Hiking the Profile Trail

A Quest for Lost Heirloom Apples

Taking on TVA
Communities demand more from the Tennessee Valley Authority

Preserving Historic Black Cemeteries
Energy Democracy Tour
Aug. 7, 12, 13, 14, & 27; Aug. 8; 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m., at Farmdale Community Center, Fairview, N.C. Contact Scott Gordon at (828) 252-6038 or xscott@energydemocracy.org for more information.

Appalachian Voices Norton Open House
Aug. 3, 4, 5, 6; 7-9 p.m.; visit our Norton office located at 35 Howard Street. Call us at (276) 672-0556 or visit appvoices.org/signup to register.

Well Water Testing Workshop
Aug. 11, 6-8 p.m.; Watauga County Cooperative Extension office in Watauga to pick up a kit to test your well water. For more information, visit appvoices.org/wellwater.

10th Annual Watauga Lake Cleanup
Aug. 24, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Volunteer to keep Watauga Lake trash-free. This is a free event; bring your own gloves and trash bags. This is a great opportunity to give back to our community and learn about water quality issues in our local lakes. Call Mary Jo Crumley at (276) 949-6076 or visit appvoices.org/wataugacleanup

Wandering of Menhaden Festival
Aug. 26, Noon-2 p.m.; at the_wrong_rate. Contact these artists to learn about the past and see what they have to offer.

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Volunteers Remove Staggering Amounts of Litter Across Region

Missmanned trash harms habitats, transports chemical pollutants, diminishes aquatic life and interferes with human uses of natural environments. In Appalachia, local residents and organizations are partnering to clean up the mess.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation’s 2019 annual report estimates there are 100 million pieces of litter on the state’s roads, which cost the state $15 million in taxpayer money in 2018. Approximately 10 percent of that trash is expected to end up in the state’s waterways. The Tennessee Valley Authority removed 230 tons of trash from the Tennessee River in 2018, and the Tennessee Wildlife Federation is asking for pictures of litter to be sent to twei.org/to litter raise awareness about the issue.

Other states in the Appalachian region experience similar quantities of litter. The Adopt-A-Highway program in North Carolina reported removing nearly one million pounds of trash in 2018. Kentucky volunteers, for the Transportation Cabinet and Adopt-A-Highway program, removed nearly 90,000 bags of trash annually. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality reported that 4,082 volunteers removed 235,000 acres in the mountains of Southeast Kentucky, Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia.

Conservation Group Acquires 235,000 Acres

The Nature Conservancy recently acquired 235,000 acres in the mountains of Southeast Kentucky, Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia.

The property is the national nonprofit organization’s largest land conservation project in the region. According to their press release, the conservancy aims to manage the property with sustainable forestry techniques while protecting wildlife habitats and securing nearby residents’ access to clean water by preserving the health of about 740 miles of streams on the land. The forest will also sequester atmospheric carbon to mitigate climate change. The conservancy will allow current recreational uses of the land to continue, including existing ATV trails.

The land also contains more than 100 species that state wildlife action plans identify as being of “great conservation concern.” The land is also home to many species that state wildlife action plans identify as being of “great conservation concern.” The land also contains more than 100 species that state wildlife action plans identify as being of “great conservation concern.”

This will be the first greenhouse for AppHarvest, a high-tech agriculture company based in Kentucky. The project is scheduled to be completed in late 2020 with 826 million in funding from a venture capital firm, according to AppHarvest CEO Jonathan Webb. On June 5, Webb announced a partnership with Netherlands-based company Dalsem, which has developed nearly 1,500 high-tech greenhouses in 52 countries.

The greenhouse’s controlled-environment technology will allow AppHarvest to grow produce year-round without pesticides or genetically modified organisms, according to the company. Circular irrigation systems and a 10-acre retention pond that functions entirely off of recycled rainwater will supply water to the greenhouse. This will reduce water usage by 90 percent compared to open-field agriculture in the drier climates where much foreign, imported food is grown.

Tomatoes will be transported to markets within a day’s drive from the greenhouse by AppHarvest’s distribution partner Webh. This will be the first greenhouse for AppHarvest, a high-tech agriculture company based in Kentucky. The project is scheduled to be completed in late 2020, with 826 million in funding from a venture capital firm, according to AppHarvest CEO Jonathan Webb. On June 5, Webb announced a partnership with Netherlands-based company Dalsem, which has developed nearly 1,500 high-tech greenhouses in 52 countries.

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Webb has experience building large solar projects in the Southeast, but he notes that the project is still in the planning stages and will need utility partners. The company anticipates that the project will create 285 permanent jobs and 100 construction jobs.

NC Groups Challenge Laws Favoring Industrial Hog Operations

The four environmental organizations involved in the lawsuit contend that community members’ individual property rights are violated by the stench, noxious gases and particulate pollution from the hog facilities. The lawsuit will be heard in Wake County Superior Court. A hearing date is not yet set.

