118 Second Ave., Marlinton, WV 24954, (304)799-4369

### ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORS

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY: Robert (Bob) Handley, HC 67 Box 508 Renick, WV, 24966 497-2266, gbrbat@ntelos.net  
PITTSBURGH CLIMBERS: Jean Rodman, 32 Crystal Dr., Oakmont, PA 15139, (412)828-8983, jeanrodman@verizon.net  
BROOKS BIRD CLUB: Cindy Ellis, RR 1, Box 163, Red House, WV 25168 (304) 586-4135, ellis\_6511@msn.com  
MOUNTAINEER CHAPTER TROUT UNLIMITED: Frank Slider, Rt 1, Box 163-A2, Middlebourne, WV 26149, (304) 758-2500, sliderf@ovis.net  
WEST VIRGINIA RIVERS COALITION: Don Garvin, P.O. Box 666, Buckhannon, WV 26201; (304) 472-8716; DSGJR@aol.com  
DOWNSTREAM ALLIANCE: Craig Mains, 137 Hoffman Ave., Morgantown WV 26505, cmains@wvu.edu  
FRIENDS OF THE LITTLE KANAWHA: Cindy Rank, HC 78, Box 227, Rock Cave, WV 26234, (304)924-5802, clrank@hughes.net

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

MINING COMMITTEE: Cindy Rank, HC 78, Box 227, Rock Cave, WV 26234, (304)924-5802, clrank@hughes.net  
PUBLIC LANDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: Bob Marshall, 201 Virginia St.W., Charleston, WV 25302, (304)345-5518, woodhavenwva@netscape.net  
OUTREACH/COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Julian Martin, , 1525 Hampton Rd., Charleston, WV 25314, (304) 342-8989, martinjul@aol.com  
BLACKWATER CANYON COMMITTEE: co-chairs Linda Cooper, J1 1220 Van Voorhis Road Morgantown, WV 26505 (304)296-0565 lcooper@hsc.wvu.edu, and Judy Rodd, Environmental Services and Education Center 501 Elizabeth St., Charleston, WV 25311, (304)345-7663, roddj@hotmail.com  
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: Frank Young, Rt. 1, Box 108, Ripley, WV 25271, (304)372-3945, fyoung@mountain.net  
WIND ENERGY COMMITTEE: Peter Shoenfeld, HC 70, Box 553, Davis, WV 26260, (304) 866-3484, (301) 642-2820, peter@mountain.net  
ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE: John McFerrin, 114 Beckley Ave., Beckley, WV 25801, (304)252-8733, johnmcferrin@aol.com  
RIVERS COMMITTEE: vacant  
HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE: Hugh Rogers, Moon Run, Kerens, WV 26276, (304)636-2662, rogers@wvhighlands.org.  
OUTINGS COMMITTEE: Jonathan Jessup, 8225 Adenlee Ave. #40, Fairfax, VA 22031, (703) 204-1372 jonathanjessup@hotmail.com

### MISCELLANEOUS OFFICES

SPEAKERS BUREAU: Julian Martin, 1525 Hampton Road, Charleston, WV 25314, (304) 342-8989, imaginemew@aol.com  
WEB PAGE: Peter Shoenfeld, 713 Chesapeake Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910, (301)587-6197, peter@mountain.net

### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Dave Saville, PO Box 569, Morgantown, WV 26507, (304)284-9548, daves@labyrinth.net  
HIGHLANDS VOICE EDITOR: John McFerrin, 114 Beckley Ave., Beckley, WV 25801, (304)252-8733, johnmcferrin@aol.com  
INTERIM VOICE EDITOR: Until further notice, please submit all articles, letters, commentaries, etc. to clrank@hughes.net

## WEST VIRGINIA WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS NEEDED

By Allan Tweddle and Jim DiPeso

Mountains, woods, and rivers are the heart and soul of West Virginia. The land embodies our heritage and defines our great state's culture like nothing else.

The land can pay tangible dividends, too, if we plan ahead and create a nest egg of protected lands that people in state and from all over the East will want to visit for years to come.

Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito can help, by supporting citizens fighting to add the great, unprotected treasures of the Monongahela National Forest to America's system of wilderness areas.

By joining with her constituents who have worked long hours to identify the places they want protected, Capito will carry on West Virginia's tradition of building wilderness proposals from the grass roots, led by local people who know the lands around their communities best.

Towns will benefit by having wilderness areas nearby. Outdoor recreation pays. People fishing, hunting, and watching wildlife spent more than half a billion dollars in West Virginia in 2001, according to the most recent edition of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services comprehensive national survey of wildlife-related recreation. Chances are good that the dollar figure will be even higher when the next edition of the survey is published in 2007.

As the populations of the eastern cities expand, more people will visit West Virginia to enjoy the existing Dolly Sods, Laurel Fork, Cranberry, and Otter Creek wilderness areas. That's a good thing.

But let's not limit ourselves to four wilderness areas. Only one-half of 1 percent of West Virginia's territory enjoys wilderness status. Let's give the visitors more wild West Virginia places to explore so they spend more money in nearby West Virginia communities.

By designating special places such as Seneca Creek, Spice Run, the East Fork of Greenbier, and Big Draft as wilderness areas, we will give visitors think of them as West Virginia's customers more reasons to schedule their weekend getaways and two-week vacations in West Virginia instead of somewhere else.

West Virginia should be tops on the list of places where kids catch their first trout, hunt their first wild turkey and run their first river rapids.

The U.S. Forest Service, however, has released a draft management plan for the Mon that is not nearly as ambitious in its wilderness proposals as it should be. Ninety percent of the 13,000 letters and e-mails that citizens sent to the Forest Service asked the agency to recommend more wilderness than the draft proposes.

The Forest Service recommendation would leave special places unprotected. Once given over to logging or other industrial uses, the lands will have lost the special features that make them interesting and enjoyable places for hiking, camping, rafting, hunting or fishing.

Fortunately, the Forest Service can only recommend wilderness designations. The final decision is up to Congress, which can accept, reject, or modify Forest Service recommendations as it sees fit.

This is where Congresswoman Capito comes in. She can help her constituents bypass the bureaucratic roadblock and win congressional passage of legislation making Seneca Creek and the Mon Forest's other treasures the newest jewels in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

An ambitious wilderness bill is an investment in our state's future. Expanding the number of our state's wilderness areas will lay a foundation for clean economic development, creating jobs, businesses, and renewed vitality for West Virginia communities.

Economic growth is vital. But wilderness offers something more its a way to protect what makes West Virginia special the land, the communities, and the people shaped by the land. When we look outside our windows at the wild beauty around us, we know we're home. Wilderness is a way to keep our West Virginia home the way we like it.

*Tweddle, of Kanawha County, is a designated West Virginia contact for Republicans for Environmental Protection and a lobbyist for the West Virginia Environmental Council. Allan also serves on the Public Energy Authority and is a stalwart supporter of alternative energy. DiPeso is policy director for Republicans for Environmental Protection and lives in Seattle.*



The *Highlands Voice* is published monthly by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, P. O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321. Articles, letters to the editor, graphics, photos, poetry, or other information for publication should be sent to the editor via the internet or by the U.S. Mail by the last Friday of each month. You may submit material for publication either to the address listed above or to the address listed for Highlands Voice Editor on the previous page. Submissions by internet or on a floppy disk are preferred.

The *Highlands Voice* is always printed on recycled paper. Our printer use 100% post consumer recycled paper when available.

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy web page is [www.wvhighlands.org](http://www.wvhighlands.org).

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is a non-profit corporation which has been recognized as a tax exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service. Its bylaws describe its purpose:

*The purposes of the Conservancy shall be to promote, encourage, and work for the conservation—including both preservation and wise use—and appreciation of the natural resources of West Virginia and the Nation, and especially of the Highlands Region of West Virginia, for the cultural, social, educational, physical, health, spiritual, and economic benefit of present and future generations of West Virginians and Americans.*

## CONGRESSMAN RAHALL HIKES IN WILD, WONDERFUL GREENBRIER VALLEY

by Bob Handley

West Virginia's 3<sup>rd</sup> District Congressman Nick Joe Rahall II has been working for many years with other West Virginians who advocate preserving special areas in the Monongahela National Forest (Mon). The West Virginia Wilderness Coalition – Southern Group (WVWC) invited Congressman Rahall to hike with them in their proposed Big Draft wilderness area

– and he accepted.

This adventure began at noon on August 4<sup>th</sup> when we gathered for a lunch (hosted by Nan Morgan) at the General Lewis Inn in Lewisburg. Congressman Rahall was at the head of the table. The others were Lewisburg's Mayor John Manchester, Beth Little, Ms. Morgan, Darlene Fife, of Plants Etc., Mary Wimmer, President of WVWC, Caroline Sharp, and Bob Handley. After a delightful meal Ms. Morgan said her Chef would really like to meet Rahall. Nick, who never passes up an opportunity to meet a constituent went back into the kitchen with Morgan for the introduction. The group (minus Nan Morgan and Darlene Fife) then proceeded to the Mon parking area near Anthony Village to begin their hike.

Our trek started "off trail" following a vague path up through the woods on top of Gunpowder Ridge. There was a short, very steep section that led up to a flat ridge top with large oaks and hickory trees and many wild flowers. There was one place where a black bear had recently ripped an old log apart looking for beetles and grubs. There were also signs of white tailed deer all along our path, but no snakes.

This part of our trek being "off trail" had no markers or beaten path. We just followed the narrow ridge top scrambling at times over fallen logs and occasional rock outcrops. After a little over a mile, the ridge abruptly ended and we made our way down a long, steep slope through open woods to an established trail along Anthony Creek. Nick turned out to be an accomplished hiker. He's quite a guy – smart, easy going, adaptable, not complaining, an all round neat hiking companion.

When hiking "off trail" the chances of meeting other people is slight, but we were on a marked trail now and headed for the Blue Hole, a beautiful swimming hole on lower Anthony Creek. There were a few people already there, either in the water or on the sandy beach. Three of our party enjoyed a dip, but Nick had unfortunately left his swimsuit in his van so could only watch and talk to the other people (who were surprised to meet a US Congressman in the Wilderness). Soon we headed back down the trail toward the grove of large old growth hemlocks and white pine near the Greenbrier River. Then we followed the trail up the

river and across the bridge to our cars. Thus our hike ended – a very enjoyable afternoon in a very small part of WVWC's proposed Big Draft Wilderness area.

