

Friends of Blackwater Canyon

June 2005

501 Elizabeth Street Room 3, Charleston, WV 25311 • 304-345-7663 • www.saveblackwater.org • info@saveblackwater.org

Friends of Blackwater and the Wilderness Society submit joint scoping letter



On May 31, Friends of Blackwater and The Wilderness Society submitted extensive comments to the Forest Service on the scope of the Blackwater Trail study and questioned the legal basis of AWP's request. The letter was also signed by the WV Rivers Coalition, the WV Environmental Council, the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, the WV Chapter of the Sierra Club, and the WV Highlands Conservancy. We told the Forest Service to address the following:

1. Research on endangered species along the Trail and on lands that border the Trail — where a logging road and intended land use changes to develop condominiums sites will alter critical habitat. More endangered species have been found in the area, including additional West Virginia flying squirrels, Cheat Mountain salamanders, and Indiana bats raising young in the forests in the Blackwater drainage.

2. Study cultural resources. New information is available from the West Virginia Division of Highways on the cultural resources in their Blackwater Trail Phase I study, published in May of 2003 which states that the trail is a historically protected site.

3. De-watering of the Blackwater River from a newly permitted mine should be studied. The reduction will make the River more vulnerable to degradation from sediment from road building and development in an area

Smokey the Bear, don't cut out the heart of Blackwater Canyon!!

Allegheny Wood Products, a timber company owned by John Crites, wants to turn the beautiful, world-class Blackwater Canyon Trail — *located on our public National Forest land* — into a commercial logging road and an access road to AWP's planned condominiums.

Our United States Forest Service (yes, Smokey the Bear and gang) owns the land that AWP wants for its commercial logging road. Over ten thousand people so far have told the Forest Service that AWP's request is a bad idea. Now, the Forest Service is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) study of AWP's plan; with some results likely in the fall of 2005.

If you are one of more than 10,000 commenters so far to the Forest Service, THANK YOU!! Without you, we never would have even seen an EIS study.

Now the real work begins!

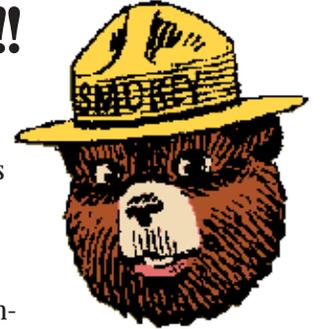
In the coming months, we must show *all* of our public officials the horror that we feel at AWP's plan to despoil West

already prone to erosion and slippage.

4. AWP's claim that they must have access to the trail under ANILCA must be studied. Our lawyers say this law does not apply because the AWP property is not surrounded by federal land. See full comment letter at our website, saveblackwater.org.

We will let you know when the EIS Draft Alternative Plans for the Blackwater Canyon Trail are published.

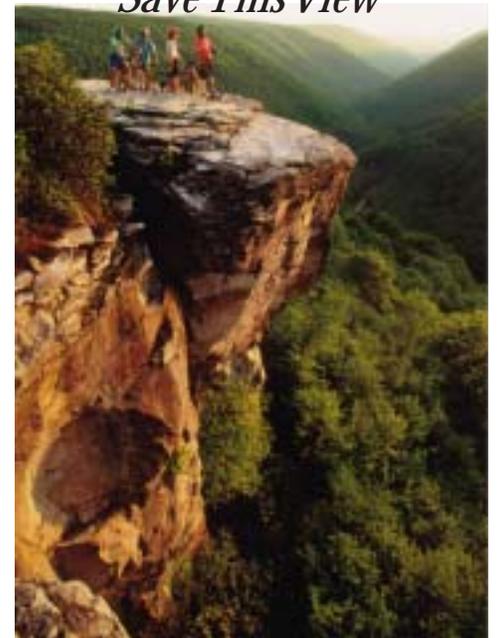
Virginia's "natural treasure" (that's how Senator Robert C. Byrd described the Blackwater Canyon.)



We must demand that our public officials speak out, and tell the Forest Service not to destroy the natural integrity of the Blackwater Canyon.

Go to our website, saveblackwater.org, and follow our mailings and e-mails throughout the coming summer, to learn how you can *make your voice heard* on these important issues.

Save This View



Inside:

Director's Update	2	North Fork Watershed News	4	The Economics of National Parks	8	Mountain Trail Rides	10
Tribute to Joseph Johnson	2	Clifford Play Draws Large Crowd	4	Bridge and Boardwalk for State Park	8	In Memory	10
Diane Baisden and Sam Jinks	3	Keep Dolly Sods Wild News Briefs	5	IMBA and National Parks Agree	8	Charleston Fish Fry	11
Canyon Kids Club Winner	3	Cheat Canyon Update	5	Spruce Country Signs of Summer	9	Get Away to the Brookside Inn	12
Legislative Update	3	Summer Calendar of Events	6,7	Davis: My Home Town	9	Membership Continues	12

Director's Update

Dear Friends,

For those of you new to the Blackwater Trail, it is a wonderful 10-mile-long hike in the heart of the Canyon — starting at an elevation of 3,000 feet in Thomas, and dropping to 2,000 feet at Hendricks, where the Blackwater enters the Dry Fork. Everywhere along the Trail—a wide, grassy path—there is water, with the river rushing below and small tributaries like Tub Run, Big Run, and Maple Run forming waterfalls and rivulets above, under, and below the Trail.

Red spruce and hemlocks along the Trail are home to the endangered West Virginia flying squirrel and Cheat Mountain salamander. Dramatic stone archways act as culverts under the Trail, and remind us that this was once the steepest railroad grade in the East. This Trail contains all that we love about the



The Blackwater Trail

Canyon. Remote from civilization we find peace and tranquility and feel at one with nature — and blessed to live in a country where the natural world is still revered.

Is this special place going to be taken from us? Will bulldozers come and cut a wide raw swath of dirt and rock knocking down the beautiful evergreens and maples and poplars and cherries that line the Trail — on our public land — so that AWP's log trucks can haul timber out of our Canyon?