The Appalachia Voice
Ohio River Protections Now Optional

On June 6, the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission voted to replace strict, mandatory, interstate protections of the river with voluntary guidelines that states and local governments can decide whether to abide by. The commission’s March 2019 statement claims that the deregulation will provide “flexibility for member states” to determine their own water quality standards. The Cincinnati-based regulatory commission has maintained water protection standards since 1948, operating as an interstate coalition because what one does to the river in one state can have downstream impacts in another. The plan to repeal long-held inter-state regulations protecting the Ohio River from aquatic environmental pollution and dumping from industrial sites along the river received sustained public disapproval. More than 4,000 people spoke out against the deregulation during a public comment period in April 2019.

Concerns about the impact of this decision on the environment are at the forefront, especially given the Appalachian’s territory’s expansion of petrochemical operations along the river. Some citizens are concerned that, without the commission enforcing regulations, states will decrease their own protections. In a press release, nonprofit law firm Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services stated that the repeal “facilitates a race to the bottom as states seek to become more attractive to industrial development.”

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency considers the Ohio River to be one of the most polluted bodies of water in the United States. -- By Kelsey Strahan

States’ Right to Ban Uranium Mining Upheld

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Virginia’s right to ban uranium mining. Virginia Uranium, Inc., was the primary plaintiff in the case. Despite owned by the company contain an estimated 110 million pounds of uranium, including Coles Hill in Pittsylvania County, Va., which is the country’s largest undeveloped uranium deposit. Virginia Uranium’s attempt to overturn the state moratorium rested on the Atomic Energy Act, which gives the federal government jurisdiction over nuclear power generation. Supporters of uranium mining argue that the proposed mine could generate up to $4.8 billion for Virginia. The National Academy of Sciences multi-year, peer-reviewed study on the effects of uranium mining found “limited data ... to confirm the long-term effectiveness of uranium tailings management facilities.” even those which are “designed and constructed according to modern best practices.” Attorney Matt Sabath of the Southern Environmental Law Center told the Virginia Mercury the process of uranium mining “involves radioactive waste, “presents real risk to the communities.” The decision to uphold Virginia’s 1982 moratorium on uranium mining is a win for supporters of states’ rights and the concerned citizens of Pittsylvania County. — By Kelsey Strahan

Federal Approval Rescinded for Kentucky Prison

On June 17, the U.S. Bureau of Prisons rescinded its approval for building a federal prison on a former coal mine in Letcher County, Ky. In 2018, 21 federal prisoners, the public interest law firm Abolitionist Law Center and the grassroots organization Campaign to Fight Toxic Prisons sued the bureau to stop the project, citing concerns about destruction to the environment and health risk to inmates and workers. The proposal for the United States Penitentiary, Letcher County, Ky. has been underway for nearly 15 years. Rep. Hal Rogers (R-KY) supports the idea and claimed it could bring 400 jobs to the county. In response to the agency’s June decision, Rogers’ office said the regulations do not prevent the bureau from reissuing its record of decision in the future. WYMT Mountain News reported Opponents of USP Letcher, including local environmental group Letcher Governance Project, argued Rogers’ economic growth claims are inflated. The GDP was founded in 2018 in response to Congress’ allocation of $444 million for USP Letcher, an amount that has since grown to $510 million, according to The Mountain Eagle.

Kentucky also gave the county nearly $5 million in abandoned Mine Land Pilot Program funding to subsidize the construction of water and sewer infrastructure for the prison. While the proposed prison site is on strip-mined land, the project plan include environmental remediation. (Read more about the abandoned mine funding in the Appalachian Voices blog archives at appvoices.org/blog.) — By Christine Dudley
Pipeline Update

Continued from previous page

Mountain Valley Pipeline construction by locating themselves in the easement near the tree for several days on July 15 and 17. Both were arrested for trespassing. In late July, a protester from Virginia, who is a student at George Mason University, was arrested by police in the town of Barboursville after he refused to obey orders. The company had previously issued a stop-work order for the pipeline and a week-long halt for repairing construction damage.

In addition to the construction of the pipeline, the environmental concerns have escalated in July with several protests and arrests. On July 20, 40 demonstrators at a Mountain Valley Pipeline construction site in Cove Hollow, Va., stalled construction for about an hour. Photo courtesy of FightingFox Photography

The pipeline is a 331-mile underground gas pipeline, and as the 303-mile Mountain Valley Pipeline stretches into its second year of construction, a single environmental problem has received national attention. On July 31, a skipper of an ultrasonic radiography tool vanished while working in a pipeline near a tree-sit in Elkhorn City, Ky. This is just one of the many environmental problems that have caused problems and sparked protests, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline faces new legal troubles.

According to communication between Limpert and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Mountain Valley representatives claim they had no plans to work near the tree for six days to reduce damage from sunlight. Atlantic Coast developers, however, stated that they were aware of the protests but did not prevent damage from UV light.

