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The Appalachian VOICE

February/March 2011

the Women of Appalachia

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The Appalachian VOICE

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AppalachianVoices
191 Howard Street • Boone, NC 28607
1-877-APP-VOICE
www.AppalachianVoices.org
voice@appvoices.org

Appalachian Voices is committed to protecting the land, air and water of the central and southern Appalachian region. Our mission is to empower people to defend our region's rich natural and cultural heritage by providing them with tools and strategies for successful grassroots campaigns. Appalachian Voices sponsors the Upper Watauga Riverkeeper® and is also a Member of the Waterkeeper® Alliance.

A Note From the Executive Director

Dear Readers,

This issue marks the fifteenth anniversary of *The Appalachian Voice*, and during that time, *The Voice* has celebrated the people and culture of Appalachia and highlighted the threats to our region's vibrant environment. Through *The Voice's* narrative, which includes many a diverse tongue, the struggle to protect our mountains from destructive mining practices, our water from toxic coal ash and our air from power plant pollution has been brought home to our readers, catalyzing and empowering them with information and strategies for creating a more equitable and environmentally just Appalachia.

The intention of *The Voice* is to connect with people who share our vision for a vibrant Appalachia: prosperous communities that both recognize the need and have the desire to be good stewards of our ancient mountains and their surrounding areas. *The Voice* will continue to wield the power of the word and the strength of the image to bring even more people together to work toward that constantly unfolding vision.

As we gear up to make a clean energy future for our region a reality, the next fifteen years promise to be full of new challenges, transitions and unprecedented victories as *The Voice* strives each issue to tell the tale of Appalachia. Join us and become part of the story.

Willa

Back to 6 issues!

We're pleased to announce that we will be publishing 6 issues this year, bringing you more environmental and cultural news about Appalachia. Look for us on newsstands every other month!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Regulars

Correction

In the December 2010 Note from the Executive Director, Bill McKibben was incorrectly attributed as having written the book "Blessed Unrest," when it was actually written by Paul Hawken. We apologize for the mistake.

About the cover

Jo Syz took the feature photograph of Judy Bonds, a resident of West Virginia and advocate for a cleaner future for Appalachia until her death in January.

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Saluting the Women I Want To Be

By Jamie Goodman

My grandmother was a true Appalachian mountain woman.

She stood a mere 5 feet 2 inches, but she was as tall as a tree in my eyes. Her skin was weathered by years of working on the farm; her eyes were water-blue, and her hands scarred and tough. Her back was hunched from years of bending to tend the garden, chop and stack wood, carry water and wash laundry by hand.

She could grab a hot pan of yeast rolls out of the oven without using a towel and carry 60-pound bales of hay on her back to feed the cattle. She crocheted small white ornaments, using sugar water to shape the thread into angels and delicate lace teacups. She mended fences, chased off snakes and sewed gorgeous patchwork quilts from scraps of fabric and my grandfather's old shirts and ties.

She was a midwife, and would walk miles to help the country doctors deliver babies. She knew the plants in the woods, how to make herbal teas and poultices for croup. She often tended sick neighbors when the doctor couldn't come. She took care of the animals, one time using her own hands to turn a breached calf in a birthing cow.

She ate country ham nearly every morning of her life, and baked the best biscuits I have ever tasted. Her name was Virginia, but we called her Nanny.

She was humble to the point of being self-effacing, always put others before herself and faithfully kept the family Bible updated with new births. She saw the ocean only one time in her entire life.

My grandmother, Virginia Wagoner Goodman, pictured here in her late teens (top), mid-40s (bottom), was born in 1909, married at 18, and watched the world evolve from horse and buggy days to space travel and personal home computers.

Women of Appalachia

My grandmother was in her mid-eighties when she stopped tending the farm, 93 when she died in 2002. At her funeral, the pastor spoke of her as though she were the last of the real mountain women, and at the time I believed him. But after researching the amazing women for this issue, I know for a fact this is not true.

While the women of today may not have to be as versed in the art of everywoman-on-the-farm like my grandmother, they are as equally if not more amazing in their contributions to our region. I wish we had enough space in this issue to include all of the spectacular, deserving Appalachian mothers, grandmothers, healthcare providers, nuns, students, scientists, musicians, teachers, farmers, writers and historians (to name just a few) striving for a better world.

In the following pages, we feature more than 60 women and groups who represent a mere sampling of the ladies who have devoted their lives to work for the health and well-being of our mountain culture, people and environment in their own unique ways.

We thank the folks who helped us compile these stories; without you this would have been next to impossible. Please forgive us for the women who were left out and elp us to expand our list by visiting **AppalachianVoices.org/appalachiawomen**/ to add to our growing database of amazingly incredible, stupendous, fantastic, extraordinary and utterly wonderful super women of Appalachia.

the formidable, fearless & fantastic Women of Appalachia

Fearless women settled Appalachia – and are still fighting for it.

Alongside men, they plowed fields, put up food, kept the family and faced conflict.

Women like Mary Draper Ingles, taken hostage in 1755 by Shawnee Indians, hiked 500 hundred miles of wilderness barefoot to find her way back home, founding the settlement that became the city of Radford, Va. Women like Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, who in the 1900s organized women for the labor movement. Women like Judy Bonds, who fought the coal industry's destruction of mountain communities in the 21st century.

In Ingles' time, women were the indispensible center of subsistence farming households. By the 1900s, only men could work in the coalmines and women's roles diminished in comparison. Paradoxically, this made them a potent force for labor, as Mother Jones discovered, since they could not be fired from jobs or fired upon by soldiers.

While the first women did not begin working for the coal industry until the 1970s, a group of women who called themselves the "daughters of Mother Jones" played a crucial role on the picket lines during the Pittston strike of 1989.

Women have led the way in activism as well. In 1965, Ollie "Widow" Combs laid down in front of the bulldozer that was preparing to strip-mine her Kentucky farm. She spent Thanksgiving in jail, but her protests led to strip mining legislation in 1967 in the Kentucky General Assembly. Ten years later, Widow Combs was invited to the White House for the signing of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.

Other crucial roles for women have involved education, literature and art.

One of the underlying themes has been a reaction to the hillbilly stereotype that made it so easy for the timber and coal companies to push Appalachian people off their land.