Will we let another precious part of our West Virginia heritage be destroyed and shipped overseas? We can't let this happen!! Please send your letter to the Forest Service and the Governor — with a copy to us — letting them know how much you love Blackwater Canyon.

Write to **Bill Shields, Monongahela NE, 200 Sycamore Street, Elkins, WV 26241** and **Governor Joe Manchin at 1900 Kanawha Boulevard E, Charleston, WV 25305.**

Judith S. Rodd, Executive Director



In memory of Joseph "Joey" Johnson by fellow AmeriCorps members Linda Reeves, Cindy Phillips, Kip Ambro, Charles Barker, Amy Bonfiglio, Roxanne Hofer, Rod Newton, Holly Smith, Ellen Voss, and AmeriCorps advisors Eleanor Palko and Matt Quattro.

Tribute to Joseph Johnson

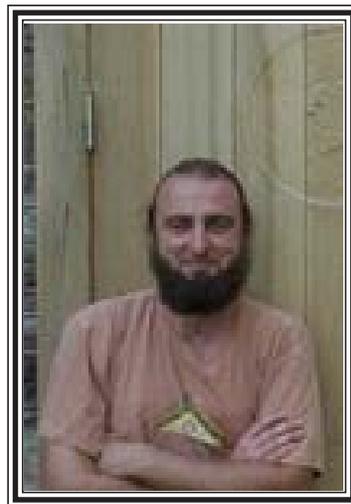
Joseph "Joey" Johnson was one of 10 members of our AmeriCorps team. Together, in 2000 and 2001, we worked on community projects in Tucker and Randolph Counties. It was a privilege knowing Joseph and working with him. His kindness, creativity and generosity of spirit inspired us.

After the initiation ceremony into the AmeriCorps program in Charleston, Joseph asked us to come with him to the rotunda area of the Capital Building. There, much to our surprise and delight he walked to the center of the rotunda and began playing a beautiful melody on a wooden flute he had made. The acoustics were incredible and we felt honored to be a part of something so special. It was an amazing way to start our wonderful year of working together.

Joseph was strongly connected to the natural world: its birds and trees, walks along mountain trails, observing and

learning Nature's nuances and subtleties. This deep reverence for Nature reflected a humanity beyond his years. And his smile....his smile would light up a room and just make the day go better.

We miss you, Joey.



1968-2001



**Above the canyon walls
Birds soaring the blue skies
We think of him.**

Joey Johnson at Lindy Point atop the Blackwater Canyon

Photo by Linda Reeves

Board of Directors

Judy Rodd, President
Paul Hill, Vice President
Jeannie Dalporto, Secretary
Linda Cooper, Treasurer
Sandy Fisher
Sheila McEntee

Advisory Board

Annie Dillard
Larry Groce
Jason Halbert
David Hammer, Esq.
Alan Karlin, Esq.
Patrick McGinley, Esq.
Deborah McHenry, Esq.
J. Lawrence Smith
Rafe Pomerance
Joe Rieffenberger
Steve White, Esq.
Christopher Wood

Staff

Judy Rodd, Director
John Brown
Janel Ferron
Valerie Little
Emily Smaargo

Our Volunteers

The King and Queen of Tucker County Recreation: Diane Baisden and Sam Jinks

If you're not quite sure how to begin enjoying the exquisite beauty, adventure, and health of the highlands of West Virginia, there's only one place to start: Highland Scene Tours. Owners Sam Jinks and Diane Baisden have been sharing their love of the outdoors with visitors, and expanding their business, for ten years.

Highland Scene Tours offers mountain bike rentals, kayak rentals, snowshoe and cross country ski rentals, shuttle service, nature/ecology tours, and overnight biking trips. They book multi-day packages that include biking, whitewater rafting, kayaking and horseback riding. Highland Inn and Spa offers lodging, exercise classes and four types of massage.

Both Sam Jinks and Diane Baisden have traveled long roads to be where they are today. Sam, originally from Texas, had a career in the navy that took him all over the world. He spent time in all parts of the U.S. and in Japan, Korea and Kuwait. Sam occasionally worked at recreation facilities on military bases, which provided some of the background he would need to run an outfitting business.

A Mingo County native, Diane worked as a schoolteacher for the Department of Defense. The two met while stationed in Edzell, Scotland, and soon after moved to West Virginia.

Diane had spent time in Canaan Valley, and always felt that there was something special about the area. When asked about the origin of Highland Scene Tours, Diane recalls her first impressions of the Canaan Valley. "It felt so healthy here. I wanted to use that healthy feeling and share it with other people." Diane began work as a health consultant for Tucker and Randolph county schools. At the same time, she attended graduate school in the field of Community Health Promotions.



Work as a health consultant ultimately lead to the purchase of a few mountain bikes. Today, ten years later, Highland Scene Tours and Highland Inn and Spa have grown to offer many more services: cheery accommodations, exercise and Yoga classes, massage therapy, and popular outdoor adventures like mountain biking, flat-water kayaking, back-country hiking, and much more.

Sam and Diane are also active on the Davis/Thomas Business Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, the West Virginia Ecotourism Association, and the Allegheny Highland Trail board.

Sam and Diane opened their new outfitter store on Front Street in Thomas in May. They will have Friends of Blackwater t-shirts and posters for sale. We are very excited at this terrific opportunity to have the Friends of Blackwater message in a high-traffic area of Tucker County. For information on tour packages and lodging, call 1-877-223-5388 or visit their website, www.highlandscenetours.com.



2005 Legislation

The staff, board of directors, and advisory members of Friends of Blackwater wish to thank Senator John Yoder and Delegate Sharon Spencer for introducing Senate and House legislation that called for a feasibility study of a national park in the Allegheny Highlands of West Virginia.



Congratulations to Andrew Hannah of Cross Lanes, winner of our Earth Day drawing. Andrew won Vinny-a 17-inch toy flying squirrel.

Visit www.saveblackwater.org for ecological fun and games.