The proposed Big Draft area is small at 5,300 acres, but encompasses eight miles of Anthony Creek with its great fishing and some very rugged terrain. One has no difficulty finding quiet solitude or miles

of hiking trails all within five miles of White Sulphur Springs. Big Draft is one of the proposed wilderness areas located in the Greenbrier Valley. The others are Spice Run and Middle Mountain on the Greenbrier/Pocahontas County line, the East Fork of the Greenbrier north of Thornwood in Pocahontas County, and Laurel Run and Little Allegheny Mountain east of Neola in Greenbrier County. At this time there is no wilderness in the Greenbrier Valley part of the Mon (more than a quarter of the total National Forest area.). WV Wilderness Coalition has proposed nine other areas in the Mon that are mostly in the northern highlands.

The Southern Group of WVWC is working to get more recognition of the six Greenbrier Valley areas.

This hike with Congressman Rahall gave him a chance to get out into one of our proposed Wilderness areas; to see and experience first hand some of the wilds the WVWC and our Congressional Delegation has been working to preserve for future generations. Wilderness also, if allowed to grow undisturbed; reduces flood crests, enhances the quality of our drinking water, improves our air by removing carbon (as carbon dioxide) and releasing oxygen, provides better hunting and fishing, hiking, camping, swimming, white water paddling, horse back riding, photography, and nature study of all sorts. ("Each forested acre takes up roughly 4.5 tons of carbon a year.") In general wilderness is good for tourism, which is the lifeblood of many towns in our beautiful valley.

Congressman Rahall indicated that next year he will work to introduce and help pass legislation that will very likely include more proposed areas than the new (soon to be released) Monongahela Forest Management Plan recommends. This has been the case for wilderness legislation in many other states in the last few years. President Bush has signed all of the Wilderness bills presented to him.

The proposed wilderness areas involve only public (Mon Forest) land and when declared wilderness (by Congress) does not affect any private land (other than to make it more valuable).



Lewisburg Mayor John Manchester, Mary Wimmer, Caroline Sharp, Nick Rahall & Beth Little  
- on top of Gunpowder Ridge-  
Proposed Big Draft Wilderness Area in Greenbrier County



~~~~~  
Bob Handley lives in Renick, WV and represents the National Speleological Society on the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy Board. He can be reached at gbrbat@ntelos.net or by calling 304-497-2276.  
~~~~~

# ON THE TRAIL OF A NEW 8TH EDITION OF THE MONONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST HIKING GUIDE

by Allen de Hart

Bruce Sundquist, my co-editor, and I began the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide as early as 2002. Within our plans I would be meeting with Monongahela National Forest (MNF) staff and completing the field work on all trails needing a complete or partial re hike. In addition we would have to determine what trails were officially abandoned and where new trails had been added to the MNF's official inventory. I also responded to trail corrections and relocations posted on the West Virginia Highlands conservancy's web page. Most of the web messages were valid, but I soon learned that some of them were incorrect observations or were based on the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> editions where corrections had already been made. The result created longer periods of field research.

Additionally, I was accumulating personal letters about trail mileage errors. An example is a serious out-of-state hiker who sent a list of seven trails totaling more than 12 miles he had measured and found incorrect. In my remeasurement I found my original measurement to be correct. Confronting the hiker on the matter he explained how he counted each foot. His method was a laborious placing one shoe step in touch with the other because his shoe was 12 inches in length. Another sent a correction of the Seneca Creek Trail mileage and explained the trail was overgrown and unused. After a re hike I later learned the out-of-state user hiked the unauthorized lower section on private land. Years ago the MNF trail signage system had numerical distance to the nearest whole or half numbers. An example of one of those signs still standing is Judy Springs Trail with a 1.0 mile sign, but the distance is 0.7 miles. Users of the 8<sup>th</sup> edition may expect to see a few differences between the measurements of the MNF and my use of a Rolatape wheel or GPS.

On June 15, 2003 I met with MNF and WVHC officials in Elkins about the direction of the 8<sup>th</sup> edition. I was provided with the MNF's trail inventory. About 20 trails described in the 7<sup>th</sup> edition were recommended for closure (abandonment) because of a lack of public usage or other reasons. On the inventory were about 20 new trails. Some were older trails recommended for reopening. Others were partially reroutings with name changes. The most unique and expensive trail was Props Run Trail in the Marlinton Ranger District. Its 8.6 miles was created on an old railroad grade to adequately serve hikers and mountain bicyclists as a multi-use trail. Nearby was a special network of trails constructed specifically for mountain bicyclists.

As the summers of 2003 and 2004 blended into continued research, it became obvious to me that the MNF was undergoing a major change in questions of trail multi-usage. Because the 2005 Forest Plan Revision had not included a Comprehensive Trail Plan, my research was expanded. For the first time in the Guide's history, the issue of multi-use trails is addressed in the 8<sup>th</sup> edition.

Another change in the 8<sup>th</sup> edition is about the MNF alphabetic order of the ranger districts and numerical order of the trail inventory numbers resulting from administratively combining four districts. Examples are the Cheat/Potomac Ranger District and the Marlinton/White Sulphur Springs Ranger District. In addition to seeing trail names and

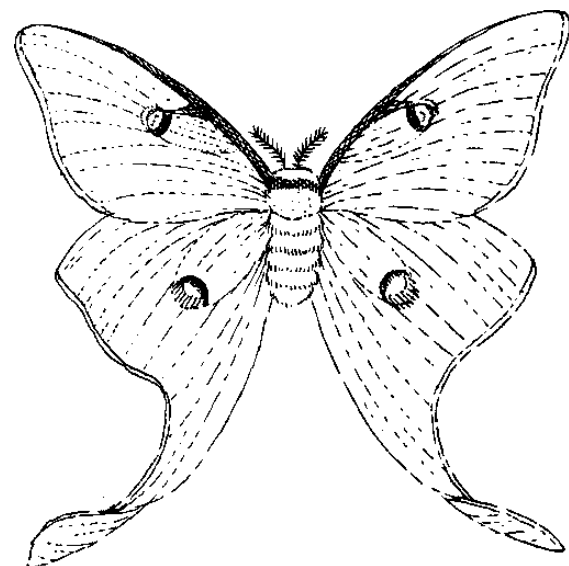
numbers rearranged, users will notice some changes in mapping, changes made possible by Bruce's computer skills.

***For me, each trail is like a poem to be written. Its pathway is magnetic, allowing us to leave only if we promise to return.***

Beginning in the summer of 2004 a widespread effort was made to have trail users provide potential photography selections to illustrate the MNF character. Before the search was over I had received more than 400 photos ranging from those taken by amateur and simple cameras to professionally scanned material. My goal was to have, for the first time, a completely new gallery. Initially, the photos were confined (as in the past) to the most popular trail locations in the Monongahela National Forest. This required more research and additional trips for me to photograph a more balanced arrangement for each district. Our efforts were prompted by users of the Guide who encouraged us to include a wider scope of bridges, rivers, rock formation, waterfalls, scenic areas, trees, people, wildlife and plant life.

Now, after thousands of miles criss-crossing the MNF, hundreds of days and nights locating shelter/campsites and food convenient to trailheads, indescribably hours on book notes and the computer, I have - with Bruce's help and the dedicated cooperation of the MNF and Highlands Conservancy staffs, provided you with a new look at an old and classic Guide.

I will be 80 years old September 3, 2006. I have always loved the Mon. For me, each trail is like a poem to be written. Its pathway is magnetic, allowing us to leave only if we promise to return.



(From the Heart - Hugh - continued from page 2)

ply knowing that such areas exist now and will be there for future generations, all drew (marginally) more support than recreation. Every one of these benefits was important to at least 90% of the NSRE respondents.

Compelling evidence that wilderness has a well-established place in our contemporary American culture—but it took more than half a century to put wilderness into our law.

The federal land management agencies—the Forest Service, within the Department of Agriculture, and the Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service, within the Department of the Interior—were early sources of both practical strategies for preserving wilderness and obdurate resistance to making such protection permanent. (The Bureau of Land Management had no wilderness program at all until after the Wilderness Act finally passed in 1964.) Bureaucratic jostling within and between the agencies foretold the hard politicking in Congress. And veterans of those agencies often came outside to found or work for advocacy groups.

John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Benton MacKaye, Bob Marshall, Dave Brower, and other historic figures shine on us from the pages of *The Enduring Wilderness*. Most important of all, according to Doug Scott, was Howard Zahniser (1906-1964), to whose memory he dedicates his book. “Zahnie” became a leader of the ten-year-old Wilderness Society at the end of World War Two. A gifted writer and a patient and skillful politician, he accepted the mission to write and gain passage of a wilderness bill. Across a two-year gap (they never met) he became Doug’s mentor. Now Doug is the wise man who guides younger advocates from his position at Campaign for America’s Wilderness.

He sees wilderness as not only a “bulwark of our culture,” but as an issue that has brought out the best in our democratic government. Here are many lessons in American citizenship. For instance: (1) Compromise can bring more gains than losses. (2) Humility is practical—the defeat of an important provision in Zahniser’s bill eventually made the law stronger. (3) The legislative inertia that makes passage of a bill so difficult subsequently protects it (and thus protects wilderness areas) from being nibbled away. (4) Grassroots campaigns work.

In the English model, a landed aristocracy managed, supervised, and guided the landscape. In our United States, the people as a whole direct the uses and benefits of public lands. Of course we contend over which uses and whose benefits. Of course we watchdog the agents who carry out our instructions. But thanks to the work of so many before us, we have a law on our side. We can protect wilderness, as Howard Zahniser said, “with a presumption of perpetuity.”

You can buy Doug Scott’s *The Enduring Wilderness* (Fulcrum Publishing, 2005) from the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition, which will benefit directly from the sale. Contact Matt Keller, P.O. Box 6, Masantown WV 26542, (304) 864-5530, or [info@wwwild.org](mailto:info@wwwild.org).

\*\*\*\*\*

### BROCHURES

The Sierra Club, Citizens Coal Council, Coal River Mountain Watch, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, West Virginia Rivers Coalition, Appalachian Focus (Kentucky), Big Sandy Environmental coalition (Kentucky), Kentuckians for the Commonwealth and the west Virginia Highlands Conservancy have put together a new brochure entitled **“Mountaintop Removal Destroys Our Homeplace STOP THE DEVASTATION!”** For a copy send a self addressed stamped envelope to Julian Martin, 1525 Hampton Road, Charleston, WV 25314.

Quantities are available for teachers, civic and religious groups and anyone who can distribute them.

## “Lifeboat earth” launched

By Chuck Wyrostok,  
WVEC Outreach Coordinator and itinerant deck hand, [wyro@appalight.com](mailto:wyro@appalight.com)

The first week in April brought thoughts of sunshine, showers, and ship-launchings...ship launchings?? Aye, mate! Spring saw the launching of “*Lifeboat Earth*”, an environmental education column offered free to all West Virginia weeklies and college papers. The aim is to raise the level of awareness in all the nooks and crannies of our wondrous state.