Appalachian people were complex, human, intelligent and often beautiful as portrayed in Lucy Furman's 1920s novels about the Hindman Settlement School, or in the social realism of Elizabeth Madox Roberts or Anne W. Armstrong of the 1930s and 40s. And they were fighters, too, as depicted in the mid-20th century and early 21st century novels of Wilma Dykeman, Denise Giardina and Anne Pancake.

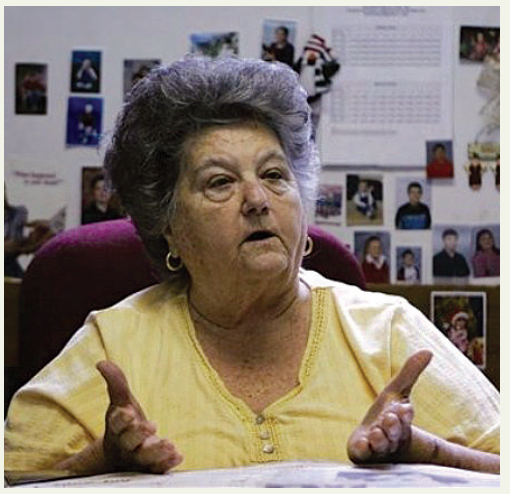
Nikki Giovanni, an African-American poet teaching at Virginia Tech, is another woman whose work describes Appalachian people and speaks out against all kinds of hate-motivated violence. Another poet, Marilou Awiakta, is informed by her Cherokee heritage in writing about growing up in Appalachia and describing Native American legends that point towards a nurturing relationship between people and Mother Earth.

Nature writing is another major contribution of Appalachian women, especially the Hollins University group, led by Anne Dillard, who wrote the Pulitzer Prize winning Pilgrim at Tinker Creek in 1975. And harmony with nature motivated Barbara Kingsolver, a Southwestern Virginia writer whose 2005 book Animal, Vegetable, Miracle helped launch the local foods movement.

And so, we present to you the region's most powerful natural resource —the outstanding and fearless women of Appalachia. --*Story by Bill Kovarik*

Eula Hall —The Mother Teresa of Mud Creek

By Kiran Bhatraju



Eula Hall in her Mud Creek Clinic Office (2009). Photo by Kiran Bhatraju

At the tender age of 14, Eula Hall vowed to "raise holy hell" in response to miserable working conditions she faced in a World War II factory in New York. Soon after, she was arrested and charged with 'inciting a riot.' But it wasn't enough to stop Eula. She returned to eastern Kentucky vowing to fight injustice wherever she saw it.

Born into the searing poverty of the Depression and taunted by poor health and abusive relationships, she sought to make a better life for herself and her Mud Creek, Ky., community. As an early participant in the VISTA program, Eula became a poverty warrior fighting for clean drinking water and black lung compensation and against local political fiefdoms.

In the 1960s, when President Johnson's War on Poverty ended funding for a crucial health program, Eula took her community's well-being into her own hands. She transformed her trailer-home into a doctor's office, launching the Mud Creek Clinic to provide free healthcare for all.

The clinic was an incredible success, but it wasn't without enemies. A mysterious arsonist set fire to the clinic in 1982, leaving nothing behind. However, with grit and determination common to so many Appalachian women, Eula rallied the community to rebuild the clinic, with donations coming in from as far away as California. Today, the Mud Creek Clinic continues to provide care and stands as a testament to the power of one woman's determination.

Eula, like so many quiet civic heroes, didn't do it for fame because, in her words, "fame ain't worth a damn." She didn't do it for accolades because, "we need action not awards." And she didn't do it for money because she's, "been rich since birth."

Eula has spent her life fighting injustice, even risking her life at times. But, just as the sign outside her clinic reads, she did it, "for the people."

Kiran Bhatraju is a native of Pikeville, Kentucky currently working on a biography of Eula Hall titled "Mud Creek Medicine," due out in late 2011.

Theresa Burriss: Literary Luminary

By Jillian Randel

Growing up in a matriarchal family, Theresa Burriss was surrounded by strong female Appalachians, igniting a passion for studying— and later educating about— women's issues in Appalachia.

As a professor at Radford University, Burriss is in the process of transforming her Appalachian Women Activists project into a multi-media performance called *Sounds of Stories Dancing*. For the project, she interviewed over 40 female activists across central and southern Appalachia.

"The performance is coming out of an oral tradition," said Burriss. "I am using some of these interviews and extracting excerpts out- there are themes of migration and strength of character of Appalachians. It's very abstract and similar to a dream montage and political social commentary."

She will be collaborating with her colleague and friend at Radford University, Deborah McLaughlin, with whom she has previously worked on a dance piece about mountaintop removal coal mining.

Musicians Don Hall and Bud Bennett will be creating original work for the piece as well. Artist Susan Stryke will be creating the set design.

"Appalachia is known as a patriarchal society," said Burriss. "I'm all about providing space for those voices that don't always get space."

Burriss recently received a grant to write her first children's book, *The Country Store on White Oak Grove*, which she will begin working on this year. She is the director of RU's Learning Assistance and Resource Center, director of Appalachia Regional Studies Center and Chair of the Appalachian Studies.

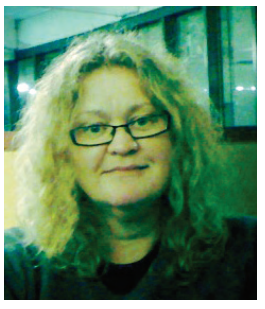
Joyce Berry: Up and Coming Historian

By Jillian Randel

In 1998, Joyce Barry visited Larry Gibson's camp on Kayford Mountain and saw mountaintop removal for the first time.

"Coming of age in West Virginia, the beautiful mountains that surround us were inextricably linked to our history, culture and sense of place in the world," said Barry.

Her forthcoming book, *Standing Ground: Gender and Environmental Justice in the Age of Mountaintop Removal Coal Mining*, is a study of women's environmental activism to stop mountaintop removal mining.



"Ordinary people—Appalachian women—can make real differences in the world and they are doing so in Appalachia with their critiques of the coal industry. They are my heroes, the people that I look up to and try to pattern my life after."

Joyce Barry is currently a visiting professor of women's studies at Hamilton College in N.Y. She teaches classes on the intersections between gender and environmentalism.

Pat Beaver: Investing in Appalachia

By Anna Oakes

Located in the Blue Ridge Mountains on the campus of Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C., the Center for Appalachian Studies develops, coordinates and facilitates curricula and programs related to the Appalachian region.