North Fork Watershed Project News

North Fork's future treatment options discussed in April

Cleanup of the Coketon/Kempton mine pool, which affects both the North Fork of the Blackwater River and the Potomac River, is drawing attention from the scientific community in Maryland, West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

At an April 8 meeting in Morgantown, West Virginia, twenty-four people representing the U.S. Department of Energy, Maryland Department Bureau of Mines, Maryland Abandoned Mine Lands, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Geography, Office of Surface Mining, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, National Mine Land Reclamation Center, West Virginia University, Friends of Blackwater, Friends of Deckers Creek, Down Stream Strategies, Maryland's Geospatial Research Group, and Western Maryland RC&D, met at the National Research Center for Coal and Energy.

The meeting focused on Brownfields Assessment and an evaluation of techniques for addressing sources of acid mine drainage in the North Fork area. Some possible solutions discussed were grouting, limestone sand, steel slag, passive or active systems, and kiln dust. Most of these are techniques for decreasing the acidity in the North Fork, by adding alkalinity.

Attendees planned to review treatment ideas that were brought forward, evaluate treatment systems, and locate monies for these efforts. The next meeting is scheduled for July 22.



Town Creek Grant

The Town Creek Foundation recently awarded a major grant to Friends of Blackwater for the North Fork Watershed Mine Pool Project, to educate the public about the underground polluted water degrading the North Fork of the Blackwater River and North Branch of the Potomac River.

Welcome OSM/VISTA volunteer - Janel Farron!



Janel was raised in Traverse City, MI, where she enjoyed the northern hardwoods of Michigan and its plentiful great lakes. She recently received a degree from Michigan State University in anthropology and environmental science. Janel just finished teaching outdoor education at Camp Hayo-Went-Ha, in Central Lake, Michigan. Janel has always loved water, so she is excited to begin grassroots work at the watershed level.

As an outdoor enthusiast, Janel has lead young women on both backpacking and canoeing trips across Michigan, Canada,

and Alaska. Her impeccable canoeing and kayaking skills should come in handy here on the rivers of West Virginia. When not escaping to the woods, Janel enjoys the sweet taste of local honey, reading, and swimming.

Janel will be working in the community to promote understanding of the threats facing the North Fork of the Blackwater River, and coordinating environmental restoration projects.

Janel will be trained by the North Fork Watershed's first project director, Emily Samargo.

Tucker County Blackwater Canyon case comes alive Carrie Williams/J. R. Clifford play draws large crowd!



About 300 people turned out for the re-enactment of *Williams v. Board of Education* at the Tucker County Courthouse in Parsons.

Photo reprinted with permission from The Parsons Advocate

Taking Action

Keep Dolly Sods Wild News Briefs

■ Citizen meetings in Franklin, West Virginia (Pendleton County) and Monterey, Virginia, drew over 500 people to state their objections to two proposed wind turbine projects along Jack Mountain. The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources fears that the projects will kill endangered Virginia Big-eared bats, which live in caves nearby. Six thousand acres of land for the giant turbines is owned by John Crites of Allegheny Wood Products. John Crites bought land in the Cheat Canyon and the Blackwater Canyon, just before they were slated to be protected as public land. Crites is also involved with US Windforce's industrial wind project near Mt. Storm in Tucker County. Officials in Pendleton County threatened to use eminent domain to "take" land from local farmers for the Jack Mountain project.

■ The Backbone Mountain and Meyersdale industrial wind projects owned by Florida Power and Light again killed record numbers of bats in 2004. After correcting for bats removed by scavengers or missed by searchers, the average number of fatalities at the two locations is estimated between 1,764 and 2,900 for the six-week period. Bat Conservation International President Merlin Tuttle said, "If we start killing these thousands of bats that these data predict, that's going to put a heck of a dent in the green image of wind power." For a summary of a report on the bat mortality study, go to www.batcon.org/wind/BWEC2004Reportsummary.pdf

■ The West Virginia Public Service Commission (PSC) has released siting guidelines for wholesale energy generating facilities including industrial wind projects. Check our website (www.saveblackwater.org) for the full Guidelines. The PSC chose not to

wait for information from studies by General Accountability Office and the National Academy of Science on wind regulation and siting. The guidelines do not adequately protect viewsheds from public land and do not require the two years of bird and bat studies recommended by the Fish and Wildlife Service.



■ The wind industry filed objections to the PSC siting standards on noise. Wind industry representatives fear that new noise regulations will prevent windfarms from being built in West Virginia.

■ Tucker County Commissioners have complained that the taxes paid by Florida Power and Light's Backbone Mountain Project are too low. At the same time, they admitted that they worked with the WV Legislature to get taxes lowered. Legislation was introduced by Delegate Harold Michael of Hardy County, who received significant campaign contributions from the owners of US Windforce.

Cheat Canyon Update

■ On April 9, 2005, the West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Cheat Lake Environment and Recreation Association, and Friends of Blackwater filed a lawsuit against Allegheny Wood Product for logging in endangered species habitat in the Cheat Canyon. AWP stopped logging on April 15. From photos taken during a flyover by Southwings, Inc., it appears that many roads have been cut and trees logged out in environmentally sensitive areas of the Cheat Canyon Gorge. The plaintiffs are working to see that no further degradation to endangered species habitat occurs.

■ Allegheny Wood Products is planning to log the Viewshed property — across from Coopers Rock State Forest — in the near future. This land is a public wildlife management area. It is also home to the endangered flat-spined three toothed land snail. The West Virginia DNR is in charge of this property. Please contact the DNR Director Frank Jezioro and Governor Manchin to let them know how you feel about these logging projects. Addresses: 1900 Kanawha Boulevard, Charleston WV 25305.



Cheat Canyon logging in endangered species habitat



Photo taken May 9, 2005 by Southwings

Summer Calendar of Events

JUNE

All month

Show Featuring Painter Alain Kiény - Thomas. Paintings by Parsons artist Alain Kiény are now on display at the MountainMade Artisan Gallery.

17 - 19 WV Days Celebration - Canaan Valley State Park. Celebrate the state's birthday this weekend. Civil War reenactments throughout the weekend including skirmishes and mock campsites. Local WV artist and crafters will be on hand, live entertainment, food and more.

17-19 Racefest III - Timberline. Motor bike and ATV races. Special events for all participants and visitors alike including food and music. Enjoy the first of the summer's wine tasting festivals all day June 18th featuring West Virginia's vineyards.