Written by various members of West Virginia Environmental Council (WVEC), the premier piece, on individual responsibility to the planet, was penned by Bob Mertz, a science teacher at Roane County High School. Dr. Vickie Wolfe, a biology professor at Marshall University, has written about our personal ecological footprint plus water issues.

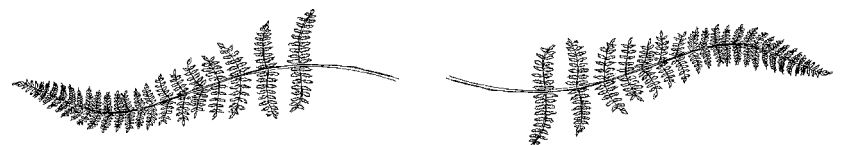
With an estimated combined circulation of more than 400,000, weeklies represent a sizeable potential audience. Folks in every town and hamlet have faithfully read weeklies for generations. Our hope is to build a roster of good writers who can craft the ideas that are basic to the health of the planet into five hundred words or less that will resonate with these readers. Please consider joining our writers’ group. With more columns, we can increase frequency and interest, and, as they say, “get the word out”. An article in your field of expertise would help keep this ‘boat’ afloat.

Many editors I spoke to early on liked the concept and were anxious to see what we had to offer. However, since we’re not using a clipping service, we don’t really know how many publications are using “*Lifeboat Earth*”. So if you see it in your locale, please let us know. If your local paper isn’t using it, please call and ask why. For a glimpse of the boat, go to <http://www.wvecouncil.org/articles/lifeboat.html>

***Please consider joining our writers’ group. With more columns, we can increase frequency and interest, and, as they say, “get the word out”. An article in your field of expertise would help keep this ‘boat’ afloat.***

---- also ----

***...since we’re not using a clipping service, we don’t really know how many publications are using “Lifeboat Earth”. So if you see it in your locale, please let us know. If your local paper isn’t using it, please call and ask why.***



## ***SENATOR BYRD AND THE CONSERVANCY: FORTY YEARS TOGETHER***

By Dave Elkinton

When I opened my Sunday *Washington Post* on June 18, 2006 a major retrospective on Senator Robert C. Byrd caught my eye. The opening sentence read: "Hugh Rogers, the president of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, once tried to persuade his U.S. senator to oppose a road through the mountains he loves, a billion-dollar boondoggle that had been lampooned nationwide as a 'Road to Nowhere.'" Indeed there has been little, if any, agreement on Corridor H. Senator Byrd has been its most ardent booster, and it is now officially the "Robert C. Byrd Highway," a part of the "Robert C. Byrd Appalachian Corridor Highway System," according to the posted signage.

After getting over the fact that our president was the lead in a major opinion piece in a nationally-influential paper, I started to think about the forty years of the Conservancy and the more than fifty years of Senator Byrd's tenure in Congress. As Hugh indicated, illustrated later by quotes in the same article, the Conservancy has often advocated positions that Byrd opposed. Similarly, Cindy Rank has reminded us that it was Senator Byrd who loudly decried on the Senate floor, "The Judge was wrong!" when supporting legislation to overturn the late Judge Charles Haden's decision to limit mountaintop removal mining and valley fills. There remains great disappointment that Senator Byrd has not used his influence to benefit of the victims of such mining abuses, rather than support its corporate leaders.

But over the forty years of the Conservancy, the record is actually a mixed one, and conservationists should not be too quick to dismiss Byrd as always "wrong." Let's take a look back.

The *Voice* has retold the story of the infamous 1965 meeting in the revivalist's tent on Spruce Knob. This was the first Fall Review, and actually predates the establishment of the Conservancy by one year and three months (January 1967.) As the assembled throng of nearly 500 listened, the generator that controlled the lights suddenly went out, and Senator Byrd was cut off. He has often said it was the only time in his political career that someone shut off his microphone. (Power was soon restored.)

In the first decade of the Conservancy, 1967-1977, Senator Byrd was the junior senator from West Virginia, and environmentalists dealt much more with the senior senator, Jennings Randolph. One reason was that Randolph had risen to chairmanship of the powerful Environment and Public Works Committee. It was this committee and Randolph's involvement that produced the National Environmental Policy Act (creating EPA, the environmental impact statement process, etc); the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and other pieces of environmental legislation. Another reason Randolph was key was that his base was Elkins, while Byrd's was Beckley, and each deferred to the other accordingly. Obviously the highlands were more associated with Randolph's region.

### ***Speakers Available !!!!!***

Does your school, church or civic group need a speaker or program presentation on a variety of environmental issues? Contact Julian Martin at 1525 Hampton Road, Charleston, WV 25314, or [martinjul@aol.com](mailto:martinjul@aol.com), or 304-342-8989.

For example in the battle to establish the concept of capital-W Wilderness in the east, resulting in the Eastern Wilderness Areas Act of 1974, it was necessary to focus lobbying on Randolph. The belief was that if Randolph supported it, Randolph would help influence Byrd. Similarly, the preservation of Dolly Sods, Otter Creek and Cranberry as Wilderness areas within the Monongahela National Forest, went through Randolph.

Meanwhile Byrd was advancing up the seniority path on both the Democratic Party leadership and the Appropriations Committee. He had been a member of the Appropriations Committee since entering the Senate, and had also become a party leader. He eventually served as Majority Leader from 1977-80, and again 1987-88, and as Minority Leader 1981-86.

When Randolph left the Senate, and Jay Rockefeller was elected to the seat in 1984, Byrd became the senior senator. By now Byrd was Minority Leader, and ranking Appropriations member. In 1989 he left his leadership post to become Chairman of the Appropriations Committee. The Democrats retained control of the Senate until 1995.

From these positions, he enabled passage of many proposals for West Virginia. Federal agencies, notably the US Forest Service, but also the Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service all provided Byrd with their list of projects that he could "earmark" in the appropriations bills. A regular and oft-repeated ritual when a federal agency came to his committee for annual appropriations would be his question: "What have you done, or could you do, in West Virginia?"

The answer to that question ultimately led to the FBI fingerprint facility near Clarksburg, the US Bureau of Debt building in Parkersburg, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) facility in Morgantown, among others. From an environmentally friendly perspective he also expanded funding for the Harpers Ferry National Park, the New River National River, the Fish & Wildlife Service's Leetown Laboratory and their Shepherdstown National Training Center. Throughout these years, Byrd continued to enthusiastically champion Corridor H, despite repeated delays via litigation and local opposition, including that of the Conservancy.

From the point of view of the Conservancy, perhaps the most significant positive funding decision was the establishment of the 500<sup>th</sup> national wildlife refuge in the Canaan Valley. After the Davis Power Project had met widespread opposition at the federal level and the Fish and Wildlife Service had issued a proposal for the Canaan Valley Wildlife Refuge in 1978, the Conservancy led a campaign to build a political base of support. Everyone knew the proposal would only become a reality if Senator Byrd gave his blessing. Groups wrote letters, delegations went to Washington, and a true grassroots lobbying campaign was underway. Eventually the refuge was indeed established, funded through Byrd's support on the Appropriations Committee, and he was the guest of honor at the dedication in Canaan Valley on August 11, 1994.

(continued on page 9)

## PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION DISMISSES LIBERTY GAP APPLICATION

by Peter Shoenfeld

Throughout this year, the West Virginia Public Service Commission (PSC) has been collecting information, evidence, argument and opinion, to adjudicate Case No.05-1740-E-CS, the application of Liberty Gap Wind Force, LLC, a subsidiary of U.S. Wind Force, for a Siting Certificate authorizing construction of a wind farm on Jack Mountain and transmission lines connecting the facility to the Franklin sub-station, in Pendleton County.

Although public debate expressed in other venues is mixed and often heated, public opinion documented in the PSC case record for Liberty Gap is overwhelmingly negative. The project is seen as having serious potential for adverse aesthetic, ecological and economic impact and many observers see the developer as arrogant, dishonest, and unconcerned with the public interest. The opposition has coalesced around a locally based, loosely organized and passionately supported organization called "Friends of Beautiful Pendleton County (FOBPC)."

On July 24, in an unscheduled and unexpected development, the Commission determined that Liberty Gap's application should be dismissed "without prejudice," i.e., they would be allowed to re-apply if they wished. The case schedule at this time was getting near the finish line with an evidentiary hearing scheduled for August 9 and a final ruling expected soon after that.

The rationale for the Commission's dismissal order lay in a struggle that had gone on since early June over allowing access to the Liberty Gap project site for FOBPC's "consultant on geology/hydrology." Such permissions are normally routine during the discovery process. However, this time Liberty Gap resisted and delayed with a variety of arguments, e.g., their lease from Allegheny Wood Products would not allow such visits, baby-sitting the visitor(s) would be onerous and should be compensated, liability, the need to control exactly where any visitors went, rattlesnakes, etc. The Commission didn't buy this and, on June 23d, issued an order compelling Liberty Gap to allow FOBPC the required access. But Liberty Gap continued to argue, raising the issue of a waiver of liability that had not been required of others, e.g., Commission staff, in the past. This was proposed as a pre-condition of allowing Liberty Gap access and went so far as to re-

quire that Liberty Gap waive any claims "CAUSED BY THE GROSS NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASED PARTIES."

On July 3, FOBPC filed a motion stating that not only would they not agree to such demands, but also that, because of delays created by Liberty Gap it was now too late to complete the planned studies. The consultants were no longer available and. FOBPC had been, in effect, barred from the site. This was the fault of the delays and the "hostile, obstructionist attitude" of Liberty Gap. As an alternative remedy, FOBPC now asked for "evidentiary sanctions" against Liberty Gap, which would prohibit Liberty Gap from making use of the advantage they had gained over Liberty Gap by denying them access to the property.

In the July 24 dismissal order, the Commission agreed with FOBPC that they had been denied the opportunity to access the project area, that this eliminated the possibility of full litigation and for that reason made dismissal necessary. The order placed great emphasis on the unreasonableness of the proposed liability release, and on Liberty Gap's conduct and attitude in general.

Immediately after the dismissal order, the case was listed as closed on the PSC web site and all further information was removed. However it soon came back when Liberty Gap filed their "Petition to Reconsider," which is 77 pages along and seeks to re-justify their positions on points over which they had been criticized, surrenders on the issue of allowing access, and even offers to pay travel expenses for the FOBPC consultants if and when they return.

Commission procedures allow such petitions and rejoinders to them from parties-of-record with deadlines at ten-day intervals starting from the original order. These have been filed along with dozens more of letters of protest and commentary from concerned citizens.

The present status of Liberty Gap's case seems to be this:

- 1- They do not have the Siting Certificate needed to move ahead with the project.
- 2- They do not have an application pending; the Commission dismissed it.
- 3- They do have the right to start over with a new application since the dismissal was "without prejudice."