Patricia Beaver, a professor of anthropology who earned her doctorate from Duke University in 1976, is the director of the Center for Appalachian Studies. She has conducted research in Appalachia and China, focusing on community, family and public policy and issues related to gender, class and ethnicity.

Beaver was project director of the landmark Appalachian Land Ownership Study (1979-1980), credited with contributing to the emergence of participatory action research in the United States and the establishment of the interdisciplinary field of Appalachian Studies.

Her recent research concerns cultural and ethnic diversity in Appalachia, with special focuses on African American and Jewish communities in Asheville, N.C., Melungeon history and identity, and rehistoricizing gender and ethnicity.

The Center for Appalachian Studies encourages individuals, including students, faculty and the public, to invest more of themselves in the region, beyond the simple economic exchanges derived from studying, working and relaxing here. This investment provides the vital human capital necessary for the region's continued development. For more info visit appstudies.appstate.edu.

Marie Daly: Chartering An Education for Low-Income Kids

By Jesse Wood

In the fall of 2009, Marie Daly founded Ivy Academy, a unique and successful tuition-free charter school outside of Chattanooga, Tenn.

After teaching English for 20 years and witnessing apathetic students, she knew she had to do something different to help children regain their natural curiosity for the world around them, as well as excel in school.

"I always wanted to teach outdoors in more of an integrated thematic curriculum," she said. "I couldn't find [a school] like this, so I created one."

Compared to traditional public schools, the class sizes are smaller, typically 10 – 12 students, and class periods run longer.

Over 85 percent of Ivy Academy's students are considered low-income. Studies and reports often correlate socioeconomics with success in school, but Ivy Academy proves to be an exception to the rule.

In their first year, the school reported 83 percent of students were proficient or advanced in Algebra 1, and 96 percent of students were proficient or advanced in English.

"We have some kids that hated school, now they really like school," said Daley. "We have kids that had chronic absentee problems and they don't have it here. Kids that never got good grades before are passing here and doing well."

The public high school is adjacent to 7,000 acres of protected wilderness in Hamilton County and the curriculum places an emphasis on the environment. The staff and students recycle their waste, and students spend at least half of their class time outdoors.

"There is a real movement for education reform. I think we have to learn how to think differently, and the environment is very important," she said. "Sustainability and going to alternative sources of power is the wave of the future. You can either get on the bus or get left behind."

At left, Lucy Morgan circa 1930 watching local spinner Emma Conley stir the dye pot, and above circa 1950.

Lucy Morgan: Weaving A Community Craft School

By Alli Marshall

When Lucy Morgan stepped off a train in Penland, N.C. in 1920, ready to work as a teacher at the Appalachian School, no one knew that she would one day lay the foundation for one of the most well-known craft schools on the east coast. Inspired by weaving classes at Berea College in Kentucky, Morgan decided to teach western North Carolina mountain women to weave as a means of income. As the popularity of the weaving collective spread, Morgan secured government funding for program instruction. Morgan's success attracted the attention of Craft Revival leaders like weaving expert Edward Worst, who suggested adding a pottery production to the weaving program and in 1928, the cottage industry duo was named Penland Weavers and Potters.

Penland Weavers morphed into Penland School of Handicrafts in 1929, offering training for artisans in a quickly expanding variety of traditional and contemporary craft disciplines, with a goal, says the school's webpage, "to support creative traditions and build community through instruction in craft." Even during the Great Depression, Morgan was adding programs at Penland like chair-seating, vegetable dyeing and spinning. She was named the Southern Mountain Handicraft Guild representative to the International Exhibition of Folk Arts in Berne, Switzerland in 1934. By the 1940s, visitors from Canada, Alaska, Peru and China were visiting Penland to learn about crafts and cottage industries. Today, the Penland School of Handicrafts is a nationally recognized center for craft education offering short-term workshops, a resident artist program and an exhibiting gallery space.

According to her own memoirs, Lucy Morgan never left the Western Carolina mountains for any length of time during her life (and she lived to be older than 90!). Morgan's story is well-documented in Western Carolina University's project, "Craft Revival: Shaping Western North Carolina Past and Present." Morgan remained at Penland until 1962.

The Art of Empowerment

By Jillian Randel

Three years ago, Kari Gunter-Seymour was sitting at her monthly potluck supper surrounded by her closest female friends, when she and her friend, Winsome Chunnu— assistant director of the Multicultural Center at Ohio University— had a vision.

Above: Sisters in Recovery posing behind their t-shirts.

Left: "Sunrise, Sunset" by Simona Aizicovici, pressed flowers.

"People think of an Appalachian woman and look down on her," said Gunter-Seymour. "I started thinking about women and art out there needing support and that prodded me to put together an exhibit."

Thus began the annual women of Appalachia Art Exhibit and its sister project, Women Speak— a night dedicated entirely to spoken art.

Seymour strives to include less-traditional artists and women with fewer resources.

"Some of the women in our area have not had the same opportunities as others," said Gunter-Seymour. "I was a single mother going to school and a lot of people were helping me. We have women that don't have that support or encouragement."

This led to the involvement of the Athens County Sisters in Recovery program.

"We have women who need to be safe from domestic violence and rape and things that we don't like to talk about," said Gunter-Seymour. "Last year they made two beautiful quilts that were just wrenching in their message."

This year the art exhibit will feature work from the Clothesline Project, a program where women create t-shirts, a process to help heal the wounds of domestic violence and sexual abuse.

"It is hard to learn about what these women have been through knowing they are 2nd and 3rd generation victims and now they have the opportunity to leave that life," said Gunter-Seymour.

Unique to the exhibit is the diversity of mediums used— among them metal, enamol, acrylic, water color, clay, photography and fiber pieces.

This year's Women Speak event will be held on May 12 from 6-8 p.m. in the university's main theatre.

"I think there is a lot less opportunity for spoken art than visual," said Gunter-Seymour. "We are in a time where people aren't speaking anymore— they are emailing and tweeting. It is more important than ever to remind people of spoken word."

Support comes from Ohio University's Multicultural Center and the Women's Center.

This year's exhibit will show April 1 through June 10, 2011. womenofappalachiaevents.com

Sharman Chapman-Crane: Quilting Community

Two years ago Sharman Chapman-Crane held a meeting to start a Heritage Quilt project. She had seen quilts decorating the countryside in other states and decided to bring the idea to her own Letcher County community.

"My idea was to put them near community and senior citizens centers, but it has gone way beyond that," said Chapman-Crane. "Schools, parks, businesses and individuals are putting them up. It's been pretty amazing to see."