17 - 19 Highland Sky Ultra Run
Canaan Valley State Park. One of the toughest Ultra Run competitions in the East covering 40 miles of mountain terrain. Presented by the WV Mountain Trail Runners Org. For info: www.wvmtr.org

18 - 19 Chair Seat Weaving Hickory Bark with Tom Lynch - Thomas Educational Center 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Students will learn how to harvest hickory bark from the tree and prepare it to weave a chair or stool bottom. Material fee \$40 and up depending on size of project. Two sizes of foot stools (\$30. - 45.) will be available for sale for those do not have a stool or chair to weave on. For more info call: 304-463-3376.

18 Training for New Volunteers - Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. 10 am - 2:30 pm, at the Refuge Visitor Center. This is the first part of our training for new volunteers. We meet indoors this day. Later, we will pair you with an experienced volunteer to learn more. Follow-up Refuge tour is scheduled for June 29th, all day.

19 Father's Day Golf Scramble - Canaan Valley State Park. Nine hole (2-man) parent/child golf scramble. Open to all ages.

24-26 Blue Grass Festival - Timberline. Afternoon and evening blue grass music. Traditional Mountain food and evening entertainment.

27 CVR Pro-Am Golf Tournament
Canaan Valley State Park

JULY

1-3 Mountaineer Days - Thomas. Family oriented-patriotic celebration. All day events including Annual Homecoming with music, fireworks, kids games, craft vendors, parade, and food.

2 Birds in Their Habitat - Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. 7 am, meet at the Refuge Visitor Center. Explore the places where birds live.

4 Independence Day Golf Scramble -Canaan Valley State Park.

23 Family Fun Day - Blackwater Falls State Park. Come to the Nature and Recreation Center for games, crafts and lots of fun. Also, local fire departments will display their equipment and give you a close-up view of fire and rescue equipment.

9 Mid-Summer Walk Between the Parks - Eight mile hike between Blackwater Falls State Park and Canaan Valley State Park. Shuttle service provided. Bring your own snacks and water. Registration required, for further information call 800-622-4121 ext. 2677.

10 Blackwater Bikes WV State Championship Races - Davis. Blackwater Bikes WV State Championship Point Series Race & Canaan Mountain Series Event www.blackwaterbikes.com.

10-15 Augusta Heritage Cajun & Guitar Week - Elkins.

15-17 Frontier Weekend - Timberline. Trail rides, barbecue, square dancing, western & mountain music.

16 - 17 Canaan Cup Golf Tourney
Canaan Valley State Park. Join us for the inaugural 2 day event, 36 holes (2 man teams). Play 18 holes alternate shot one day / 18 holes best ball on day2.

16 Fence Removal Project - Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Ever see an animal tangled up in old fencing? Help us remove these hazards to wildlife on the Refuge.

17-22 Augusta Heritage Blues & Swing Week - Elkins.

22-23 Timberline Mountain & Country Music Festival - Timberline. Enjoy the sounds of WV's rich musical heritage presented by Roy Scott, legendary star of the world famous WWVA Jamboree. All you can eat crab feast.

24-23 Beverly Days
Beverly. Historic home & museum tours. Craft sales, a pageant and parade. 304-636-5032.

24-29 Augusta Heritage Irish Week - Elkins.

31 - August 5 Augusta Heritage Bluegrass & Family Week - Elkins.

31 - August 6 Theatre Production Workshop
Jr. High/High School YMCA Camp Horseshoe. Voices From the Earth presents Good Time Radio Show. Call 301-334-6273 for details.

AUGUST

5-6 Frontier Weekend

Timberline. Go back in time for a weekend in the old West with authentic cow camp and a chuck wagon complete with all the appropriate gear. Witness a live shoot out on horseback just behind Timberline Ski Lodge. Also enjoy trail rides, barbecue, square dancing, old western and mountain music, live by the Saddle Tramps. Scenic lift rides on Saturday and Sunday.

6 Mid Summer Walk Between the Parks - Eight mile hike between Blackwater Falls State Park and Canaan Valley State Park. Shuttle service provided. Bring your own snacks and water. Registration required, for further information call 800-622-4121 ext. 2677.

6 Birds and Their Young - Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. 7 am, meet at the Refuge Visitor Center. Many young birds are out of their nest, and on their way to independence by this time.

6 Elkins YMCA Race - Elkins. 5K Run, 3K Walk on the RailTrail just outside Elkins. 304-636-4515, sidneygillispie@hotmail.net.

6 - 7 The Timber Crit/Cabin Mtn Classic
Canaan Valley. XCcountry Mountain Biking. Contact: Blackwater Bikes 304-259-5286, info@blackwaterbikes.com.

7 Timberline Four Seasons Resort XC MTB Race - Timberline Four Seasons Resort XC MTB Race. 2005 WVMBA Point Series and Canaan Mountain Series. Registration begins at 7am on Sunday at Timberline Resort or you may pre-register at Blackwater Bikes on Saturday. \$30 for WVMBA members, \$35 for non-members, kids and Boy Scouts free. Award ceremony is at 4pm, and refreshments will be available at the finish line for participants and paying guests. 304-259-5286, info@blackwaterbikes.com.

Ready for a summer adventure?
Visit **Highland Scene Tours** at their new location on Front Street in Thomas. Rent bikes or book back-country hiking, kayaking and whitewater trips! Call 877-223-5388 www.highlandscenetours.com





*Ron and Karen Owens taking in the beauty of the Blackwater Canyon.
Photo by Jeff Owens*

7 -14 Augusta Heritage Old-Time, Vocal, & Dance Week - Elkins.

12-14 Augusta Heritage Festival - Elkins. The Augusta Heritage Festival comes at the end of the summer five-week session of Augusta Heritage Center Workshops and presents a popular juried craft fair featuring Appalachian region crafts-people, a full day of musical entertainment, juried craft demonstrations, and dancing, topped off with an evening concert. The Festival is held in Elkins City Park and on the campus of Davis and Elkins College and is free to the public. There is an admission charge for the August 13 Saturday evening concert.