4- They have asked the Commission to resume the proceeding where it left off, however Commission regulations do not require a response.

If this case is not re-opened by the Commission and won by Liberty Gap, this will be the second loss on this project for U.S. Wind Force. At the end of 2004, they filed a similar application, which was withdrawn after just a few weeks. This was the first wind energy case filed under the Commission's new legislative rule (Title 150, Series 30), governing Siting Certificates for Exempt Wholesale Generating Facilities. Their application was quite thin and tainted by a much criticized agreement with the County Commission for Liberty Gap to compensate the County in exchange for use of the Commission's powers of condemnation to obtain transmission line easements.

U.S. Wind Force has been in business since 2000 and has not yet brought any wind projects to the construction stage. Some of their projects have been permitted, development partnerships negotiated, and potential future energy sales contracts signed. Their prospects for ultimate success appear questionable.

The Liberty Gap and Beech Ridge (Greenbrier and Nicholas Counties) were the first two cases fully litigated and decided under the new Siting rule and were widely expected to establish precedent for the future of wind energy in West Virginia. However, in the Liberty Gap case, this has not occurred, since the dismissal was attributed more to the attitude and conduct of the applicants than the merits of their case.

Rule 150-30 states requirements to the applicants regarding the information they must provide. It does not guide the Commissioners as to how this information should be weighed in reaching a decision. Attorney James McNeely, who represented the opponents in both cases, stressed applicant shortfalls in providing required information.

The first three applications (Backbone Mountain, US Wind Force—Mt. Storm, Nedpower—Mt. Storm) were approved, with adjustments, by the PSC. Although there has been intense activist opposition (which still continues) in the Nedpower case, none of these three cases, in Tucker and Grant Counties attracted massive, local, publicly announced opposition. However, the opposite is true for the current Liberty Gap (Pendleton County) and



## Join Now !!!

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership categories (circle one)**

|                        | Individual | Family | Org     |
|------------------------|------------|--------|---------|
| Senior                 | \$15       |        |         |
| Student/               | \$15       |        |         |
| Introductory/<br>Other | \$15       |        |         |
| Regular                | \$25       | \$35   | \$50    |
| Associate              | \$50       | \$75   | \$100   |
| Sustaining             | \$100      | \$150  | \$200   |
| Patron                 | \$250      | \$250  | \$500   |
| Mountaineer            | \$500      | \$750  | \$1,000 |

Mail to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy PO Box 306 Charleston, WV 25321

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

(Byrd - continued from page 7)

Once more, in 2000, Senator Byrd again became the perceived savior for the nearby Blackwater Canyon. First led by the Conservancy, then later by the Friends of the Blackwater, pressure on Senator Byrd has remained a critical goal. Petitions and letters, delegations of West Virginians, all the traditional means of building grassroots awareness and political advocacy will continue in the hope of saving the Blackwater.

Even more recently, the West Virginian Wilderness Coalition has developed a close relationship with Senator Byrd and his staff as he considers the Monongahela National Forest plan and its proposed Wilderness areas. Clearly his support for additional Wilderness in West Virginia will be decisive.

So what's the verdict after forty years? First, Senator Byrd is the most influential agent for important policy and major funding decisions in West Virginia involving the federal government. Secondly, his record of projects of interest to Conservancy members has been mixed. On some we have worked together; on some we were opposed. As we look toward an expansion of Wilderness areas in West Virginia, the protection of the Blackwater, and other issues of concern, we hope to find common ground.

*Note: Dave Elkinton can be reached at [daveelkinton@hotmail.com](mailto:daveelkinton@hotmail.com), and welcomes comments and information as he continues his research and writing on the Conservancy's first forty years.*

### Some things never change !

19 years ago our current Vice President for State Affairs wrote the following to his local paper. The Lincoln Journal headlined it INHERITANCE and said "We received the following from Duval science teacher and environmental activist Julian Martin."

April 29, 1987  
 To The Editor

Coal River runs foul today  
 As we see the black coal gob  
 Ruin our drinking water  
 We thank the coal industry  
 for being so good  
 As to destroy  
 278 acres  
 With a strip mine  
 We happily trade our mountains  
 For thirty pieces of silver  
 The strippers will bruise the land  
 and expose the springs  
 Until it looks like a hog  
 Ready for slaughter  
 Oozing inner liquids onto  
 The shaved carcass  
 Then the coal will be gone  
 The jobs will be gone and  
 The mountains will be gone  
 and our grandchildren  
 will inherit  
 a wasted land

Julian Martin  
 Griffithsville

WHAT INHERITANCE NOW? 278 acres in 1987....thousands more by 2006

[Editor's admission and apology. This trip down memory lane was reprinted without consulting the author. Since I took the liberty of using Julian's words from 1987 without seeking permission, I think it only right to print the following more recent comment Julian included a few weeks ago when he shared his earlier letter to the editor: "... how I hate that title 'environmental activist' when what I am most happy about are my children and grandchildren and even one great granddaughter and the fact that long ago I had one of the best jump shots in playground basketball."]

Interesting tidbit from the U.K.

"Purchases inspired by design and hands-on experience have gone some way to demolishing ignorance about solar power. Contrary to popular myth, solar cells don't need direct sunlight to produce electricity, and Britain's actually quite well located for the sun. **Sharp's research says that if every single building in the UK was roofed with solar panels, we'd generate more than the UK's present industrial and residential electricity consumption - there'd be no need for gas, nuclear, coal or even wind power.**"

Adam Vaughan, [The Guardian](#)  
 Thursday August 17, 2006

# MON FOREST PLAN UPDATE

Following a public comment period last fall on their draft management plan revision for the Monongahela National Forest (the MON), the Forest Service is scheduled to release its final forest plan in mid-September. The results of the public comment period should have sent a very clear message to the Forest Service: Protect our remaining wild lands and streams! Of the 13,000 individuals who took the time to submit formal comments, over 93% urged the Forest Service to select Alternative 3. That plan would recommend many more Wilderness area designations to Congress than does their 'preferred' Alternative 2, which only 3% of respondents favored. Alternative 3 includes special areas like Seneca Creek, Spice Run, Big Draft, and an expansion of the existing Dolly Sods Wilderness. Most of those who wrote comments in favor of Alternative 3 also supported adding the proposed Wilderness areas identified in the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal which were not included in Alternative 3, such as North Fork Mountain and Middle Mountain.

We hope that the Forest Service will take these comments seriously and that they will be reflected in the final forest plan. This would include not just more Wilderness recommendations but more lands protected under the 6.2 or primitive backcountry recreation management prescription, as well as better protection for our trout streams, soil and wildlife. The Mon's wild lands and streams and the wildlife that rely on them are immeasurable in value and deserve the highest level of protection possible. Those that care enough about the forest to have sent in their comments clearly feel the same way.

While it is unclear what the Forest Service will ultimately change in its final plan, one thing is certain: West Virginia's Congressional Delegation will have the last say on what areas should be protected through Wilderness designation. They have the ability to designate far more than what the Forest Service recommends. Only they can assure that special places such as Seneca Creek, Spice Run, the proposed Dolly Sods Expansion, Big Draft, East Fork of Greenbrier and others can be kept just as they are for current and future generations to enjoy.

As you may know, the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition has been working hard to make sure these special places are protected for several years now. We started from scratch really, with volunteers on the ground doing inventories of areas that were likely to qualify as Wilderness. This work, along with extensive meetings with stakeholders that care about the fate of these wild areas, led to the development of the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for the Monongahela National Forest. This research identified thirteen new areas and expansions to two existing areas that cover about 143,000 acres. The Coalition has been working hard to build support and spread the word about the opportunity to protect these areas. We will continue to push over the next few months in the hope that the release of the final forest plan, the final hurdle towards getting legislation introduced, will have been cleared. Much work will need to be done to ensure a good bill is introduced and passed.

## ***We need your help to make this become a reality!***

***First and foremost***, contact WV's congressional delegation and let them know you want more Wilderness on the Mon. Be sure to mention areas that are important to you.

***Secondly***, get involved with the local Wilderness groups that are now meeting regularly. Groups are active in North Central WV, Pocahontas and Greenbrier County, Randolph and Tucker County, the Eastern Panhandle and Charleston.

***Lastly***, If you'd like to get something started in your area or even just bring together a group of friends to write letters, we can send you a *Wild Mon House Party* kit which includes our video and info on having the party.

***~~~~~Contact Matt Keller at 304-864-5530 or matt.keller@wvwild.org to get involved.~~~~~***

(Liberty Gap - continued from page 8)

Beech Ridge (Greenbrier County) \* cases where the numbers of opponents filing material with the PSC have been in the hundreds of thousands.

A few words about the participants and procedures is this and similar PSC cases: The participants include the Commissioners, Commission Staff, the Applicant(s), Intervenor, and other interested groups and individuals. The Commissioners preside and render the ultimate decision, the Staff examines the case and formally represents what they see as the general public interest. The Intervenor is an individual and organizations recognized by the Commission to be stakeholders granted a role of formal participation in the decision process. Anyone else may participate by corresponding with

the Commission. Such correspondence is read, considered and published on the web site ([www.psc.state.wv.us](http://www.psc.state.wv.us)). The nature of such contributions ranges all the way from petition signatures and statements of personal sentiment to scientific papers of varying degrees of accuracy and credibility.

The Intervenor is most often opponents of the application. They contribute evidence, responses, interrogatories, and motions. The list of Intervenor currently include Friends of Beautiful Pendleton County, West Virginia Building and Construction Trades Council, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, Larry V. Thomas, Larry Hargrove, Lynn V. Vandevander, and Garnet B. Gregory. The Highlands Conservancy has not been very ac-

tive organizationally in this case. Early on, the Commission ruled that the Conservancy and another organization could not submit testimony or participate in hearings, because legal representation would be required. Rather than assume this expense, the Conservancy decided to support FOBPC with resources available. Individual intervenors now include Conservancy members Larry Tomas and Larry Hargrove. Jonathan Jessup has contributed his fine photographic work.

**\* Just as we go to press with this article, we've learned that the Beech Ridge Project has been approved by the PSC.** (See Frank Young's article on page 12)

# And a Grand time Was Had By All !!

## ~2006 Garden Party~



Nick Hales, volunteer education director for the WV Raptor Rehabilitation Center, uses Annie and the other birds in their environmental education programs. Visit [www.wvrrc.org](http://www.wvrrc.org) to learn more about their rescue, rehabilitation and education programs.