Her community has created over 80 squares ranging from 2 by 2 feet to 8 by 8 feet.

The county festival committee is considering creating a brochure and map of the quilt locations for visitors to follow.

The quilt project—now in 20 states—was started by a woman in Ohio and was originally intended for the sides of barns.

"Other counties have applied for grants and had professional artists doing it," said Chapman-Crane. "Ours is entirely volunteer. Also unique is that here we have a strong quilt heritage, but not enough barns so we have them hanging in many places."

"People just love it and it has been a real unifying thing," said Chapman-Crane. -- *Written by Jillian Randel*

Marie Cirillo and Carol Judy: Keeping the Land in the Hands of the People

In the Eagan, Tenn., community, two women strive tirelessly to promote community development. Carol Judy and Marie Cirillo have worked with the Clearfork Community Institute and the Woodland Community Land Trust to purchase land for community members who would otherwise be left without. The land trusts allow residents to enter into lifetime renewable leases where they can build homes and businesses, grow gardens, plan community meals and foster a sense of belonging and participation. Judy and Cirillo work to keep the land in the people's hands, rather than for-profit private and corporate owners. Cirillo, a former nun, keeps a smile on her face and positive energy everywhere she goes. Judy is a good-humored root digging herbalist and passionate about the mountains. Both women have dedicated their lives to creating positive community development.

-- Written by Jillian Randel

Kit Gruille: Turning domestic violence 'victims' into 'survivors'

Kit Gruelle has been a professional advocate for battered women in North Carolina for 25 years, helping them tap into their unrealized strengths. "It's almost a form of midwifery – you get to be a part of the birthing process," said Gruelle, who lives in Wilkes County. She has lectured throughout the United States as a community educator to law enforcement, clergy and health care professionals. She breaks the stereotypes regarding domestic violence in her educational film, *Private Violence*, which is being made into a feature-length documentary with support from Gloria Steinem and *Crazy Love* author Leslie Morgan Steiner. Gruelle is working on a sociology degree at Appalachian State University, with possible plans to attend law school to better support domestic violence reform. *-- Written by Linda Coutant*

Minnie Vance: Sixty Years of Open-Door Healthcare

By Katherine Vance

Minnie, at the time 87 years old, looks at a patient's ears at her office on McCallie Ave. Photo by Katherine Vance. Inset, Minnie at 23 when she first entered medical school.

When I was asked to write a 500 word feature about my grandmother, Dr. Minnie Vance, I admit that I almost turned the assignment down. How could I possibly fit the story of her more than half a century's work as a pediatrician in Chattanooga, Tenn.?

Perhaps I should start in 1932. Minnie was a ten-year-old tom-boy, running around barefoot during a hot, sticky summer. When she wasn't playing in the Texas heat, she read in the big, old wicker chair in her family's living room. When she was ten, she read a book about nurses, which helped her realize that she wanted to use her life to help others. Yet, this wiry little girl didn't stop there. Despite the traditional gender roles of the 1930's, Minnie remembers thinking, "Why be a nurse? Nurses have to empty bedpans. I don't want to empty 'ole bedpans. Why not be a doctor?"

In 1945, at 23, Minnie started her first year at the University of Tennessee's Medical School in Memphis. A tall, striking blonde, she was the only woman in her class, and remained so for the first few years.

Minnie claimed she was isolated by some of her male classmates; some found her career decision unconventional. But Minnie never flinched.

"I never thought it was weird," she said. "I always believed that I could be what I wanted to be."

In 1950, Minnie married Daniel Vance of Chattanooga. After finishing her residency in 1952, she opened a pediatric office in a small house at 2507 McCallie Ave. The little Chattanooga house would serve as her office for 58 years.

Minnie continued to live a life that was unconventional and revolutionary. With four children, she balanced life as a doctor with life as a mother.

A friend of Minnie's, Dr. Eleanor Stafford, became a partner at the office in 1954, and the two women gained a reputation for treating underprivileged children. Their initial charge for an office visit was about $3, but if a parent couldn't afford it, the doctors would see their children anyway.

"We could never turn away a child," Minnie said. "Children from the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum needed good doctors, too."

The two women maintained this mentality throughout their years of practicing medicine, often taking patients that other doctors would not. Before the civil-rights bill passed, Minnie and Eleanor's office had one of the few non-segregated waiting rooms in Chattanooga.

"We could never do that to a human being," Minnie says, "I was brought up by my parents to be open-minded and loving towards all people, to believe that we are all children of God."

Minnie was 30 years old when she opened the McCallie Ave office and did not retire until the fall of 2010, at the age of 88. She saw tens of thousands of patients over the years, and often multiple generations within families.

Dr. Minnie Vance has touched the lives of so many people. She is truly a great woman of Texas, of Appalachia, of the world.

Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture: An Emphasis on Local

In 2005, a group of women farmers in northwestern North Carolina, frustrated by the lack of resources and skepticism often shown to female agriculturalists, decided to create a support system for themselves called the Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture (BRWIA).

Over the past seven years, the all-volunteer group has accumulated a directory of more than 60 female farmers in a tri-county region. All donation and grant money is applied directly to BRWIA's various programs, helping women attend regional and national farming conferences and offering well-attended community workshops each month (open to both men and women) on topics such as chicken processing, bread making and policy.

Their third annual Farm Tour, held last August, featured seventeen farms and hosted more than 250 visitors; participating farms included a goat dairy, a blueberry orchard, and a horse rehab center. This year BRWIA will begin offering a $1,500 Sustainable Food and Agriculture Grant (deadline March 1) to women farmers in their region, supporting innovation in sustainable agriculture. While focusing mostly on the needs of women farmers, the organization's ultimate goal, says Mel Weiss, Americorps Vista Program Coordinator for BRWIA, is to create "a strong and vibrant food system."

BRWIA will host a Winter Gathering at Hob Knob Farm Cafe in Boone, N.C., on February 21 from 4-6 p.m. for the community to meet the members and learn about the group's work. For more information visit brwia.org.

-- Written by Jamie Goodman

Appalachian Women's Alliance: Celebrating Strength

By Anna Oakes

The cast of a play presented by the Clinchco Center included Edna Gulley (far right), a full-time staff member at the center and member of the Appalachian Women's Alliance. Photo by Julia Powers, courtesy of the Clinchco Center.