13 Mountain Arts & Bluegrass Festival - Canaan Valley State Park. Live bluegrass music played throughout the day, local artisans displaying their authentic WV crafts. An evening square dance at the outdoor pavilion will wrap up the days activities.

19-21 Racefest IV "Timberline 50" - Timberline. Motor bike and ATV races. Special events for all participants and visitors alike including food and entertainment.

20 Night Flight Golf Tournament Canaan Valley State Park. Nine holes by day / Nine holes by night. Glow in the dark ball provided. Bring your own 2 man team.

23-27 Tucker County Fair - Parsons. Hometown fair including Carnival rides, good music, great food, livestock competitions and much more. Enjoy this family event in the splendor of the high mountains. 304-478-3820.

24 Conifer Forest Restoration - Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Join Refuge staff in planting spruce and balsam trees to restore and grow these native woodlands.

SEPTEMBER

3-5 Hick Festival
Tucker County 4-H Camp Kidd near Parsons. A weekend of fun activities and entertainment. Wood chopping/logging events, husband and wife calling contest, Queen Laurel pageant, gospel singing, coon chase, childrens' activities, horseshoe, cakewalk and more!! Famous open-pit chicken barbeque and ox roast, corn dogs, homemade applebutter, crafts and various other activities. 800-782-2775.

20-23 Septemberfest Senior Fling - Blackwater Falls State Park. 18th Annual Septemberfest Senior Fling at Blackwater Falls. This event offers a variety of programs, tours, and activities planned especially for people 50 years of age and older. Reservation fee required.

24-26 Leaf Peeper's Festival - Workshops, crafts, food, music, photo contest, hiking, biking all weekend throughout Davis, Thomas, and Canaan Valley area. For more information and brochures contact Tucker County Convention and Visitors Bureau. PO Box 565, Davis, WV 26260 1.800.782.2775 Fax: 304.259.4210.

OCTOBER

7-9 Astronomy Weekend - Blackwater Falls State Park. Workshops, keynote speakers and star parties are the main activities at this event with the novice and advanced amateur astronomers in mind.



Purple Fiddle Mountain Music Weekends

Every Friday, Saturday and Sunday will be booked with quality live music.



June

- 18 Steppin' In It
- 19 Gigi Dover
- 22 Rushad Eggleston & his Wild Band of Snee
- 24 Bluelight Special
- 25 Old School Freight Train
- 26 Biscuit Burners



July

- 1 Flyin' Blind Bluegrass
- 3 Fragment
- 4 The Ginsangers
- 8 Rachel Eddy & the Mo'town Rounders
- 9 Big Hillbilly Bluegrass
- 15 Halftime String Band
- 16 Greensky Bluegrass
- 17 The Avett Brothers
- 22 High Ground Bluegrass Band
- 23 Demolition String Band
- 25 Uncle Earl
- 30 Tony Trischka



August

- 6 Steep Canyon Rangers
- 12 Two High String Band
- 13 Deep River Band
- 20 The Chris Sharp and David Long Band
- 21 Meridian

Schedule is subject to change.
Call for updates: 304-463-4040
The Purple Fiddle Coffeehouse
21 East Avenue Thomas, WV 26292
purplefiddle@citlink.net

Important contact information:

Tucker County Convention and Visitors Bureau www.canaanvalley.org

Timberline Resort
800-766-9464 www.timberlineresort.com

Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge
866-3858

Blackwater Falls State Park
800-225-5982 www.blackwaterfalls.com

Augusta Heritage Festival
304-637-1209 www.augustaheritage.com

Thomas Education Center
304-463-3376

Mountain Made
877-686-6233 www.mountainmade.com

THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF PUBLIC LAND AND A NATIONAL PARK

Part I - Property Taxes

A large portion (about 41%) of the land in Tucker County is public land, owned by the state and federal governments. The Monongahela National Forest consists of 101,360 acres, the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge protects 15,235 acres, and West Virginia state parks (Canaan Valley, Blackwater Falls, and Fairfax Stone State Parks) comprise 8,479 acres.

State government land is exempt from property taxation. Tucker County receives nothing from the state for the state park land located within the county. However state-owned lodges do pay a hotel-motel tax to the county. For fiscal year 2001-2002, Tucker County realized \$301,768 from hotel-motel taxes.

Most private acreage in Tucker County is undeveloped timberland or farmland. Two tax structures reduce local property tax liability for this private land. Both structures generate substantially less tax revenue than is received from federally managed land. Managed timberland is taxed at 60% of the appraised value and is taxed at a rate of \$0.63 to \$1.89 per acre. If all federal land in Tucker County was taxed as managed private timberland, it would generate \$78,797.25 to \$236,391.75 (depending on which grade was assigned) — only half as much as it currently generates under federal management.

The second tax alternative is the farmland assessment. It is used to promote the preservation of farmland and “allows agricultural lands to be appraised at their use values rather than at their market values. This results in lower assessment levels and, consequently, lower tax bills for farmers.” It assesses farmland on the basis of its value of farmland rather than on its actual market value. It yields less revenue per

acre than current federal payments. The federal government has established several reimbursement programs for paying property taxes. The US Forest Service pays money under two programs: Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) and the 25% Fund or Stabilized Payments. In 2004 the Forest Service paid Tucker County \$141,429 in PILOT payments, \$209,567 in 25% Fund payments for a total of \$350,996. This averages out

to \$3.46 per acre. The total amount of money that the

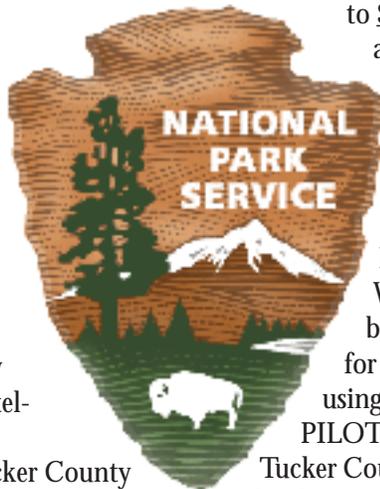
Forest Service has paid to West Virginia counties for federal land has tripled since 1985.