### Special Thanks to:

- Archies
- BOPARC
- Pathfinder
- Ami Hirata
- Woodticks
- Mike Costello
- Dee Quaranto
- Josh Rutkowski
- Keith McManus
- Whitegrass Café
- Jonathan Jessup
- Adventures Edge
- Patchwork Films
- The Current B&B
- Sharon Goodman
- Wamsley Cycles
- Karen & Bill Grubb
- Black Bear Burritos
- Siriannis Restaurant
- Daily Kneads Bakery
- Elk Ridge Nature Works
- Jason & Jesse Coffman
- Mountain State Brewery
- Matt Keller & Julie Olexa
- Chip Chase & Laurie Little
- Susan Capelle & Sam Dyke
- Morgantown Farmers Market
- Merrell Performance Footwear
- Morgantown Theatre Company
- Mother Wit Writing and Design
- Whitegrass Ski Touring Center
- Corey Bonasso & Kate Jaworski
- Mountain State Balloon Company
- Kiwi Catering and Carryout Cuisine
- West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
- West Virginia Raptor Rehabilitation Center



Cory Chase entertains himself and others.



Willian Stout draws the winning raffle tickets.



Congressman Alan Mollohan handles Annie, the Redtailed Hawk. The WV Raptor Rehabilitation Center was at the Garden Party with a variety of birds that are currently residing at the Center.



Jon Leyton gives directions as Rob Stout helps to get the hot air balloon aloft. We were lucky to get it up even for a short while with all the thunderstorms in the area.



Dave Saville and Congressman Mollohan contemplate Wilderness legislation for West Virginia.



Kate Jaworski and Corey Bonasso make some mighty fine music together to the delight of the 200+ people at the Garden Party.

**-- BEECH RIDGE WIND PROJECT APPROVED --**

by Frank Young

Just hours before this edition of the *Highlands Voice* went to press, the WV Public Service Commission (PSC) granted, subject to several conditions, a certificate of site approval and construction for the much debated Beech Ridge wind farm in northern Greenbrier County.

We will have a detailed article about this newest permitted wind power facility in the state in the next edition of the *Highlands Voice* including information about the various parties to the case and their respective positions and arguments. But here are the general terms of the permit just approved.

Before and during construction:

1- Most construction to take place during daylight hours, between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM, and not during hours when area church services are in session.

2- Beech Ridge must comply with the Endangered Species Act (16 USC 0 153 1 *et seq.*), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 5 701 *et seq.*), and, if applicable, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 USC 5 432 1 *et seq.*) in both the construction and operation of the Project.

3- Beech Ridge must have a decommissioning fund in place prior to commencement of operation. The fund will cover eventual dismantling of the turbines and towers, as well as land reclamation.

4— Beech Ridge is to provide to the PSC a copy of the guaranty agreement between Beech Ridge and the Greenbrier County Commission whereby Beech Ridge agrees to pay at least \$400,000 a year to the County.

6- Beech Ridge shall prohibit the use of lighting in the project area as much as possible.

After construction and as operations begin:

1- Three years of post-construction bat mortality and adaptive management studies, after operations commence, to assess 1) the project's impact, if any, upon bat life, 2) the potential for adaptive management techniques to mitigate such impacts, and 3) the expected costs over a range of mitigation effectiveness levels.

2- Three years of post-construction bird studies, after operations commence, to assess the impact, if any, on birds.

3- Beech Ridge will consult with a Technical Advisory Committee regarding the post-construction bat and bird studies. Membership shall be open to a representative of each of the following: PSC, US Fish and Wildlife Service, WV DNR, Bat and Wind Energy Cooperative, a statewide environmental organization w/ 500+ members, a statewide bird group, and a private or academic institution with a background in avian issues.

4- There have been indications that at Backbone Mountain, under certain atmospheric conditions, unnecessary lighting can contribute to additional bird mortality. Thus, Beech Ridge "shall work with its employees and the FAA to minimize the impact that lighting will have upon the project's visibility".

All of these as well as dozens of other conditions apply to Beech Ridge, LLC- as well as to any subsequent owners/operators of the wind energy facility.

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

***True love found, and back-bumper bound***

by Richard Kerns

It's altogether fitting and proper. Not just the shirt I'm wearing, but its peaceful, easy feel. Button-down cotton, short-sleeved, wrinkled and loose, soft as a downy chick. Comfort, defined.

And it's purple. Even more fitting and proper, for I write this mid-August eve of a Purple Fiddle clogging the light Appalachian in the heart of the West Virginia highlands. ....

Over two decades of owning vehicles, I never affixed a bumper sticker till last summer, about this time, when a winding, climbing road through wild wonderful carried me to two cool little towns near Blackwater Falls. I say two towns, but Thomas and Davis can easily be mistaken for one, as only 2 miles separate them along W.Va. Rt. 32 through Tucker County. ....

Moseying around the Purple Fiddle [in Thomas, WV] ... I came upon my bumper sticker. Its pure, stylized simplicity struck me with all the force of truth. Still, I stood there a minute or so in the Scotsman's pursed pause. A dollar maybe? Then I set my bumper sticker down and walked away. But the message echoed within, and I soon surrendered, approaching the counter with not one but two stickers. "We're on vacation - let's splurge!"

"They're free," the young lady said.

That's when I fell in love with Thomas, W.Va. But it wasn't about saving a couple of bucks. It was about the history of the place, and the present, and how the two dance in sweet harmony. ....

....The ignorance of the age confers absolution for our forebears' sins upon the land. Indeed, we would not know today's comforts - to say nothing of some bodacious oak floors - if not for their ravenous labor. ***Our generation, though, warrants no such pardon, for we truly know better.***

"I Love Mountains," the bumper sticker proclaimed from the counter of the Purple Fiddle, but it didn't say "love," it drew it with a heart. And it's a sexy, curvaceous image, like the heart on Love American Style (truer than the red, white and blue ooh, ooh, ooh!) Born to extol New York, the rendering reaches supreme refinement in protest of mountaintop-removal coal mining.

Produced by The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, the bumper sticker includes a message on the back detailing the devastation of mountaintop removal. Such mining has ravaged an area equal to a quarter-mile swath stretching from New York to San Francisco. More than 1,000 miles of streams...buried.

We strip-mine coal in Maryland, but put the land back the way it was - even better sometimes, resolving acid mine drainage during reclamation. And Marylanders can't even put a backhoe in a river without state approval. Across the Potomac, it's still the 1800s. One-thousand miles of streams - not diverted, tainted or threatened, but killed. Dead and buried. No one who has ever dropped a line in water can back such environmental carnage with a clear conscience.

The I Love Mountains bumper sticker sings of home, speaks to truth, and declares righteous opposition to a hideous enterprise. All for a buck. Or 20 cents in bulk. ...It's not quite a Mountain Maryland license plate, but we'll get there. And I'll get back to the Purple Fiddle, because I love mountains, and the people who love 'em...

## SUMMER BOARD MEETING NOTES

by Cindy Rank

Hugh and Ruth Rogers graciously hosted the July 29<sup>th</sup> Summer Board meeting at their peaceful retreat in Montrose West Virginia.

Wandering around the grounds and relaxing on the tree swing before and after the meeting, Cindy Ellis noted some 30 different bird songs. Those of us who ventured up a hillside path during lunch break were treated to an astonishing variety of mushrooms growing on the hillside above the house.

Meeting inside the pleasant screened-in porch, members of the board received news of a recent generous bequest from long time member Joe Monahan.

Hugh appointed a **nominating** committee of Cindy Ellis, Buff Rodman and Frank Young to report back to the annual meeting in October with a proposed slate of officers and nominees for the 5 expiring Directors-at-Large positions.

Peter reviewed the ongoing additions to the **website** that Jim Solley has been working on. The board expressed its gratitude and agreed to support the fine work being done by both Jim and Peter to upgrade the [www.wvhighlands.org](http://www.wvhighlands.org) site.

Reporting on the activities of the **Outreach** Committee, Julian listed several public events he and others participated in. He passed around the newest Stop Mountaintop Removal brochure put together by a coalition of groups including the Highlands Conservancy. He also presented the newest green-on-white Friends of the Mountains stickers that oddly enough bear some faint resemblance to the oval Friends of Coal stickers often seen on cars and trucks owned by members of the Coal Association.

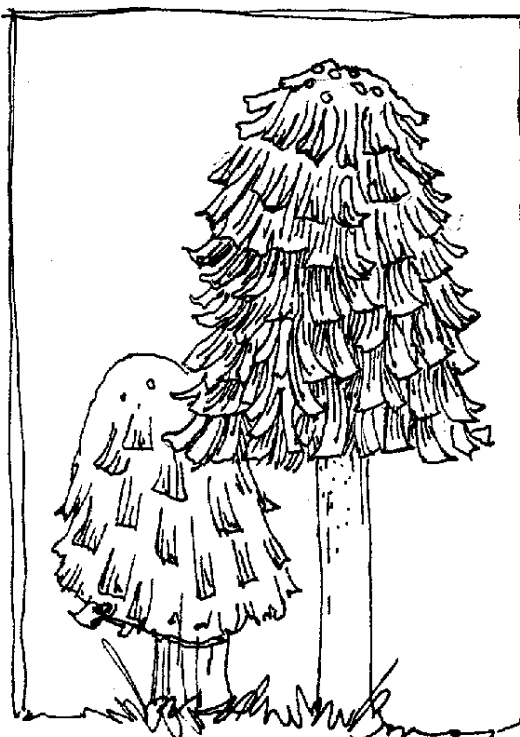
Frank reminded the Board that the new 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Monongahela National Forest **Hiking Guide** is about to go to the printer (See article by Allen de Hart elsewhere in this issue) ...and just in time, since the supply of the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition is nearly gone.

Other committee reports and discussions included the following highlights. **MINING**: October 3<sup>rd</sup> has been set as the court hearing date in our most recent challenge of the Army Corps of Engineers' illegal permitting of four new mountaintop removal mines. **PUBLIC LANDS**: the final forest plan is due for release soon, at which time the public will have 45 days to assess the plan and decide what further action might be needed. **WIND**: the Public Service Commission decided to dismiss – without prejudice – the U.S. Wind Force proposed Liberty Gap wind facility in Pendleton County. Several other similar projects are now in the pipeline: Rich Mountain, Gauley Mountain, another near Keyser, and possibly one in Barbour County. Questions about siting continue to haunt our oftentimes painful discussions as we attempt to balance our underlying belief in and support of wind power with our concerns about specific projects and the impact of the increasing number of wind facilities proposed for the highest peaks along the Appalachian highlands.

President Hugh Rogers told the board that Cindy Rank will act as interim editor of the **VOICE** during John McFerrin's expected months of recuperation from his recent surgery. Hugh also thanked Dee Quaranto for taking time from her work as Coordinator of "We're Friends of the Mon!" to quickly put together the special July edition of the **VOICE** when John became ill.