Since the heyday of the railroads and coal companies, when black Appalachians settled in the coalfields of southwestern Virginia, the black and white "camps" of Clinchco remained separated—until the late 1990s, when local groups organized by the Appalachian Women's Alliance planned a diversity workshop and rally that drew threats from the Ku Klux Klan.

The Appalachian Women's Alliance, headquartered in Floyd, Va., was founded in 1993 by a group of women organizers throughout the region. Striving for economic justice, human rights and safety for women and children, they work to preserve the Appalachian mountains, culture and communities.

The alliance resolved to end racism in Dickenson County, holding black history celebrations, placing black history books in schools and libraries and opening the Clinchco Center in 2004. The center is a resource for education, civic involvement, creative expression and social interaction.

"Since that time, we've involved hundreds of women in our programs," said Meredith Dean, director of the alliance.

Edna Gulley is a Clinchco resident and full-time staff member at the center. Gulley said she is proud to work with low-income women in her community, helping them realize that they do have a voice.

"It's work that makes you feel good," Gulley said. "If I wasn't getting paid, I would still be a part of this organization. Coming into the alliance has made a tremendous impact on my life…getting out and meeting and greeting different people."

The alliance has published the *Appalachian Women's Journal*, encouraging Appalachian women to speak to each other and the world in their own words.

"Mountain Women Rising"—a traveling performance presentation that shares women's experiences through poetry, prose and song— was designed to be tailored to classes in social studies, women's studies and Appalachian studies, and supplemented with workshops.

The alliance also sponsors Ironweed, a gathering that celebrates the artistic talent, regional leadership and courageous lives of Appalachian women through music, storytelling, poetry, dance and visual arts.

"I do thank the alliance for coming together and saying, 'how can we bridge this community so it can be one community?'" Gulley added. "It's a community—it's not either/or."

For more info about the Appalachian Women's Alliance, visit appalachianwomen.org or email awa@swva.net.

Appalachian Women's Fund:
Picking Up Where Crisis Centers Leave Off

In Watauga County, N.C., there are a number of agencies that help women in crisis situations, but once they are out of immediate danger, what comes next?

Appalachian Women's Fund (AWF) works in collaboration with organizations in the High Country to provide services and educational opportunities that help women transition from crisis situations towards safety, stability and independence.

Run by an all female volunteer board, AWF has raised and granted over $180,000 to programs in seven N.C. counties that provide women with the skills and confidence they need to improve their future.

"We are all very proud of the work we do empowering women" says Cathy Williamson, AWF board member. "We are providing opportunities to impoverished, disenfranchised women and empowering them to break out of that cycle."

AWF focuses on programs that give women the tools – including professional training, education, and financial skills – they need to become self-sufficient.

-- Written by Parker Stevens

Teresa Gardner & Paula Hill Meade:
Mission Work in Your Own Back Yard

Best friends since 8th grade, Teresa Gardner and Paula Hill Meade have drawn even closer through their work together at the Health Wagon in Clinchco, Va.

As Nurse Practitioners, the two women serve communities in Dickenson and Wise Counties year round, offering free health care to people who could not otherwise afford these services. A mobile clinic drives to remote areas of Dickenson County and every July, the Health Wagon hosts the Remote Area Medical clinic (known as RAM) in Wise, Va., serving over a thousand patients in one weekend.

Inspired by Sr. Bernie Kenny, founder of the Health Wagon, the two women have dedicated their lives to serving those in need in their community. As Meade says, "my philosophy has always been that the only way to find yourself is to lose yourself in serving others."

-- Written by Hannah Morgan

Reel World String Band: Singing for Justice

By Jillian Randel

In 1977, a group of twenty-five women in Kentucky gathered their instruments to perform for the International Day of Women. Of that group, four women (later joined by a fifth) decided to keep stringing and singing, playing traditional tunes incorporating country, swing, blues and jazz. It was the birth of the Reel World String Band.

"As we began to develop a repertoire, we realized that many of the songs we sang were pretty sexist," said Karen Jones, the band's fiddler. "Our own song writing sort of evolved out of a lack of material on contemporary issues."

The Reel World String band worked closely with the Highlander Center, an organization based out of Tennessee that works with grassroots movements; an experience that helped to politicize Reel World's work.

Inspired by a group of women living in Harlan County, Ky., Futrell wrote a song called "Cranks Creek," about the destructive strip mining happening above their homes and the ensuing flooding this small community suffered.

"We have seen the evolution of coal mining through our songs," said Jones, recalling one written by Futrell in 1986 about the injustices of broad form deeds— documents that establish that coal companies owned the subsurface rights of people's lands. Two years after the song was written, 82% of Kentucky residents voted in favor of an amendment to broad form deeds which would protect landowners from strip mining.

In a recent song, titled "Who Owns Appalachia," the band's banjo player Sue Massek writes, "These hills hold my soul; King Coal owns my land; Oil barrens own King Coal; It's time we make our stand." Lyrics of activism articulate Reel World's style.

"Certainly the arts have been very active in trying to keep these issues in the forefront so there is constant pressure on the coal companies," said Jones.

Reel World taps into more sensitive issues in Appalachia with a sense of grace.

"Sometimes people don't know how to define us when they book us for a place to play," said Futrell. "When we start playing, the audience wonders what we're going to do. We usually win them over even if they don't like what we're singing about. We don't antagonize them—we inform them in a gentle manner.

The ladies of Reel World String Band from left to right: Sharon Ruble (bass), Bev Futrell (guitar), Sue Massek (banjo), Karen Jones (fiddle) and Elise Melrood (piano).

"In the early days as a band, people often approached us after a show and asked, 'What do your husbands think?'" Futrell laughs.

"Back then we had an agent who tried to portray the novelty of an 'all-girl string band,'" adds Jones. "He wanted to make money off us, but we weren't really commercially viable. We had a bigger connection to our community and politics."

"If we wanted to go commercial we would have had to give up being socially conscious and we were never willing to do that."

"Also," adds Futrell, "It probably wouldn't be as much fun."

To learn more about Reel World String Band, visit reelworldstringband.com.

Appalachian History: Women Blazing Trails in Song and Verse

By Jason Reagan

Aunt Molly Jackson (right, source "Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People") and Maybelle and Sara Carter (left).

Ask most people what they think when they hear the term "Appalachian Women in Music" and the likely response may be "Coal Miner's Daughter/ Loretta Lynn" or maybe their eyes will brighten as they shout "Dolly Parton!"