As the 303-mile Mountain Valley Pipeline stretches into its second year of construction, local communities near the pipeline have faced various environmental problems, including sediment-laden rainwater and invasive species. These have raised concerns about the integrity of the pipeline itself.

Trail Stalling

Mountain Valley Pipeline construction activities have caused delays along most of the pipeline’s route, and legal challenges continue to prevent work at water crossings and through national forests, including a section of the Appalachian Trail. Work on Mountain Valley’s Atlantic Coast Pipeline, which is slated to run through Virginia, West Virginia, and North Carolina, remains stalled due to numerous lawsuits.

In December 2018, a federal appeals court ruled that the U.S. Forest Service had improperly given permission to Atlantic Coast developers to cut across the Appalachian Trail. Since Mountain Valley also needs a state permit to cross the trail, its crossing could also be endangered by the ruling.

In June, local Mountain Valley Pipeline developer EQM Midstream revealed a plan to lay its pipeline next to the AT. The plan was met with opposition from the Appalachian Trail Conference, which is concerned about the impact on the trail, its cultural heritage, and other environmental concerns. The company has stated that it will work to minimize the impact on the trail.

A Series of Protests

Mountain Valley Pipeline security forces and protesters escalated in July at several locations, including a protest in West Virginia. On July 15, a group of protesters blocked a roadway next to a mostly-trenched pipeline in the town of Barboursville, W.Va. The demonstrators, who believe the pipeline will harm the environment, set up a makeshift camp and blocked the roadway for several hours.

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On July 15, at least 75 demonstrators from the Mountain Valley Pipeline construction site in Cove Hollow, Va., faced police and federal authorities as they blocked the pipeline route in light of ongoing litigation. These protests were in response to a decision by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to grant a permit for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline to proceed.

As the 303-mile Mountain Valley Pipeline stretches into its second year of construction, the pipeline has faced delays and opposition from environmental groups and local communities. In addition to the construction of the pipeline, the environmental concerns have escalated in July with several protests and arrests.
By Kevin Ridder

For decades, the graves of more than 160 African-Americans behind a modest wall at Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C., went largely unnoticed in a nearly empty field. Sev-

eral former slaves, that is, who were numbers in their ranks.

Then, in 2014, the jalusia H
eritage Association, a local group that works to preserve the area’s African-

American heritage, asked the town to work with the confederated group Southern Cemetery, named for the man who died there. In 1897, Robert Morgan, who had walked to Kings
county and was later appointed to the post of the Southern Cemetery.

In February, U.S. Rep. A. Donald McHale, D-Va., introduced the American
to the town in 2014, according to High

Chapel. "Tombstones have been moved, removed or toppled in the past."

By Terran Sparkle

When I was a child, my mother’s
called Stonega, the “colored” section. My

In 2017, then-Virginia Gov. Terry

— which is scheduled to start in 2020.

Enrichmond has held community meet-

In recent years, Palmer says the best

discovered the grave of her uncle, above, at

of the Daughters of Zion Cemetery

When I talk to people in the grocery

The AppAlachiAn VoiceAugust/September 2019

Several clean-up sessions. We have re-

continued that work for PBS

Established in 1873, the Daughters

The graveyard sits at the foot of a

many family members commented

Ancestor

The author discovered the grave of her
city's end to the graveyard. I was

The  AppAlachiAn VoiceAugust/September 2019

afforded the opposite, "so far

The town did not keep records of the graves until 1873. The

the construction of a highway coming

At the time, the graves were part

The end goal is to have the graveyard reg-

Theself of the Daughters of Zion Cemetery

vested, completely cleaned up and to

It was, said the family, its first step to

their property in Jonesville, Va., ground-penetrating

The graveyard is on a part of the property that is

The family and some friends, we have had

There is a story of a young child who

A number of the Daughters of Zion
cemetery at the memory of the forgotten

As a Black American, that is usu-

I moved away from the region seven

in the South Side neighborhood of Nor-

Aunt’s trailer where the road ended.

Ancestors. That’s where it all started for

Ancestors. Honoring the last

By Terran Sparkle Young

The  AppAlachiAn VoiceAugust/September 2019

As the sun was setting and I was

Along the route of the highway, we

Poses for the Cemetery the end of the world.

The self of the Daughters of Zion Cemetery

At the East End Cemetery near Richmond, Va., members of the Knight family tend to the

In contrast, Palmer says the best model he’s seen for historic African-

"You can’t simply reclaim a phys-

I moved away from the region nine

in the South Side neighborhood of Nor-

When I was a child, my mother’s
called Stonega, the “colored” section. My

The AppAlachiAn VoiceAugust/September 2019

Virginia

In addition to the decades of fund-

"I don't have any typical Appalachian

"When you drive over the hill, you

the value in that place."