The Department of Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reimburses local governments for national wildlife refuges using a different system than PILOT or the 25% Fund.

Tucker County receives payments under the Revenue Sharing Act for the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, the most recent addition to federal lands in Tucker County. In 2004, the federal government paid Tucker County a total of \$98,152 for the 15,235 acres of land in the Refuge. This is an average of \$6.44 per acre, the highest rate per acre that Tucker County receives for undeveloped land. In total, Tucker County received \$449,148 for federal land in 2004.

Federal land is the single biggest money-maker for Tucker County. **This is the same valuation system that would be used for High Allegheny National Park.** In addition, a National Park attracts second-home owners and creates good-paying jobs!!

To order the full report, “The Economic Impact of a National Park in West Virginia,” call Friends of Blackwater toll-free at 877-WVA-LAND or submit your request to info@saveblackwater.org.



Great News for Mountain Bikers — National Parks Now Open for Public Use

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) and the National Park Service recently signed a five-year agreement that formally recognizes mountain biking as a positive activity, compatible with the values of our National Park System.



Riding areas in America's premier parks that were formerly closed to biking will open and bring new access to hundreds of dirt roads to millions of bicyclists.

“This agreement represents a true breakthrough for mountain biking,” said IMBA Executive Director Mike Van Abel. “It opens the door for individual park units to partner with mountain bikers and investigate new riding opportunities on a case-by-case basis.”

Partnerships to build bridge of cooperation at Blackwater Falls State Park

By the end of summer 2007, visitors to Blackwater Falls State Park will have two new recreation opportunities, thanks in part to a grant provided by NiSource. Friends of Blackwater and the State Park plan to coordinate the construction of a foot/bike bridge that will provide access to the 500-acre tract of State Park land that was added to the park in 2002. There



will also be a boardwalk through the wetlands area behind Park Superintendent's Rob Gilligan's headquarters.

The project is estimated to cost \$51,000. To date, \$5,000 has been contributed by NiSource and \$1,000 from the Norcross Foundation. The bridge and boardwalk will be constructed from recycled plastic lumber materials pledged by Aeolian Enterprises. This project will bring wonderful recreational experiences to tourists and local residents.

Spruce Country Signs of Summer

By: J. Lawrence Smith

Summer is a time when “signs” hardly seem visible amid the rather uniform blanket of green. Even so, many plants, birds and other wildlife are best looked for at certain times during the season.

Characteristic northern plants that will be found in bloom in early summer beneath the spruce are the yellow clintonia and dwarf cornel. The clintonia produces blue berries that have given it another name, blue beadlily, while the cornel is also called bunchberry for its cluster of red berries.

Mountain folk know the azaleas as “honeysuckle” and these flowering shrubs add splashes of rose and pink amid the spruce at Dolly Sods when blooming in early summer.

Early summer is the best time to search for birds busy with nesting. The beautiful Blackburnian warbler with flaming orange throat builds its compact nest in an evergreen where it sings its high-pitched notes. After mid-July, nesting activity and song is greatly

diminished among most species.

The name of the chimney swift that looks somewhat like a cigar with wings when seen rocketing over rooftops seems appropriate. Swifts seen over the mountains and far from any dwelling are doubtless nesting in hollow trees in the ancestral way.

Mushrooms give the forest floor the look of a fairyland in July and they seem to have a magic quality by springing up overnight. The ghostly “death angel” may grow to a height of a foot and even though having a strange beauty contains a deadly poison.

The delicate grasspink orchid will be found in bloom on mats of sphagnum or “peat” moss in bogs high in the mountains about mid-summer. The striking wood lily appears later in the season with flowers shaded from orange to red.

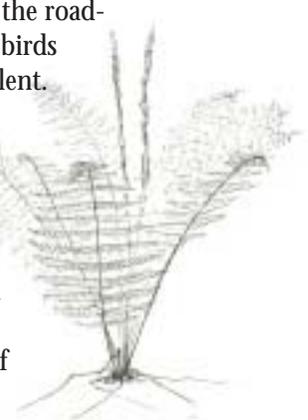
The ghostly green luna moth with long tails on its lower wings can be expected throughout the season. Luna is

Latin for “moon” and when the moth is seen dancing in flight it almost has the look of moonlight flickering through the treetops.

Late in the summer the cardinal flower will be a blaze of color along a stream or swampy place where hummingbirds will be attracted to its brightness. Before blooming, its weedy stem and that of the closely related blue lobelia would be easily overlooked.

Summer is nearing an end when fireweed is found abundantly in bloom at the roadside and the birds are mostly silent.

The spruce woods seem napping before the arrival of fall with its patchwork of colors.



My Home Town

By Margaret Calwell

Growing up in Davis, Tucker County, in the 1920s was a unique experience. At an elevation of 3,200 feet it was said to be the highest unincorporated town east of the Rocky Mountains. People from almost every European country migrated there. They came to work in the lumber industries created by the forests of spruce, hemlock, birch, beech, wild cherry, and maple. Rhododendron and laurel were thick. Some of the industries were a band mill, sawmills, and tannery. Jobs included millwrights, sorters, yard bosses, foreman, paymasters, skidders, edgers, masons, sawyers, setters, burners, foreman, and engineers. Other early influences were visits by lumbermen from elsewhere. A forestry school at Lansing, Michigan, sent its logging classes to Babcock plant. Engineering students from Carnegie Tech, in Pittsburgh came for six weeks each summer