And, although Lynn and Parton paved the way for a generation of musicians from the hollers and mountains to the stage of the Grand Ole Opry, the deeper traditions echoing down the Appalachian mountain range over the decades whispers a rich tapestry of many women making their songs heard despite the barren soil from which it often came.

"I think there were probably more socioeconomic factors that kept women from the forefront of history in Appalachian folk music than those that brought them to the front," Mark Freed, a North Carolina-based folklorist said.

For many folk singers of Appalachia – both men and women – their musical muse spawned not from lighthearted days spent idly by a mountain stream, but rather from the depths of the coal pits with songs as gloomy and combustible as the coal dust that inspired their lyrics.

"I think the women songwriters from the coal camps were forced to the forefront," Freed said. "They were the ones at home with starving children, dealing with company thugs, and witnessing the atrocities of coal camps."

Such was the genesis of Aunt Molly Jackson, born in 1880.

The daughter of a bankrupt grocer and union activist in Clay County, Ky., Jackson felt the black arm of the mines at a young age when her father had to close his store due to the failure and abandonment of a nearby coal mine.

The Appalachian mines that robbed her father of his livelihood, also stole everything she held dear, killing her first husband in a 1917 accident and blinding both her brother and father in another incident. To cope with such horrors, Jackson turned to her great-grandmother's rich folk music heritage.

Such loss and her seemingly natural sense of justice shaped Jackson's evolution into one of the century's best known protest singers.

"She was at the height of her glory when she was giving someone she thought was no good a hard time," recalled Jim Garland, Jackson's half-brother and fellow musician, in his autobiography, "Welcome the Traveler Home."

"These troublemaking instincts led her to write many a fine song," he said.

By 1930, Jackson's songs began to take shape as a key factor in bringing deplorable mining conditions in places like Harlan, Ky., to light.

Songs like "Poor Miner's Farewell" and "Kentucky Miner's Wife" brought the plight of the miner to the attention of a wider --- some would say national --- audience.

The combination of her great-grandmother's pure folk roots and her flaming internal combustion to right wrongs launched Jackson into greater heights of fame when she recorded her first album in New York City in 1931.

Her work inspired a generation of younger folk singers and later led to a folk music revival in Greenwich Village; it also lit a bright torch for the burgeoning labor movements of post-Depression America.

"She came to be perceived by intellectuals of the time as an 'authentic' representative of the American folk," said Alexis Luckey, a folklorist at the University of Virginia, writing in a 2005 article.

Almost synonymous with folk music are the equally melodious names, Maybelle and Sara Carter.

Born in the mountains of Scott County, Va., the Carters – along with Sarah's husband A.P.—recorded more than 250 songs between the late 1920s and 1941.

"Maybelle's 'Carter Scratch' style on the guitar became one of the most mimicked styles across the region," Freed said.

"The harmony singing of Sara and Maybelle was extremely influential," he added, noting a pantheon of other folk music goddesses who helped shape a generation of later musicians; pioneers like Hazel Dickens, Jean Ritchie, Lulu Belle and Ola Belle Reed.

The list goes on, but amid these triumphs, perhaps the most poignant aspect in the development of Appalachian women of music was the heart-wrenching poverty and heartbreak that often consumed regions of Appalachia through unfair labor practices, treacherous mining conditions and general exploitation.

"Women were backed into corners where speaking out and writing songs were the only ways to try and overcome their situations," Freed said.

Here's hoping future generations of songwriters never forget those dark corners where a little lyrical light still shown.

Kathy Mattea & Coal

Kathy Mattea is a Grammy-winning singer, songwriter and social activist from South Charleston, West Va. On her album, *Coal*, Mattea compiled historic coal-mining songs in honor of her place and her people.

"Coal is a re-education for the listeners, a record that reshapes the way we think about music," said Mattea

Both of Mattea's grandfathers were coalminers and her own parents grew up in coal camps. The idea for *Coal* was born after the Sago Mine Disaster, when 12 miners were killed, an event that reminded her of the Farmington Disaster during her childhood, when a staggering 78 miners were killed. "I thought 'now is the time to do these songs.' Sago was the thing that brought it all back to the surface," said Mattea.

Mattea said in a recent National Public Radio interview, "My goal was to tell the story and to open up a window to people who have not heard these songs before and hopefully they might find some accessibility there." -- *Written by Kaley Bellanti*

Kellin Watson:
The Evolution of Mountain Music

Mountain music isn't disappearing, it's evolving. Singer/songwriter Kellin Watson, from Black Mountain, N.C. is proof. She's descended from Appalachian musicians (third-cousin to bluegrass legend Doc Watson), her dad taught banjo and fiddle, and Watson herself started playing guitar and writing songs at 13. Her sound is informed by jazz, blues and pop as much as by roots music. In fact, Watson's resume includes singing on a Japanese metal album and opening for country artist Jessica Simpson, as well as playing Black Mountain's Lake Eden Arts Festival. She just completed her fourth album, the soulful *Halo Of Blue*, due out this spring. Visit kellinwatson.com. -- *Written by Alli Marshall*

Photo by John Warner Photography

Kelly Ellis: Helping Students Tell Their Stories

By Jillian Randel

Kelly Ellis's legs were shaking the first time she got up to do a poetry reading. She was working on her Ph.D. at the University of Kentucky when Frank Walker X— a student in the graduate program and also program coordinator of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Cultural Center— asked her to do an open mic night. "Why are you asking me?" said Ellis. "You just act like a writer," replied Walker.

Ellis and a group of other minority students and staff members started meeting regularly- including poets such as Crystal Wilkinson and Nikky Finney. They finally became known as the Affrilachians- a term coined by Walker.

"[The Affrilachian Group] was supportive and made me feel like I was a writer," said Ellis. "Having people respond to my work in a positive way made me keep going."

The women in Ellis's family were natural storytellers. She always wanted to be a writer, and started taking creative writing classes at UK around the time she helped found the Affrilachians.

"There had to be a space for non-white writers and artists in the region, because we were ignored," said Ellis. "It was assumed there weren't a lot of black people in Appalachia. When Frank gave us a name and said, 'you belong here, you have always been here,' it gave us permission then to identify people and ourselves as black Appalachians— and extended that to other artists of color."

"Writers and artists need communities. It doesn't mean you're all the same, but you have a place where people recognize you are an artist. If you're by yourself it can be really lonely. You keep your art secret or hidden in a journal or sketchbook. You won't dance because you think no one else is dancing."