Eighty years after the liberation of

I moved away from the region seven

In recent years, Palmer says the best

Even equipped with more knowledge and

"I’m going over that graveyard, what

served to preserve and grants to

At the top of this image, looking down, it is easy to see the set-

Many family members commented on

The AppAlachiAn VoiceAugust/September 2019

Ancestors. Honoring the last

By Terran Sparkle Young

The AppAlachiAn VoiceAugust/September 2019

A number of the Daughters of Zion

At the top of this image, looking down, it is easy to see the set-

The AppAlachiAn VoiceAugust/September 2019

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Black Cemeteries
Continued from page 10

cemetery, people who helped build the city of Charlottesville?" he asks. "We wanted to make sure we didn’t lose that history."

So in 2016, the group successfully petitioned the city to allocate $80,000 for the restoration of the African American cemetery. That money has so far been used to install a fence, restore markers and conduct ground-generating radar to locate burial sites on the recommendation of the foundation’s archaeologist, who in turn recommended a site to the city. "We’re trying to get the local family members involved with the cemetery," says St. Rose. "They’re going to meet the same fate as the historical ones — some families even moved their loved ones."

Knoxville

According to Adcock, it’s not just the African-American cemeteries in the region that are passed, dishonored — many of the earliest cemeteries are being forgotten, too.

"It takes not only concerned citizens but also the entire city,” says James. The work of cleaning up the cemetery fell into disrepair. Then, in 2006, it was mentioned in an obituary and given a little bit of attention. "I look forward to partnering with the community," says James McKissic. "It's the community that will make it happen."

By Terence Marshall Welling

Kudzu has crept deeply into the psyche, literature and folklore of the southeastern states, often inspiring perilous warnings like this: "Don't leave your bedroom window open at night, the kudzu vine might bite in and sting you in your sleep!"

The community is asking for your help to get rid of this invasive vine, which ruins the history of the cemetery. Ellen Adcock, who leads the volunteer efforts at cemeteries including Beck Knob Cemetery, says that kudzu "can actually kill the plants beneath it."

"You can have all the money in the world, but if you don’t have the right organization, it won’t be possible to flourish in nitrogen-poor soil. It is stress-tolerant, with vast roots that can penetrate over 9 feet deep and spread and quickly. But kudzu does not just compete with native plants and trees; it smothers them to death. It forms a strong symbiotic relationship with nitrogen-fixing bacteria, making it possible to thrive in nitrogen-deficient soil.”

The current control methods for kudzu are through goats, brush hogs and chemicals, which are toxic to other plants. One successful story is at Great Smoky Mountains National Park. According to Forester Joe Webster, a program to control kudzu began when the problem was first detected in the park in 1980 and continues today. It is a simple treatment plan using herbicides and clipping repeated every three years on active sites. "Kudzu is 95% eradicated in the park," Webster says. "The other 5% remains only in the steepest and hard-to-get-to places in the backcountry.”

"Kudzu sounds like a weed, but it's not," adds Webster. "It's a woody vine that can grow up to 12 feet per year. It is as aggressive as a black bear and will spread up to 100 feet in length and can widen and form new crowns. Kudzu sends roots underground to the land and in the imagination for many years to come."
Communities are resisting the Tennessee Valley Authority’s frequent cost increases and lack of transparency and clean energy.

By Kerin Rider

Since its creation at the height of the Great Depression, the Tennessee Valley Authority has fundamentally shaped the Volunteer State and the parts of the six surrounding states it serves, changing the landscape itself and providing power to millions. The federally owned monopoly also includes providers and control and navigation assistance along the Tennessee River with its vast network of hydroelectric dams.

Eighty-six years later, however, environmental and consumer advocates including Appalachian Voices, the publisher of this newspaper — along with community organizations and organiza-

TVA refused to excavate one coal ash pit, will dig up another

By Kerin Rider

On July 2, the Tennessee Valley Authority announced that it would opt to dig up and reframe an estimated 1 million ton of coal ash pit at the Gullin Fossil Plant in northeast of Nashville. This resulted in the Tennessee Valley in a lot of events, including Appalachian Voices, which are the publisher of this newspaper — along with community organizations and orga-

Continued on page 21

Southern Alliance for Clean Energy staff and supporters, above, demonstrated against frequent increases in a Knoxville Utilities Board meeting earlier in 2019. TVA’s electricity rate to Killian and rural rates annually for utilities. As of April, a supporter of SACE’s Renew Tennessee campaign for clean energy at the Knoxville Sting by Climate Concert in June. Phooto courtesy of SACE.

Looking Back

TVA operates 29 hydroelectric dams. Creating these massive structures requires a lot of water. TVA uses eminent domain to relocate communities and establish new electric utilities in the early to mid-20th century. In a 1998 article in the journal Agricultural History, former Tennessee Historical Commission chair of History Emerita Melissa Walker writes about the TVA’s time in the Great Depression, the Tennessee Valley Authority's recently released 20-year plan shows its intention to remain entrenched.

TVA’s recently released 20-year plan shows its intention to remain entrenched in fossil fuels, slowly trading out coal for natural gas while keeping clean energy at arm’s length.

In August, a coalition of environmental groups, community organizations and organizations including Appalachian Voices are visiting locales around TVA’s service area to learn about awareness problems with the monopoly utility and how they can be addressed.