The good news about John is that his system and his new liver appear to have established a mutual admiration society and are working together quite nicely. John's surgery was August 4<sup>th</sup>

so, of course, there remains a long period of waiting and watching — and recovering from the surgery itself — and regaining strength after months of inactivity. For now John is happy to be home and sounding much more like himself.



### BUMPER STICKERS

To get free *I [heart] 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 new green-on-white oval *Friends of the Mountains* stickers. Let Julian know which (or both) you want.

GREETINGS FOR JOHN  
CAN BE SENT TO HIS HOME:  
114 BECKLEY AVE.  
BECKLEY, WV  
25801

~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
~ a message/plea from your interim **VOICE** editor ~  
If you submitted material that wasn't used,  
or see any spelling or grammatical errors,  
i ask for your indulgence...  
at least for this, my first issue.  
However,

i would appreciate any comments,  
suggestions, or criticisms  
you care to send

~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
clrank@hughes.net

~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
(of course, articles, prose, letters, etc are encouraged)

----- **A BETTER PLAN FOR THE MONONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST** -----

(the first of two articles about forestry assumptions in the Draft Forest Plan)

by Bruce Sundquist

**The Monongahela National Forest in Context:** Most of the Monongahela National Forest (MNF) was cut in the late 1800s and early 1900s as part of the timber industry's trans-national sweep across New York State, then Pennsylvania, then West Virginia, then the lake states and onto the West, cutting everything in its path. There were no laws about sustained yield forestry or erosion control then. In fact, there still aren't. The devastation the industry left in its broad wake created lots of public outrage – enough to establish the National Forest system and its Monongahela National Forest early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a result of the speed at which the industry swept across the US, a large fraction of the tree population on the MNF that has not yet been cut under MNF management falls into a narrow range – about 75-95 years old.

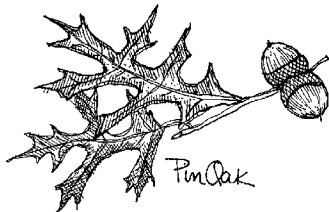
According to the 2005 Draft Forest Plan, in the past 18 years, timber harvesting on the 919,000 acres of the MNF has averaged about 1020 acres per year – slightly over 0.1% of the forest annually. Only about 3-4% of the MNF is now in a “young”- or “early-successional” stage. The Draft Plan refers to most of the Forest's timberlands as containing “mature” timber in the “mid-to-late-successional” age classes. The Draft Plan argues that, without additional timber harvesting soon, most MNF timber stands will become “over-mature” or “late-successional” over the next 50 years with associated effects on the diversity of both tree ages and habitat. This diversity-related statement seems to suggest that MNF managers would prefer to even out the tree-age distribution on MNF timberlands. This seems reasonable from the viewpoint of a stable timber industry, stable timber outputs, and a broad, perpetual diversity of both scenery and habitats for both flora and fauna – at least within some unspecified limits.

**The Unanswered Question:** The crucial question apparently not addressed by the Draft Plan is that of the “rotation length” (maximum tree age) that should characterize any timber-age distribution. I say “apparently not addressed” because the MNF did not respond to my request for a copy of the Draft Plan page(s) having a bearing on the rotation age they had in mind for its timberlands. Without a clear policy on rotation lengths there can be no rational plan for smoothing tree-age distributions. In timberlands where nothing is done to the trees between seed and saw, a decision on rotation length is the only substantive decision a forester makes in “forest management.” So any Forest Plan ought to cover this issue in great length. But from decades of experience with forest planning processes on public forests, I know this issue gets buried deep in hundreds of pages of “boiler-plate” (standard sets of nice-sounding words that don't say anything) if it is discussed at all.

~~~~~

*You must be the change you  
wish to see in the world.*

*Mahatma Gandhi*



**MNF Tree Ages in Context:** Let's give some context to what MNF foresters mean by words like “over-mature” or “late-successional.” Trees rarely live more than 400 years in this part of the country, so a forest becomes “climax” at perhaps 200 years and changes little after that. If forest managers wanted to maximize the timber-value productivity (dollars worth of sawtimber sales per average acre per year) on eastern hardwood forests they would use a rotation age of roughly 130 years, at which time timber values are increasing by about 0.7%/ year and when the timber is roughly 30 inches in diameter. This figure 130 years comes from half-a-dozen or so research documents authored by highly respected US Forest Service (USFS) forestry researchers and some university forestry researchers. The common forestry practice however is to harvest hardwood sawtimber when it is 70-90 years old, after the value growth rate drops below about 4%/ year for USFS sawtimber and below about 10%/ year on commercial forest lands.

**The Scam:** Why would someone want to harvest sawtimber so young and reduce the timber-value productivity of the land by 50% (USFS) or by 75% (timber industry) relative to its optimum productivity? This is done by arguing that, after timber-value growth slows to a rate less than the real rates of interest on money, it would be better to cut the timber, put the timber sales proceeds in a bank and watch the savings account grow in value at a rate greater than rate of increase of the value of the sawtimber were it left standing. Such “present-net-value” (PNV) analyses sound logical at first glance, but that is deceptive. Timber sales proceeds are rarely, if ever, put into a savings account and left untouched for decades. Instead timber sales proceeds simply go into checking accounts where the bulk of the money gets spent on current consumption. You can do all sorts of weird things with PNV analyses – like proving that the Indians who sold Manhattan for \$24 would now have a savings account worth more than Manhattan Island is presently worth. You can also prove that soil conservation is not wise, economically. Instead, just put the savings from not conserving soil into a savings account and, when the soil is all gone, the annual interest earned on the savings account will exceed the annual sales value of the crops that once grew in the soil.

Once we see through the chicanery that forest managers use to reduce the timber-value productivity of hundreds of thousands of square miles of America's forests by 50 to 75%, we see that the real optimal rotation age of eastern hardwood forests is a lot closer to 130 years than to 70-90 years. In other words, the best practice is to grow the trees to what the USFS-MNF refers to as “over-mature” or “late-successional” (and what the timber industry assures us is “decadent stands of rotting timber.”)

**Hidden Agendas on the Dark Side:** Why would forest managers want to engage in chicanery? I can only guess. High-level forest managers who make the important decisions are probably in their late 50s or early 60s. The last thing they want to hear is that their trees are immature – think loss of bonuses, demotions, layoffs, etc. So when some economist comes along with a mathematically elegant analysis that proves their trees are actually mature they can't resist ignoring the fact that the assumptions behind all that elegance are almost always false. Nowadays you probably would never get a degree in forestry unless you pretended that you were totally unaware that decisions based on PNV analyses nearly always rest on false assumptions.

**Non-Timber Values:** The above assigns zero value to the habitat diversity and scenic, natural, and recreational values that result from longer rotation ages and uniform tree age distributions. In dollar terms, non-timber values exceed timber values by a wide margin in public forests in the U.S. Two studies done independently by Wilderness Society personnel using USFS-MNF data provide some numbers. Donald Parks found that for every job that is timber-based on the MNF, about nine jobs are recreation-based. For every dollar earned that is timber-based, almost \$6 is recreation-earned on the MNF. Ann Ingerson, using different MNF data, produced similar results. One often hears numbers like 20:1 or 30:1 for the ratio of recreational outputs of national forests to timber outputs, but these numbers apparently refer to western national forests.

Everyone loves big trees – the “forest cathedrals” that are so rare on eastern public forest – and even rarer on private forests. It is probably some combination of rarity and aesthetics that makes these areas so popular. Growing trees on long rotations with an even distribution of tree ages produces a lot more than forest cathedrals. It also increases habitat diversity for plants and wildlife, and natural and scenic diversity for the rest of us. It also increases the diversity of timber outputs without the boom-and-bust cycles that created such pain in decades past. This creates an environment for a more stable and healthier timber industry that produces everything from dirt-cheap wood chips, mine timbers and pallet lumber (from 40-50-year old trees selling for a few tens of dollars each) to high quality veneer logs (from 100+-year-old trees selling for \$5000 - \$6000 each). One could best enhance the diversity of West Virginia’s timber outputs by focusing timber outputs from public forests on long-rotation forestry and focusing timber outputs from private forests on short-rotation forestry (where habitat diversity, scenic values and natural values are less important). Private timberland owners would benefit from the fact that they would compete less directly with public forests. If one added any reasonable dollar value to the value of habitat diversity (and quality), scenic values, natural values, and recreational values, the economically optimal rotation age would increase to well beyond the optimal 130-year age based on timber issues alone. All this ignores the fact that the USFS has lost money on timber sales every year since it was founded, suggesting that economically optimal rotation ages on the MNF should be even longer.

**The Global Context:** If we look at the big picture, we see that short-rotation timber management on the MNF makes even less sense. The wood productivity of the world’s forests seems to be roughly balanced by the rate of growth of the world’s forests. But this ignores the fact that something on the order of 50-85% of the developing world’s timber harvests are illegal harvests that aren’t counted in the tally of global timber outputs. (These illegal harvests go to China, Japan, the United States and the European Union – Robin Hood in Reverse.) These illegal harvests are typically done on the world’s virgin forests or fairly mature forests, suggesting that prices of higher-grade timber are bound to increase as global reserves of older growth timber shrink. On the other hand, forest plantations (which typically grow fast-growing [i.e. low-grade] species of trees and produce prodigious tonnages of cellulose fiber on short rotations) are expanding rapidly the world over. All this suggests that low-grade timber, which has always been sold into glutted markets, is bound to get a lot cheaper. So if the MNF wants to get well positioned for the timber marketplace of the future, it will see even more incentive than it sees now to focus on the better quality timber that come from growing sawtimber on long rotations. The US has imported more timber than it has exported for about three decades. The obvious way to correct this trade deficit is to devote more US forestland to increasingly high value (older growth) timber and correspondingly less forestland to increasingly cheap, low-grade (faster-growing and younger) timber.



On January 9, 2006, 9 hearty souls undertook an expedition to re-discover, and re-dedicate the summit of Mount Porte Crayon. This, West Virginia’s second highest mountain top was dedicated to the memory of General David Hunter Strother, artist, writer, author, soldier, engineer, map maker, hunter, outdoorsman and fisherman. On this day, we would celebrate the 65th anniversary of the original dedication in July 1941. From Laneville, we followed the Flat Rock Run Trail to the top of Roaring Plains. We then used the secret maps produced by Mary Ann Honcharik to find the passage through the thick spruce and laurel forest to the summit. A few navigational errors on the way down made for several extra miles of cross country travel across the mountainside, but by nightfall, we were all safely back at our cars on Red Creek.

**Hidden Agendas on the Bright Side:** Might we be criticizing MNF managers unfairly? After all, they have been selling very little timber, relative to growth, for some decades now. This could easily be viewed as an attempt to sneak through the toughest part of a process of converting relatively short-rotation forestry (required by USFS policy) to longer rotation ages that more honestly attempt to optimize the productivity of the MNF in terms of the sum total of all of its diverse outputs. Words like “over-mature” and “late successional” could be smoke screens to conceal their little secret. Perhaps we have a bunch of shrewd forest managers who, in their Forest Plan of a decade from now, will announce that the MNF is well into the transition from low-productivity, low-value, taxpayer-subsidized, low-habitat-diversity, limited-aesthetics forestry to high-productivity, high-timber-quality, high-profit-margin, enhanced-habitat-diversity, enhanced-aesthetics forestry. Pointing the way for the USFS to become a “profit center” could win them enhanced respect in future congressional hearings on USFS budgets. This could turn the nightmarish tasks of managing national forests on shoestring budgets into more exciting tasks.

I can think of only one bit of evidence that would contradict this conspiracy theory. Fernow Experimental Forest is doing research on the economic effects of harvesting timber after its value growth rate drops below 2, 3, 4 and 6%/ year. Current USFS policy, I understand, is 3-4%/ year. These growth rates involve reducing timber-value productivity of the land roughly 50% below its optimal value (that which involves waiting roughly 130 years when timber-value growth rates drop to roughly 0.7%/ year). This research hints that MNF managers plan to continue placing zero value on habitat diversity and scenic, natural and recreational values of the MNF, and to remain committed to fairly low-grade sawtimber, taxpayer subsidies, and shoestring budgets.

**The forthcoming second of Bruce’s two articles examines some implications of long-rotation forestry on the MNF.**