Ellis is an associate professor of English and creative writing at Chicago State University, as well as the associate director of the MFA Creative Writing program.

"I learn so much helping my students claim their voices," said Ellis. "But it's also about what I learn about who were are as human beings and how important it is for people to be able to tell their stories. I don't want just a few people to have access to the power of language and words- that is every body's right."

Kelly Ellis is one of the founding members of the Affrilachians— a collective of artists working to bring voice and name to African Americans across Appalachia.

"I work with different races and ethnicities, and everybody has a story and these stories amaze me and make me think about my own humanity. Even though we are all different, we are all the same."

Ellis is currently working on a book called *The Shoe Cobbler's Daughter*- a collection of poems about her grandfather's life. She is also working on an anthology of black writers in Appalachia, titled *Brown Country*. Visit affrilachianpoets.com.

Crystal Good: Changing the Community through Creativity

By Jillian Randel

When Crystal Good was ten years old and her best friend was hit by a car, her reaction was to rally for speed bumps in her town. It showed Good that she had a voice and ideas to bring to the table, and was an early demonstration of the values that would shape her life and the positive contributions she would make to her community.

A West Virginia native, Good knew very little about the history of African Americans in her region, though she was aware a rich history existed.

"I was a poet and trying to find somebody else like me," said Good. "I found the Affrilachian poets. They were working to preserve and share the history, and not just in an African American context but people from Native American or Hispanic backgrounds, too."

Good has always had a passion for sharing her poetry with others.

Crystal Good is a community organizer guru, using her passion to help her community.

"Twelve years ago I did my first poetry slam," said Good. "There were open invitations to poets and the people who came out to those first few are now good friends of mine. Now I'm thinking about how to put together a show that fuses music, multimedia and poetry."

Growing up near chemical plants in Charleston, W.Va. and seeing her parents work in them put environmental and human health dangers on the forefront of her mind.

As Vice President of Create West Virginia- a grassroots initiative to build the new, creative economy of WV- she looks for ways to build an economy outside of the traditional manufacturing jobs that can have negative effects on her community. They look to engineers, doctors, technologists and the arts as alternative forms of economy.

"What if we didn't build a plant but something intellectual and creative in our economy?" said Good. "I am really interested in the diversity aspect of that because ideas come from the diversity of people who have different backgrounds and that will help us solve some of the challenges that are before us."

Good is the recipient of numerous awards for her community organizing including the Charleston Black Ministry's Community Trailblazer Award. She was honored along with nine other women, significant because prior to that, only one female had been honored the award.

"It comes from many years of work, value of diversity and trying to speak representation and finding my way to projects and giving a voice there- somewhat fearlessly at times," said Good.

On top of being a mother of three boys, Good works as Director of Brand Experience for a marketing firm called Mythology.

"I can't imagine not being engaged in the community and having my own passions and not raising my boys with this perspective. It's all about hard work. It's the value I come from- not an option- it's the way I'm wired."

Marilou Awiakta: Writing, Culture, Gender...Atoms

By Jared Schultz

"I am a Cherokee-Appalachian woman who grew up with the atom," writer Marilou Awiakta stated as we discussed her work and mission as a poet, storyteller and essayist.

The seventh generation of her family, Awiakta grew up in Oak Ridge, Tenn., a federal center for nuclear research. Over the course of her career as a writer, she has blended these seemingly disparate influences in her writing on environmental and social issues in such books as *Abiding Appalachia: Where Mountain and Atom Meet* and *Selu: Seeking the Corn-Mother's Wisdom.*

"From nature and my relatives, I learned that everything in the universe is connected like a web. Each strand affects the other. My work is to make those connections visible," she explained.

Our conversation flowed among discussions of modern gender roles, strip mining, mountain living and scientific evidence of nature's laws and vibrations. In her book *Selu*, first published in 1993, she transitions between poems, traditional stories and journalistic pieces with the intent of creating the literary equivalent of a woven basket. Awiakta blends together ideas just as she blends literary techniques, seamlessly and with purpose.

"When I told my mother I wanted to be a poet, she said 'that's good, but what will you do for the people?' All of my work has been in that mountain tradition—to take the material at hand and make something useful and comely for the community," Awiakta said. "I wanted to create art for life's sake as opposed to art for art's sake."

Dr. Theresa L. Burriss, Director of the Appalachian Regional Studies Center at Radford University, said of Awiakta's legacy, "Every time I talk with her, Awiakta speaks from a deep, heartfelt space inside her that beckons her ancestors and seeks to honor their memory, their legacy and their traditions."

The feminism Awiakta supports is one that exists in balance with family and gender, so that female voices are equally influential in policy development. She refers to Cherokee beliefs about the collective potential of family and gender that existed before the arrival of Europeans, who tried to destroy that system.

As a Cherokee poet, writer and speaker, Marilou Awiakta (right) is a leading literary figure in the Appalachian region.

"Woman had a respected place in governing society. It was an egalitarian idea that a balance of genders is best in any aspect of society," said Awiakta. Today many nations have restored these traditional systems.

At 75, Awiakta continues to be active as a writer and speaker. Summarizing her lecture on, "Balancing the Virtual and Real Worlds," Awiakta told me, "Scientific evidence indicates that the overuse of electronics is causing a difference in human brain frequencies, creating a digital brain that only works in a binary way, not a holistic way."

Awiakta hopes to use her poetic sensibilities and cultural foundations to encourage youth.

"I look forward to seeing how new generations will redefine the environment, gender roles, family and so on. The young people I have met in my travels inspire me to believe that they will do this well."

Joyce Dugan: First Female Chief of the Eastern Band

Joyce Dugan was elected Chief of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) in 1995, becoming the first woman to ever lead in that role. During her tenure she advocated for employment rights for the Cherokee, sought to revitalize Cherokee culture through language-focused government programs, repatriation and education issues in museum exhibits. She also brought the Cherokee voice to the chorus of environmentalists seeking solutions to water quality and air pollution problems, as well as advocated for responsible game laws. She continues to work for the women and people of Western North Carolina through teaching and advocacy work. -- *Written by Jared Schultz*

Marie Junaluska: Translating Cherokee for the World

Photo by Herb Key

Marie L. Junaluska's recent reappointment to the North Carolina Arts Council cements her presence and reputation as a master conveyor of Cherokee history and culture.