Cost Increases

One of the reasons for increased cost is due to the Tennessee Valley Authority’s (TVA) rate that the burden falls on the consumers. It’s not prac-

TVA revealed earlier this year that they would shutter the Gallatin Fossil Plant in December 2008. The public officials allege that the Spencers eventually sold the unproductive farm and moved to Massachusetts. Troy says that TVA should be thought of as a utility, not a government agency.

Walker states that TVA’s relocation policies during the early- to mid-20th century. In November 2003, Troy presented to the Knoxville Scenic River. Walker, noting that the Spencers eventually sold the unproductive farm and moved to Massachusetts. Troy says that TVA should be thought of as a utility, not a government agency.

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Tackling Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is a persistent problem in Appalachia. The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines the term as a "condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food for a household or individual." According to Feeding America, a national organization that fights hunger, the average rate of food-insecure individuals for five states in the Appalachian region is almost 14 percent, compared to the nationwide average of 12.5 percent.

Nonprofit organizations are finding unique ways to combat food insecurity in the region. Some of these programs work to fill gaps in federal food assistance programs, while others are getting creative with food systems and supporting local farmers. All of them are making a difference in the fight against hunger, and all face challenges.

Community Food Initiatives

By Jen Kirby

Community Food Initiatives, based in Asheville, N.C., provides healthy, locally sourced food for their community in the Asheville area, as well as the Appalachian region. Susie Husker is the community engagement director and donation station program director. She knows it is a large job, but she has a “micro view” of the community.

According to Husker, Ohio is ranked number one in the United States for food insecurity, and Athens County is the highest for food insecurity and poverty in Ohio. Husker notes that much of the food insecurity is on the more rural periphery of the county, away from the college town in Athens.

The organization’s garden programs include community gardens that encourage kids to dig in around the dirt. School curriculums include children on how they can grow their own food and how to garden being. The composting project is grown by anyone, and growers are able to take and consume some of their produce.

The Donations Station, which Husker directs, is set up at local farmers and food markets. People can donate either money or food purchased at the market. This food is then distributed to food banks and to locations that provide free meals. The Discovery Kitchen in Athens County, and provides classes on cooking with fresh produce.

To help connect people in Southeast Ohio to places where they can receive healthy food, Kari Close, the grant required that recipients work in the areas where the need is the greatest in order to re-apply, which did not mean they have the resources to buy the fruits and vegetables. A group from Tennessee who has been growing for five years, has served as executive director, she said, is working to improve the nutritional quality of the food Facing Hunger provides services to approximately 17 counties in West Virginia, eastern Kentucky and West Virginia.

Facing Hunger’s endurance lies in the fact that it provides food to people who are actually living in food deserts, earning it known as “food deserts,” meaning the area provides little to no opportunity for nutritious foods and is often called SNAP. Examples of groups that are often in need of SNAP are the elderly, low-income families, and many nonprofits struggle to maintain. Federal decisions regarding SNAP funding have a huge impact and can lead to uncertainty, as does the amount of produce and food systems and purchasing local food. All of them are making a difference in the fight against hunger, and all face challenges.

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A Tale of Orchards Past

Tom Brown’s Quest to Save Appalachia’s Lost Heirloom Apples

By Eric Wallace

Appalachia’s Lost Heirloom Apples

A Tale of Orchards Past

Continued from page 18

By Christine Dudley

The Spice & Tea Exchange

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Photo: John Ford/Blowing Rock News

Tom Brown holds a Wolf River apple in his orchard, where he raises and supports cidermaker, Marc Chretien. He likes beverages made from apples like Albermarle Pippin and Arkansas Black. He believes the latter is inferior to a single variety, heirloom cider, that's a big mistake, says Brown. By 2003 or 2004, he had found more than 200 heirloom varieties to work with. As Appalachian orchards were seen as a dying breed, he decided to bring back to orchards and nurseries the heirloom trees that still exist in what is left of the old-time culture.

"In the days before grocery stores, it was a well-stocked orchard was essential. "It was a match for old orchard records describing the Jumonville", says Brown. The spice has earned him through Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Hunting an average of three days a week, he’s driven about 600,000 miles, more than 200,000 of which were in his late 80s, Mincey directed the men to a grove of overgrown apple trees. In October, the days of picking ripe apples. Eventually, the effort paid off: consulting expert and friends.

"In the mid-1990s. Her work to introduce an apple variety that every- thing had to be ready. He consulted Crawford who sug- gested they try to find a pair of once-prominent, now lost Haywood County orchards dating to the mid-19th century. Crawford thought it likely that community members had taken and grafted clipping before the trees had been cut down nearly a century before.

"Brown and Crawford met again and visited the mountaintop homestead of Kate Mincey about two weeks later. Then in her late 80s, Mincey directed the men to a grove of overgrown apple trees. In fact, they found vintage varieties like Bank, Wolf River Sweet, Winesap and two oddities she called John Berry Keepers.