~~~~~

# West Virginia Mountain Odyssey



## Outings, Education and Beyond

### ~~~~~ OUTINGS ~~~~~

To join us for any of these outings, please sign up with the trip leader, who can give you more information. Their initials appear after each listing; contact information is on the following page\*. Please contact your trip leader and reserve your spot at least two weeks in advance. In doing so, you may learn critical details about the outing. For instance, all available spots may be taken or the trip leader may cancel an outing if an insufficient number of people have signed up.

Our outings vary greatly in difficulty, scenery and type. Groups average between five and ten people, though we have as many as twenty people on some outings. Lower group numbers tend to provide a better experience for everyone. Trip leaders exercise a great amount of flexibility as far as leadership style, foul weather rescheduling, daily route, etc. Please be considerate of your trip leader and follow his/her instructions.

~~~~~ *If you would like to lead an outing please contact Dee, Outings Coordinator at [dee.quaranto@gmail.com](mailto:dee.quaranto@gmail.com)* ~~~~~

**Open Dates:** Visit Kayford Mountain south of Charleston to see mountain top removal (MTR) up close and hear Larry Gibson's story about how he saved his mountain, now almost totally surrounded by MTR. Bring lunch for a picnic on Larry's mountain. Call in advance to schedule. **JM, LG**

**September** (dates to be announced): Tree Planting in Canaan Valley. We'll plant Red Spruce on the Wildlife Refuge. **DS**

**September 16 & 17:** Roaring Plains, MNF Backpack Tour of one of the most spectacular areas of the Mon — the proposed Roaring Plains Wilderness area. A serious overnight trip covering many miles. **DS**

**September 16-18:** Dolly Sods North and Dolly Sods Wilderness, MNF Backpack Approximately 30 miles of hiking through Dolly Sods: Raven Ridge, Cabin Mountain, The Falls of Red Creek, Big and Little Stonecoal, The Lion's Head, The Forks and Dobbins Grade. **MJ**

**September 29-October 1:** Seneca Creek Backcountry, MNF Backpack Day 1: Arrive early if you like and car camp at primitive Spruce Knob Lake Campground. Day 2: Explore seldom - mentioned trails on the western flank of Allegheny Mountain before descending to camp below Seneca Falls. Day 3: Backpack up Seneca Creek, visiting falls and chutes. **MJ**

**September 30:** Cranberry Wilderness, Trail Maintenance. We'll be working again with the fine folks of the Gauley Ranger Station. Call or e-mail for details. **DQ**

**October 7-9:** Cranberry Backcountry. MNF Backpack Hike approximately 30 miles through this scenic area. **MJ**

**October 14 & 15:** Red Spruce Cone Collecting. A volunteer opportunity to collect red spruce cones for our red spruce ecosystem restoration project. **DS**

**October 19-26:** Highlands Conservancy's 41st Annual Fall Review. We'll be at the historic Cheat Mountain Club for a whole week! Outings, workshops, music, special speakers, and more. Stay tuned!

\*See contact information for the trip leaders on the next page



# MONONGAHELA FOREST HIKING GUIDE

## Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide

by Allen deHart & Bruce Sundquist

Published by the  
West Virginia  
Highlands Conservancy

### The 7th edition covers:

more than 200 trails for over 700 miles  
trail scenery, difficulty, condition, distance, elevation, ac-  
cess points, streams and skiing potential.

detailed topographic maps

over 50 photographs

5 wilderness Areas totaling 77,965 acres

700 miles of streams stocked with bass and trout

send \$14.95 plus \$3.00 shipping to:

**West Virginia Highlands Conservancy**

PO Box 306 Charleston, WV 25321

Or, visit our website at

**www.wvhighlands.org**

<<<< ! >>>>

**On the trail of an exciting new 8th Edition of the Hiking Guide**

(See Allen de Hart's story of his personal quest on page )

<<<< ! >>>>

## Compact Disc version of **Monongahela Na- tional Forest Hiking Guide**

WV Highlands Conservancy continues to bring its publications into the computer era with it latest innovation- the publication of the Electronic (CD) version of its famous Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide, **Allen Dehart, Bruce Sundquist**, 7th Edition, with maps and many other enhancements by WVHC contributor **Jim Solley**

This premier edition of MNF7, on computer disc, includes the text pages as they appear in the printed version of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition in an interactive pdf format. It also includes the following ancillary features, developed by a WVHC dedicated volunteer, and **not available anywhere else:**

- All pages and maps, or even a single page 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.
- Printable, full color, 24K scale topographic maps of the entire Allegheny Trail In the Monongahela National Forest
- Printable, full color, 24K scale topographic maps of many of the popular hiking areas, including Cranberry, Dolly Sods, Otter Creek and many more

### **Introductory free shipping & postage offer:**

All this is available to *Highlands Voice* readers for only \$20.00, including postage

To receive the latest in printable hiking trail descriptions and printable topographic trail maps send \$20.00 to:

Hiking Guide CD  
West Virginia Highlands Conservancy  
P.O. Box 306  
Charleston WV 25321



~~~~~  
~~~~~ **CALL FOR LEADERS** ~~~~~  
~~~~~

**AS YOU CAN SEE, WE DON'T HAVE MANY OUTINGS SCHEDULED FOR UPCOMING MONTHS. FALL IS A BEAUTIFUL SEASON FOR HIKING IN WEST VIRGINIA. PLEASE CONSIDER LEADING AN OUTING AND SHARING ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE PLACES ON THE MON WITH OTHERS. CONTACT DEE AT THE E-MAIL ADDRESS BELOW:**

**dee.quaranto@gmail.com**

~~~~~  
~~~~~

### **\* Trip Leaders:**

**BH:** Bob Handley (304) 497-2276; gbrbat@ntelos.net

**DG:** Don Gasper (304) 472-3704

**DQ:** Dee Quaranto (304) 296-3196; dee.quaranto@gmail.com

**DS:** Dave Saville (304) 284-9548; daves@labyrinth.net

**JM:** Julian Martin (304) 342-8989; martinjul@aol.com

**LG:** Larry Gibson (304) 586-3287; (304) 549-3287

**MJ:** Mike Juskelis (410) 439-4964; juskelis@cablespeed.com; see www.midatlantichikes.com for details and VA hikes not listed here

## Southern Group Meets in Big Draft Wilderness Area

by Harrison Chase (and Bob Handley)

The Southern Mon Wilderness Group moved outdoors August 6th for a hike into the proposed Big Draft Wilderness Area. Bob Handley led a group of 10 up Anthony Creek trail to the spot known as the Cat's Eye, a terrific swimming hole and picnic spot situated at a bend in Anthony Creek, with the cliffs of Gunpowder Ridge forming the northern backdrop. The round trip hike is about three miles.

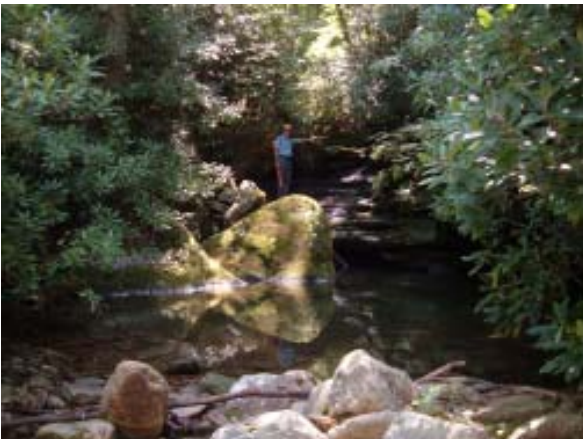
The terrain and ecology of the area is a great example of the wild forests of the Greenbrier Valley. Many tall trees create a shady canopy that was welcome on this hot August afternoon. The rhododendron was pretty thick at times, especially as some of us took a quick side trip up the drainage of Laurel Run, which feeds into Anthony Creek. The water was low but one could see where a nice section of waterfalls would be in wetter periods. Sandstone cliffs line this steep hollow as well.

The lower-elevation area is obviously well loved by locals and visitors, with obvious trails and campsites. However, one need only to venture a short way off the main trail to be in undisturbed woods.

After everyone had enough swimming, we convened our "business meeting" at the picnic table above the rocky beach. Bob and Beth talked about hiking with Congressman Rahall into the same Big Draft area last Friday. Plans were made to get a number of local photographers together for a Wilderness photo exhibit in Lewisburg. Look for more details from Beth in an upcoming issue of the Voice.

Thanks to everyone who came out. This was a great way to wrap up my involvement in the Southern Mon group. After all this talk, finally I got a chance to get out and see the place! - Truly a gem. I can see why Greenbrier and Pocahontas folks are so dedicated to seeing it protected.

\*\*\*\*\*



Dave Cowan stands near the top of a 12 foot waterfall on Laurel Creek in the proposed Big Draft Wilderness Area.

## Seneca Creek Trail Maintenance

by Dee Quaranto

On July 8th, a group of seven met up at the Seneca Creek trailhead and set off for a day of trail maintenance. Ed Lang, Recreation Technician for the Spruce Knob - Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area, was kind enough to spend his Saturday working with our volunteer crew, which included Dave Saville, Catherine Kelleher, Ed Phelps, Greg Rollins, myself, and Jason Rainville.