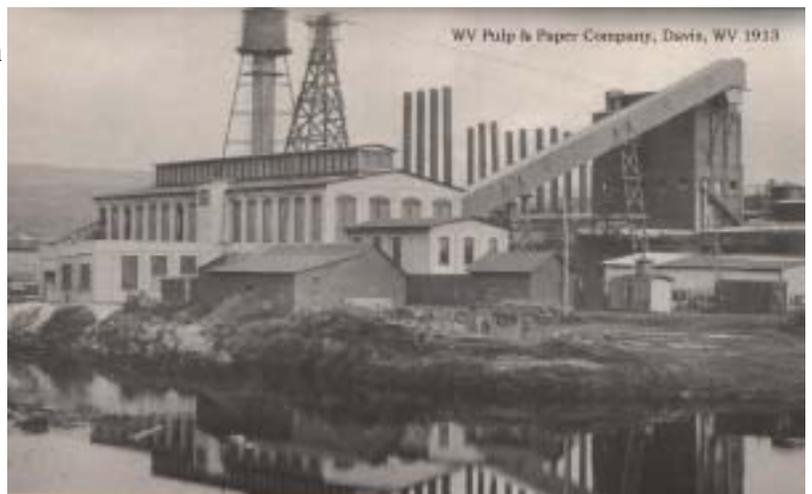
for fifteen years. Davis was truly a metropolitan little town. There were two hotels, many boarding houses, opera houses, a theater built by my father, post office, schools, saloons, stores, tow banks, a hospital, two dentists, two doctors, two barber shops, a mortician, and garages.

There were many forest fires. When they happened, people rushed out to beat at the flames with whatever tool they

could grab—usually a broom or a shovel. I remember that when a fire occurred in the fields behind our house on Kent Avenue, everyone rushed to help because the immigrant families grazed

their cattle there. When I was about ten years old, a friend and I walked to the end of Kent Avenue and beat the little flames with brooms. I can still see the little red blobs of flames. I have lived in many places, but Davis will always be my hometown.

Margaret Calwell is the author of *Speak to the Past: A Memoir Fat with Words*. To order her book, visit saveblackwater.org/merchandise.htm.



Blackwater Recreation



In memory

In memory of
**Dr. David
Schwimmer**, by Betty
Schwimmer —



Dr. Schwimmer was my father, a distinguished physician, teacher, and researcher in Manhattan for almost fifty years. He really cared about his patients, seeing them as whole people, and they were very devoted to him. In his younger years, he made home visits to the homebound. For my Dad, taking care of people was a calling.

Mountain Trail Rides A great place to revisit history

Kim Bennett has been in love with Canaan Valley for as long as she's known how to walk and talk. She and her husband, Mike, run a horseback riding establishment on Freeland Road in Canaan Valley. At Mountain Trail Rides, customers have their choice of 22 horses that Kim and Mike care for.

If you could ask Jericho, Bonnie, Spot and Breeze; Princess, Silver, Shammy and Winnie; Smoke, Easter, Legend, Leon and Cricket; Blackjack, Trigger, Buck, Jack, and Kolijah; Blaze, Dixie, Midnight and Dan and a half-Belgian mule named Sam why they are so happy working for the Bennetts, they would probably say that they love the tender care that the Bennetts give them. Each horse has a unique personality and physical characteristics that the Bennetts cater to and match with the right riders.

"With customers as young as six years old, you can't be too careful," said Kim Bennett. "We have weight limits, as well. A horse should not carry more than 20% of its own weight on its back, and right now, we will not take riders who weigh in excess of 260 pounds."

Kim's knowledge of horses can be traced back to her maternal grandfather, Hancel Mallow, "who started it all," according to Kim. She says that Hancel and her mother, Ruth Mallow Bonner, gave horseback rides back in the late 1950s at Blackwater Falls State Park and in the 1960s at their family business - Mallow's Maple Grove Lake.

"I come from a family of farmers who once owned and worked much of the land that is now the Canaan Valley State Park's golf course and ski slopes. My parents, Kermit and Ruth Bonner, still farm in this area, raising and marketing beef cattle.

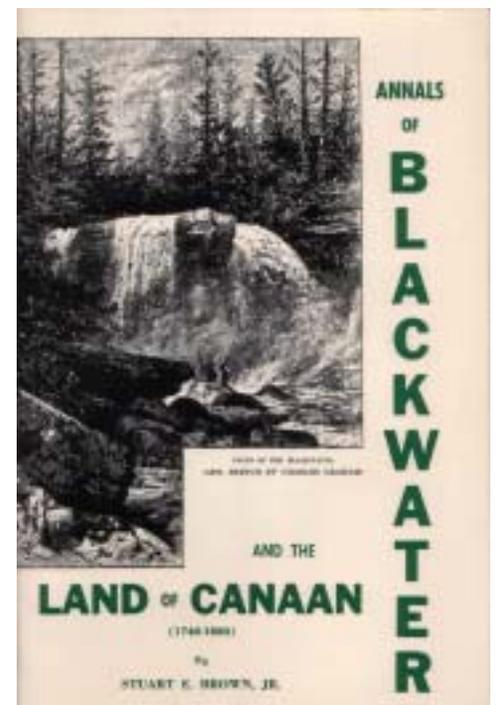
"My grandfather knew that this area was destined for the tourism industry forty years ago," said Kim.

Just as Hancel Mallow predicted, his granddaughter, Kim, says that "a lot of nice people do come and visit this valley - and I feel very privileged to meet them and show them a nice time while they are here. I also like to tell our visitors about the people who settled this valley, so their legacy is not forgotten."

Reservations can be made by calling 304-866-4652.



In memory of **Stuart Brown** by Ann Brown — My husband loved the Blackwater area. Until his death last June, we had been going there during every season for 45 years.



Stuart Brown's book "Annals of Blackwater and the Land of Canaan" can be purchased in the Blackwater Falls State Park gift shop.