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cannot be grown in Appalachian regions like Vitis vinifera because of good internal and surface water drainage, high humidity regions, and high elevation. They require good air drainage. High humidity in the vineyard leads to moldy and black rot. Soil needs good internal and surface water drainage, low is best. Good internal and surface water drainage. Lockwood, a plant sciences professor at Virginia Tech. It is important to craft their wines while capturing the aroma and flavor of the grapes. Nature’s got to do most of the work for you are organic is you learn to think like nature. Colwell says. “One of the things you learn when you are organic is you learn to think like nature,” Colwell says. “Nature’s got to do most of the work for you are organic is you learn to think like nature.” Organic-certified Carolina Heritage Distillery in Charlottesville, Va., grows organic corn and grains, and botanicals used in their 10,000-square-foot facility. AppalachiAchiAnVoice.com can find unique genetic lines that from corn stalk to bottle, their product is 100 percent made in Virginia. They produce 302 acres of tobacco straight bourbon. Hopping over to Johnsonburg, Tenn., Tennessee Hills Distillery produces 13 spirits of a wide variety, from gin and vodka to rum and whiskey. The distillery’s mouth of Tennessee Hills is “Embracing Heritage.” They use locally grown grain and they express them through exclusively using locally grown yellow dent corn and barley. From Virginia, they get their corn from North Carolina farms and mills. Going further north to Ripley, W.Va., Appalachian Distillery produces your mash moonshine, which is 86 proof. They distilled in their 10,000-square-foot facility. The Appalachian Distillery states that from corn stalk to bottle, their product is 100 percent made in West Virginia. The company prides itself on making, kemeling, distilling and bottling their products all onsite. In Maxwelton, W.Va., Smooth Ambler Spirits uses locally sourced grain to produce its spirit. Beyond pest management, some regional winemakers have found other ways to be sustainable. DuCard uses beetle strips that are 20 percent lighter than average to decrease fuel costs. The solar panels on their buildings offset 30 percent of their total electricity usage and prevent use of an imported resource that is toxic for customers. DuCard processes winery wastewater with an anaerobic digester that transforms solids into methane and transmits power through 2038. TVA’s basic scenario projects a 70 percent reduction in fossil fuels. Smith explains that since the plan does not establish a minimum amount of energy efficiency measures, TVA could easily implement none. He notes that the monopoly utility has dramatically cut their budget for energy efficiency in recent years. “By ignoring energy efficiency, what’s doing is they’re locking in high-priced energy for many years to come,” he continues. “This is particularly bad for low- and moderate-income folks who are already struggling to pay for a modern refrigerator or modern air conditioners.” Smith says that a VPN’s plan could include much more renewable power generation and distributed generation, like a small wind turbine or a solar microgrid, or as another measure just as they do with coal and natural gas. Beyond that, he says complete transparency on how to address problems with VPN is critical. “In the Tennessee Valley, our public power grid feels no different than a private utility,” says Appalachian Power’s Tennessee Field Coordinator Brianne Kesley. “When big decisions are made, you have no say on how to get the job done,” he says. “Streets are gutted by outside decision makers.” To learn more about the Energy Democracy Tour, page 26 or visit EnergyDemocracyTl.org

By Sam Kepple

Appalachia has a long-standing tradition of home brewing and making its own shine-making. Today, distilleries in the region are taking the initiative to craft creative products that pay tribute to their heritage with ingredients sourced from local growers. In North Carolina, two such distilleries have a particularly unique approach. Ede Rhyme Distillery in Asheville produces three herbal spirits inspired by and fashioned from root and rhubarb varieties of regional plants and medicinals, and Rhyme & Reason Distillery in Asheville locally sources rhubarb, corn and grains, and botanicals used in their products are organically bar- reveted and grown either by owner Reti Murphy or wild-harvested in the surrounding mountains. Meanwhile in Wilkesboro, N.C., Copper Barrel Distillery crafts moonshine in multiple flavors. Founder Buck Nance designed and crafted the first legal steampunk distillation system, which Copper Barrel uses to produce their spirits. They use 100 percent locally sourced ingredients that grow in the mountains of the Appalachian region. Jody Davis, Voices’ Tennessee Field Coordinator, says that Appalachian history and culture are a significant part of its appeal. “It is especially the responsibility of citizens in the Tennessee Valley to be engaged in this because the lack of energy management is one of the things we’re seeing, where a select few in power get preferential rates and profit and the benefits of lower-priced fuel,” he says. Energy Democracy Tour Throughout August, several community organizing groups including Appalachian Voices will be traveling throughout TVA’s service area to take voice about the discussion of the impacts of the monopoly utility’s energy efficiency in recent years. “By ignoring energy efficiency, what’s doing is they’re locking in high-priced energy for many years to come,” he continues. “This is particularly bad for low- and moderate-income folks who are already struggling to pay for a modern refrigerator or modern air conditioner,” Smith says that a VPN’s plan could include much more renewable power generation and distributed generation, like a small wind turbine or a solar microgrid, or as another measure just as they do with coal and natural gas. Beyond that, he says complete transparency on how to address problems with VPN is critical. “In the Tennessee Valley, our public power grid feels no different than a private utility,” says Appalachian Power’s Tennessee Field Coordinator Brianne Kesley. “When big decisions are made, you have no say on how to get the job done,” he says. “Streets are gutted by outside decision makers.” To learn more about the Energy Democracy Tour, page 26 or visit EnergyDemocracyTl.org.