Ed Lang is a great guy who hails from Tennessee, and has been loving his work on the Monongahela National Forest for the last four years. I had a blast talking and working with him, and am really looking forward to our next trail maintenance adventure together. A veritable encyclopedia of the Mon, Dave told us about the recent history of Seneca Creek, and pointed out places where the trail had been washed away in the flood of 1985. In fact, he was part of the crew that repaired that damage and re-routed the trail.

Catherine, who demonstrated an uncanny ability to locate just the right rocks on our last trail maintenance outing, impressed everyone by bringing a tool called a McLeod. It has a blade like a hoe on one side and wide tapered teeth on the other. Originally developed for fighting forest fires, one side can be used to rake fire lines and the other to cut branches and sod. It proved to be equally appropriate for loosening, moving, shaping and compacting soil, rocks, and good old mud. Catherine (dubbed "The Tool" by Ed Phelps on this excursion) put her McLeod to good use as she showed us how it's done.

The light showers that punctuated the day lasted long enough to cool us off, but not long enough to dampen our spirits. The trail surface was in pretty good shape and flanked by lots of young red spruce for much of the way. (I like to be able to look around while I'm hiking and really like a tread I can take my eyes off long enough to appreciate my surroundings. Seneca Creek trail is just my speed. Cleaning out the water bars will help prevent further erosion and keep the surface inviting for those who want to look at something other than their feet when out in the woods.) We spent an enjoyable few hours cleaning up water bars as we followed the creek downstream on the (roughly) three-mile stretch between the trailhead at FR 112 and Judy Springs campground. If you haven't been there, you need to go check it out. There's a large group campground on the creek just below the spring. It's really a lovely spot.

Dave Saville regales hikers in the Sinks of Gandy with tales of other memorable excursions into the magical caverns.



(Seneca Creek Trail cont'd)

The Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area was established by Congress in 1965. The Seneca Creek area was designated as a semi-primitive area, non-motorized area in the 1986 forest management plan, and has been identified as a prime Wilderness candidate in the current Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for the Monongahela National Forest. One visit there will convince you that we need to keep it wild.

Our next scheduled trail maintenance outing will take place on the Cranberry Wilderness. E-mail [dee.quaranto@gmail.com](mailto:dee.quaranto@gmail.com) or call (304) 296-3196 for details.

### Save These Dates

Sept. 30 - Oct. 1, 2006

WV Environmental Council's Annual Fall Conference will be held near Morgantown, at Chestnut Ridge Regional Park, adjacent to Coopers Rock State Forest.

Join environmentalists from all over WV in an atmosphere of learning, sharing, organizing and planning for future action. Programs & Speakers welcome. Plenty of nice on-site lodging and nearby motels, plus abundant recreation possibilities.

A few hardy volunteers are needed for all or part of the weekend. Further details soon to follow. Inquiries: [wyro@appalight.com](mailto:wyro@appalight.com) or [deniseap@earthlink.net](mailto:deniseap@earthlink.net)

visit us at [www.wvecouncil.org](http://www.wvecouncil.org)

## SINKS OF GANDY...A MEANDERING EXPLORATION

by Ann Devine-King

Back in time when I was a young, new transplant to West Virginia, my husband and I visited a magical place called the Sinks of Gandy: a place of mountains, wide green pasturelands, and a cavern that swallows Gandy Creek. We explored only the entrance to the cavern, and left feeling that we had witnessed West Virginia's finest and it felt like home.

Years later I wasn't sure how to get back to that place, so I jumped at the chance to join a beginner's spelunking trip, lead by Dave Saville, through the Sinks of Gandy. All that was needed was a hard hat and three light sources.

A group met at Spruce Knob Lake parking lot: kindred souls with a variety of caving helmets, head lamps, bicycle helmets, duct tape applications and one miner's calcium carbide head lamp. Among the participants were familiar faces from hikes at Dolly Sods (Jim Kirk and Anita Ray), Otter Creek (Tim Hughes) and many new faces. Surprisingly, three folks from Michigan drove down for the trip. Two joined the WV Highlands Conservancy after picking up a "Voice" at the Seneca Rocks Visitor Center years earlier.

From the parking lot we caravanned 3.8 miles, rounded a sharp bend to the right and pulled over to park. There it was, just as I remembered, pastoral peacefulness high in the mountains, hiding a secret: the Sinks of Gandy.

Here Gandy Creek travels 1.54 miles through a limestone cavern under Yokum Knob. The Teter Family owns the farm at the upstream entrance and the Tinglers own the exit. Both are extremely generous in allowing access to the cave. Single file, we climbed over the heavy board gate and walked about a thousand yards until we came upon Gandy Creek and the upstream entrance. Excitement rose as we followed Dave and entered the cave, turning on our lights. Leaving sun and 90 plus degree temperatures, the moist, cool 55-60 degree cave air was refreshing, not chilling. The hollow of the cavern and the magnification of the stream and drips of water changed the sound of our voices.

The ceiling was high, allowing us to stand vertical most of the time. Following the stream, we picked our way along the rocks and ledges. At times we slogged through ankle- to calf-deep water. The streambed was sandy with a mix of submerged rocks. People with water shoes and good traction seemed to fare the best. Although most rocks provided traction,

there were occasional slippery spots, especially from wet clay. We had the luxury of following the person in front of us, so deciding which way to go was easy. Wrong turns could be made but the creek remained an orienting landmark. There was comfort in the presence of others and the mood was light and cheerful. (Going through the cave alone would be a completely different experience.) Reaching a large vestibule, we waited for everyone to arrive and then turned off all lights to appreciate the cave darkness. Human sounds persisted so we didn't experience unadulterated cave noises, but the human noises were upbeat.

I would rate the difficulty as easy but the risk for injury moderate: one could slip or get an ankle caught. Dave recounted a spot where, on a previous trip, a spelunker slipped and dislocated his elbow. Fortunately, an ER doctor was on hand to set it correctly. In another recollection, a fellow slipped from a clay escarpment and landed in deep water that was over his head but was unharmed.

Near the end of the hike was a large deep pool of water. We had the choice of using the "wet exit" straight ahead or the "dry exit" to the right. We choose the right and soon entered the largest vestibule of the cave. Shortly after, we exited the cave, approximately one hour after entering.

Dave was a good guide, pointing out interesting features like stalactites and the history of the cave. He entertained us with stories of naked spelunkers and rubber ducky rides.

After resting briefly, we proceeded up the hill onto Yokum Knob and sat under the shade of a large tree to take in the panoramic view and share a few thoughts. Feeling rested, we walked back toward the cars and about half the group went on to explore the entrance of "Stillhouse" Cave, where moonshine used to be made. The cave started after a short descent from the sharp bend in the road. About 10 of us entered this smaller cave. Once in, Dave put out the invitation for volunteers to explore the cave and find the exit about 20 minutes away. "Just stay to the right", or was it left? There would be substantial crawling and intimacy with mud. Three took the bait; Jim from Cabell County, Jane from Buckhannon, and Lee with the calcium carbide head lamp from Brandywine. The three took off; commando crawling while the rest of us crawled out. Half an hour later turned into one hour, and more. Most people had left while a few of us remained, holding vigil at the Stillhouse exit. Finally, just as Dave was about to crawl in the

entrance for a search, the three emerged in front of him. They were smiling, covered in mud and in good spirits, although I thought I heard something about sore knees. Consensus was that it was a good experience even though they never found the exit.

That ended the day's adventures. Overall, a very nice, unique experience, in West Virginia's finest, shared with good people. Great idea Dave!



### WVWC Outreach Coordinator Harrison Case Moves On to Law School

*Following is a message from Harrison, who has left his position with the West Virginia Wilderness Campaign to earn a law degree at West Virginia University. There he plans on continuing his contributions to the cause by joining forces with the Environmental Law Caucus. We thank Harrison for all his work on behalf of our beloved Monongahela National Forest and wish him the best in his academic pursuits and future career.*

Friends,

It has been a great year working with all of you on the Wilderness Campaign. I'm sorry to have to leave when everything looks so positive, but I'll be keeping a close eye on your progress and look forward to seeing those new "Wilderness Area" signs go up all over the state next year!

I'd like you to know that this campaign really exceeded my expectations as a professional, positive, enthusiastic group with a clear goal and a great plan for making it a reality. Volunteers and staff, you all have created something great for my state and I can't thank you enough.

While I might be knee-deep in law school work and a bit invisible for a while, please feel free to get in touch with me if you need anything or just to chat; I'll miss working with such a terrific bunch of folks.

Yours,  
Harrison Case  
harrisonpaulcase@verizon.net



*The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy  
presents it's*

**41<sup>st</sup> annual  
Fall Review  
at  
Cheat Mountain  
Club**

**October 19-26, 2006**

*For over 100 years known as a great place for hunting, fishing and wilderness adventure, the Cheat Mountain Club is a special retreat from the outside world - a gracious, quiet, comfortable lodge that fosters contemplation, good talk, and recreational enjoyment in a place of spectacular natural beauty.*

*This year we will again dedicate an entire week to our 41<sup>st</sup> annual Fall Review. In the heart of it all, on Cheat Mountain, on the shores of the Shavers Fork of the Cheat River, we'll have workshops, art, lectures, outings, service projects, dignitaries, music, and a whole lot of fun. Details are still being worked out, but mark your calendar now! Contact Dave Saville for more information and reservations.*

*[daves@labyrinth.net](mailto:daves@labyrinth.net) or 304-284-9548*

### HATS

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has two models of caps for sale.

One is khaki and the pre-curved visor is forest green. The front of the cap has West Virginia Highlands Conservancy in gold above We [heart] Mountains. The heart is red; and lettering is black.

The other model is tan with a muted green pre-curved visor. The front sports the lovely, in color, logo that appears on the VOICE masthead. Beside the logo is "West Virginia Highlands Conservancy" in green. The lower back of the hat has the We [heart] Mountains slogan.

Pictures of both appear on our website [www.wvhighlands.org](http://www.wvhighlands.org). Both are soft twill, unstructured, low profile with sewn eyelets, cloth strap with tri-glide buckle closure. Cost is \$12 by mail. Make check payable to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and send to Julian Martin, P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321-0306

### T- SHIRTS

White, heavy cotton T-shirts with the I [heart] Mountains slogan on the front. The lettering is blue and the heart is red. "West Virginia Highlands Conservancy" in smaller blue letters is included below the slogan.

Sizes: S, M, L and XL.

**Short sleeve** model is \$10 total by mail;

**Long sleeve** is \$15.

Send sizes wanted and check payable to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, attention Julian Martin, WVHC, P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321-0306.

~~ a final note from your interim editor ~~

If you have any comments to offer about this issue of the VOICE or if you have articles, prose, poetry, letters to submit, send them to [clank@hughes.net](mailto:clank@hughes.net)