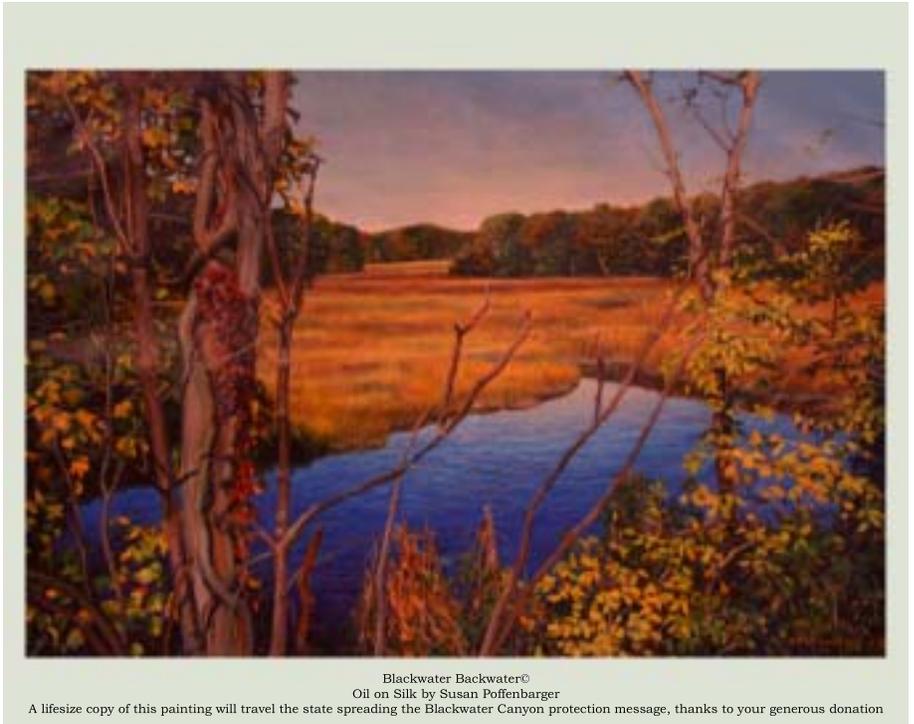
Fish-fry a big hit

June 2 was a special day for Friends of Blackwater. Our “Fish Fry Fundraiser” — the brainchild of Chuck Smith and Steve White — was a great success, raising more than \$25,000 to save the Blackwater Canyon. The hard-working hosts recruited 150 people to a party on the lawn and deck of Chuck Smith’s house on the Kanawha River across from the State Capitol. Old-time country music was provided by banjo player Tom Rodd and guitarist John Dalporto, followed by jazz guitarist Steve Himes.

A high point of the evening was an auction of art and excursions into the West Virginia Highlands. State Treasurer John Perdue made a wonderful auctioneer, with his booming voice and down-home style. A Susan Poffenbarger oil painting on silk, “Blackwater Backwater” brought the top dollar. A copy of the painting will travel the state to spread the Blackwater message. It was a beautiful setting and the evening was filled with warm feeling of support for protecting Blackwater Canyon.

Special thanks to our hosts: Nathan Anderson, Chuck and Peggy Bailey, Tim and Erika Bailey, Oshel and Joanna Craigo, Rudy and Martha DiTrapana, Terrell and Chip Ellis, Roger Forman and Arla Ralston, Brian and Lena Glasser, Steve Haid and Jennifer Taylor, Alice Hypes-Brown, Cindy and Anthony Majestro, Pat and Anita Maroney, Dr. B.J. and Jerri Nibert, John and Susan Poffenbarger, Marie Prezioso, Chuck Smith and Kim Covert, Denise Smith-Kastick and Steve and Katy White.

Susan Poffenbarger painting raises more than \$10,000 for Blackwater Canyon protection



Beautiful view from the party at sunset



Tom Rodd and John Dalporto entertain crowd

Photos by Aaron Kenstler



Judy Rodd, Alice Hypes-Brown, Barrie Kaufman, Jeannie Dalporto, Sandy Fisher and Danielle Snidow



Chuck Smith begins auction



Judy Rodd presents Steve White with best bat award

Friends of Blackwater

www.saveblackwater.org
501 Elizabeth Street, Rm 3
Charleston, WV 25311



Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT
ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 1409
CHAS., WV 25301

Become a Member

- \$1000 Porte Crayon Society
- \$500 Crown Jewel Club
- \$250 Steward
- \$100 Patron
- \$50 Family
- \$35 Individual
- \$20 Senior
- \$10 Student

To purchase FOB gear and books
visit
www.saveblackwater.org

Get away to the Brookside Inn



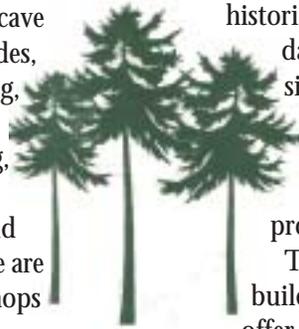
Nestled in the wooded mountains of Aurora, West Virginia, a rustic Arts and Crafts style lodge built at the end of the 19th Century offers guests a step back to a time.

The Brookside Inn, located off U.S. Route 50, is owned by Bill Reeves and managed by Michele Moure, innkeepers who have taken service and amenities to a whole new level. If you think that you might be impressed with the large country breakfasts prepared from locally produced foods, then you surely will fall in love with the candlelight dinners and luncheon picnic baskets that may be reserved in advance.

Brookside's tranquil, antique décor fills every nook and cranny. Sit in the greatroom by the wood stove or rock away on the porch, or enjoy recreational opportunities that the area has to offer.

One favorite stop for Brookside's guests is nearby Cathedral State Park, with 132 acres of virgin hemlock forest. Other

recreation options include birdwatching, apple and berry picking, cave and cavern tours, train rides, stargazing, golf, ice fishing, skiing and other winter sports, whitewater rafting, mountain climbing, spelunking, rappelling and much, much more. There are also numerous antique shops and seasonal festivals.



For more information on the Brookside Inn, please call Bill and Michele toll-free at 800-588-6344.

THE AURORA PROJECT

In addition to the Brookside Inn, Aurora will soon be home to the new Aurora Project, an artists' residency program and education center expected to open in 2006. As a community initiative, the Aurora Project, a non-profit organization founded in 2001, has

taken on the task of rehabilitating six historic structures to provide accommodations and studios for the three- to six-week residencies. Artists may submit applications to be evaluated for selection by a peer review panel and may work on new projects or works in progress.

This summer, the general store building will be dedicated and will offer a full photography and large painting studio. When the remainder of the facilities have been completed, the Aurora Project will be able to host up to fourteen artists working in visual arts, music and writing for each six-week residency period. Up to twenty students will find course work available in the arts, ecology and environmental studies, history and historic preservation.

Anyone looking for a chance to volunteer their time or interested in the Aurora Project's programming should call Michele Moure at 304-735-3620.