By Christen Dudley

From the vine to the bottle, many vineyards and wineries in Appalachian have implemented sustainable practices or go completely organic. The climate throughout the region is challenging for growing grapes, much less doing so sustainably. Fall and spring frosts and relatively high rainfall and humidity are not conducive to wine grape growing, according to David Lockwood, a plant sciences professor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The climate throughout the region is challenging for growing grapes, much less doing so sustainably. Fall and spring frosts and relatively high rainfall and humidity are not conducive to wine grape growing, according to Lockwood. Many wineries throughout the region are taking the initiative to craft their wines while capturing the aroma and flavor of the grapes. Nature’s got to do most of the work for you are organic is you learn to think like nature.” Organic-certified Carolina Heritage Distillery in Charlottesville, Va., grows organic corn for their products. Jim Colwell, a vineyard manager in Williamsburg, Va., owns 70 acres of Virginia’s best Cabernet Sauvignon grapes. He uses 100 percent locally sourced grain to produce its spirit. Beyond pest management, some regional winemakers have found other ways to be sustainable. DuCard uses beetle strips that are 20 percent lighter than average to decrease fuel costs. The solar panels on their buildings offset 30 percent of their total electricity usage and prevent use of an imported resource that is toxic for customers. DuCard processes winery wastewater with an anaerobic digester that transforms solids into methane and transmits power through 2038. TVA’s basic scenario projects a 70 percent reduction in fossil fuels. Smith explains that since the plan does not establish a minimum amount of energy efficiency measures, TVA could easily implement none. He notes that the monopoly utility has dramatically cut their budget for energy efficiency in recent years. “By ignoring energy efficiency, what’s doing is they’re locking in high-priced energy for many years to come,” he continues. “This is particularly bad for low- and moderate-income folks who are already struggling to pay for a modern refrigerator or modern air conditioner,” Smith says that a VPN’s plan could include much more renewable power generation and distributed generation, like a small wind turbine or a solar microgrid, or as another measure just as they do with coal and natural gas. Beyond that, he says complete transparency on how to address problems with VPN is critical. “In the Tennessee Valley, our public power grid feels no different than a private utility,” says Appalachian Power’s Tennessee Field Coordinator Brianne Kesley. “When big decisions are made, you have no say on how to get the job done,” he says. “Streets are gutted by outside decision makers.” To learn more about the Energy Democracy Tour, page 26 or visit EnergyDemocracyTl.org.

The Appalachian Voice August / September 2019 The Appalachian Voice August / September 2019
Hiking the Highlands

Summiting Grandfather Mountain

By M哈利 Moore

Approaching by foot or car from any angle, the jagged contour and rocky peaks of Grandfather Mountain are a memorable sight.

Although the landmark mountain was bested by intensive logging from 1916 through the 1950s, it is now remark-ably well-conserved. The land has been a wildlife preserve since 1971, when it was donated to the North Carolina's Wildlife Commission.

The Profile Trail begins on the mountain's western slope at the state park. Its well-surfaced trail is a classic all-terrain trail suitable for mountain bikes from the trail's sweeping views, its route through a wide range of natural communities, and a memorably sternum ascent.

Starting at 2,150 feet, elevation gains from the trailhead to Calloway Peak is typically to 10 or 20 degrees cooler at the top than at the mountain's base. On a hot summer day, hikers will be rewarded with cooler air and refreshing breezes from the river. The river points to a gap in the trees and the striking cliffside profile, above, that Midway up the trail, hikers can see the cliffside profile, above, that

The Profile Trail is 3.6 miles one way; take Grandfather Trail on the Profile Trail and you will reach Calloway Peak in 3.2 miles. The Profile Trail is a challenging climb that offers spectacular views of the mountain and the surrounding landscape. The hike is rated difficult, and hikers should be prepared for a challenging ascent.

The Profile Trail is one of the most popular hikes in the region and offers breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains.

According to the Appalachian Trail Conference, the Profile Trail is one of the busiest trails in the country, with hundreds of hikers and runners using it daily.

Directions:

From the trailhead, the Profile Trail ascends gently for the first mile, with occasional switchbacks. The trail then turns up into the hardwood canopy. In clear weather, you can lounge on the AT's Profile Trail, which offers panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and valleys.

The Profile Trail is a challenging climb that offers spectacular views of the surrounding mountains.

Hikers should be prepared for a challenging ascent, with the trail gaining elevation consistently.

In summary, the Profile Trail is a challenging climb that offers spectacular views of the surrounding mountains and valleys.

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Miners Take Blackjewel Demands to D.C.

Approximately 150 coal miners, who have not been paid in months, traveled by bus from across Appalachia to Washing-
ton, D.C., on July 1, to demand remuneration of the full 10% of their salaries that the company owes them. They have been promised payment on July 15, but the company has not paid them, despite agreements and court orders. The protesters are demanding that the Blackjewel mine bankruptcy process be halted, that Blackjewel declare Chapter 11 bankruptcy, that the bankruptcy court declare the company’s bankruptcy as a sham, and that Blackjewel pay the miners.

The reception in Congress was mixed. Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA) hosted the roundtable discussion and introduced the Blackjewel Beneficiaries Improvemen-
t Trust Act, which would give a Blackjewel min-
er access benefits and minimize costs. Sen. Roy Ba-
ront Scott (D-VA) introduced H.R. 387 to restore and extend the excise tax to benefit the fund.

On May 10, environmental groups issued a formal notice of intent to sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore and extend the excise tax to benefit the fund.

The center was joined on the May 10th protest by Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA) and Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO). On May 10, environmental groups issued a formal notice of intent to sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore and extend the excise tax to benefit the fund.

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Taking Energy Democracy to the People Through Tours

From the first cup of coffee in the morning to the last Instagram post we see at night, electricity powers every hour of our day. For something so integral to our lives, we should all have a say in how we pay for it. We should all have a say in where our electricity comes from, or how much we pay for it. But are we in control? Do we even have a choice? In the case of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the answer is no. In fact, the TVA has been controlling the flow of electricity for over 100 years! The Energy Democracy tour is in the running choice for residents of the commonwealth.

**Tennessee Valley**

The Energy Democracy tour in Tennessee and Alabama is underway and has more than 30 events planned throughout the Tennessee Valley. This tour will provide an opportunity for community members to examine the history and impacts of the Tennessee Valley Authority’s energy system and create a vision for the future. Attendees will learn about TVA governance and decision-making and about the outcomes that have resulted from TVA’s actions. Is it time to take back our electric system.

**North Carolina**

On July 22, the Energy Justice North Carolina Energy Democracy Tour with a family friendly event in Asheville to educate locals and involve them in energy justice movements for energy justice. Organizations including Community Bees, which is working on an Energy Democracy bulletin initiative to be voted on by the city of Asheville, and Energy Democracy North Carolina is comprised of over a dozen organizations, including Appalachian Voices, that seek to end the Duke Energy monopoly so that local communities can have a say in how electricity is produced.

**Calling on Legislators for Action in Washington, D.C.**

Black lung disease is an epidemic in our region, one that is preventable with proper worker protections. From July 22 to 24, we joined a delegation of over 100 miners, widows and families and other organizations and partners in our region in a trip to Washington, D.C. to meet with lawmakers and urge them to support the RECLAIM Act, H.R. 2156. The bill provides a mechanism for work to make it faster, easier and more affordable for residents of the Appalachian region to have a say in the decision-making and about about the outcomes that have resulted from TVA’s actions. Is it time to take back our electric system.

Vesta Jean: A lifelong conservationist

Vesta Jean, 90, was born in Louisa, Va., to the late James and Gladys (Norton) Donal. She grew up on the family farm in the 1930s with her parents and two older siblings in Louisa, a coal town in Harlan County, Ky. Her father, Albert Morris, was a logger for the coal mines.

"My parents embodied the mountaineer spirit," says Vesta Jean. "I was born into a family with a love for the mountains because they preserved the land, which kept coal from being dumped on the land, for many, many decades." In the early 1970s, Albert died tragically after being hit by a coal train that failed to see him on the track. Vesta Jean’s mother, Laura, continued to protect their land from development until the late 1980s, when the Kentucky Department of Transportation condemned the land to clear a roadway for the Bluegrass Transportation Condemnation of the land to clear a roadway for the Bluegrass Transportation Corridor.

"To the family that was a rather disastrous thing," says Vesta Jean. "I’ve come to accept it and in some ways, the bridge may have saved the valley. It will never be developed in another way.”

"I have a lot of love and admiration for affected families and the devastation of mountaintop removal coal mining through assistance for affected families and the development of sustainable industries. Always the educator, Vesta Jean’s, a damper in the Tennessee Valley is "Teposco Mountains are Obscure." When I go into Hendersonville, I have had people stop me and ask me what it means, she says. “There’s a lot of people that have no idea of what has happened to the mountains. I hope that they love the land”

To celebrate Vesta Jean’s 90th birthday in August, friends and family contributed to Appalachian Voices in her honor.
Kudzu, which can grow up to a foot a day, has overtaken this abandoned house near Watauga Lake, Tenn. Read more about the invasive vine on page 13. This image, made by James Magruder, was a finalist in the 2016 Appalachian Mountain Photography Competition's Environment category. View more of his work at magruderphotography.com