Junaluska grew up in the Qualla Boundary, home to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI), speaking Cherokee as her first language. Over the years, she retained her first language and has become an interpreter of the Cherokee language for the Smithsonian, Disney Imagineering and Western Carolina University, as well as teacher of the Cherokee language to students in Cherokee schools. She received the Friends of Sequoyah Award in 2004 for her work on the Sequoyah Syllabary— the first written language of the Cherokee, and received the Peacemaker of the Year Award in 2008. -- *Written by Jared Schultz*

The Heart of the Mountaintop R

When Ollie "Widow" Combs laid down in front of a bulldozer t
her actions to protect her land would grow into a movement. To
but drinking water, clean air, the natural environment and the v

Julia "Judy" Bonds: Saying Goodbye To An American Hero

By J.W. Randolph

Judy Bonds, at left, outside of a West Virginia courtroom, lived her life in the quest of an end to mountaintop removal coal mining and to protect Appalachia for the next generation. Photo by Antrim Caskey

It is with a heavy heart that we witness the passing of one of the greatest Appalachian leaders in our country's history, Judy Bonds.

A loyal friend, inspiring leader and a proud family woman, Judy will be remembered for her unwavering commitment to the people of Appalachia and for her heroic efforts to ending mountaintop removal coal mining. With her sharp wit and quick smile, Judy was a joyful peer, an engaging collaborator and a powerful and beautiful storyteller who told the rest of America the story of Appalachia and its people. Judy stood up for her region at great personal risk to herself, facing arrest, threats and even assault from allies of a corrupt coal industry.

Born in Marfork Hollow, W.Va., she was the proud daughter of a coal miner. In 2003 Judy received international acclaim, winning the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize for community organizing at a time when few people had even heard of mountaintop removal.

Like many Appalachian women, Judy was intimately familiar with the flora and fauna around her. "See that? That's the ironweed," Ms. Bonds once said, pointing out a purple-flowered plant to a visiting reporter. "They say they're a symbol for Appalachian women. They're pretty. And their roots run deep. It's hard to move them."

As much as Judy loved her home, she spent years on the road bearing witness to the problems in Appalachia and inspiring thousands of people to join the movement to end mountaintop removal. Her organizing efforts were palpable at the national level and in her own backyard where she confronted dangerously overloaded coal haul trucks. These efforts were instrumental in the campaign to build a new Marsh Fork Elementary School and she fought tirelessly to end the poisoning and blasting of her own community. Recognizing the corruption and ineffectiveness of many Appalachian politicians, Judy also spoke about the importance of organizing across the nation and bringing the fight to Washington D.C.

Judy's family lived in Marfork Hollow for six generations until she was forced to leave in 2001, as the last residents of a community ravaged by mountaintop removal. She recalled standing in a creek in the Coal River Valley with her 7-year old grandson, his fists full of dead fish, and knowing that something was going horribly wrong. Fueled by her first hand knowledge of the injustices faced by coalfield citizens, Judy went on to become the director of Coal River Mountain Watch, and a leading voice calling for justice in Appalachia, helping build a national movement.

"When powerful people pursue profits at the expense of human rights and our environment, they have failed as leaders," Judy once said. "Responsible citizens must step forward, not just to point the way, but to lead the way to a better world."

Words will fail to express the awe we all shared as we watched Judy live her life, the gratitude that we feel for her leadership and courage, or the loss of a friend that is felt in our shared community. It is a community that is much larger thanks to Judy Bonds. Judy's family has asked that donations be made to Coal River Mountain Watch (www.crmw.net)

Maria Gunnoe: Turning Spirit and Grit into A Goldman


Photo by Vivian Stockman

When floods from a nearby mountaintop removal mine washed away acres of Maria Gunnoe's ancestral land in Boone County, W.Va., she began to tirelessly organize with Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition to stop the mine and protect other communities from the same fate, despite threats against her life. "Maria is a prime example of true Appalachian spirit and grit. She goes out of her way to help someone in need, and won't think twice to stand up to those who do wrong," said Dustin White, who works with Maria to protect cemeteries from mountaintop removal. Maria's tenacity earned her a 2009 Goldman Environmental Prize and stopped expansion of the mine behind her house. She is currently working to keep the community of Twilight, W.Va., from being lost to mountaintop removal. Learn more at mtrstopshere.org. -- *By Dana Kuhnline*

Kathy Selvage: A Woman "Wise" Beyond Her Years

With a sweet demeanor and a southern disposition rivaling any Georgia Peach, you might not take Kathy Selvage for a fighter, but she is. A coal miner's daughter from Wise County, Va., Selvage has always had a great respect for miners, but when a coal company began blasting off mountaintops in her community, Selvage began working to bring national exposure to mountaintop removal coal mining.

She has been a citizen lobbyist for five years at the annual Week in Washington and has appeared in films such as *Coal Country* and *Electricity Fairy*. As part of the Wise Energy for Virginia Coalition, Selvage was instrumental in the fight against a proposal for a Wise County coal-fired power plant. She was the recipient of the 2006 St. Francis Ecological Award of Sowers of Justice and was named in Blue Ridge Country magazine as one of 14 individuals shaping the region. "Appalachian women are hard working women," said Selvage. "We are multi-taskers, we are given to great thought and we are people of action."

-- *By Parker Stevens*

Removal Movement

hat was preparing to strip-mine her Kentucky farm in 1965, it's doubtful that she realized oday, women's voices are among the loudest in the fight to protect not only personal land, very culture that Appalachia thrives on. Here are but a few of those amazing voices.

Lorelei Scarbro - She Knows Which Way The Wind Blows

Lorelei Scarbro's vision for the economically oppressed of Coal River Valley in W.Va. is a thriving and empowered community with the capacity to shape its economic future. Scarbro, a W.Va. native, has worked to help establish the Boone-Raleigh Community Center in Whitesville. By providing a "third space" (outside of home and work), Scarbro encourages local residents to come together in a spirit of community to reclaim local traditions and create new ideas, with the hope of stimulating local entrepreneurship. She has also been a passionate advocate for a wind farm on Coal River Mountain as an alternative to mountaintop removal mining. -- *By Sandra Diaz*

Ann League: A Force to be Reckoned With

By Dana Kuhnline

When Ann League's dream home near Zeb Mountain in Tennessee was threatened by mountaintop removal, she decided to become involved with Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment (SOCM), where she now works as an organizer.

"I do this work because I love the mountains, and I have a deep seated feeling of southern Appalachian heritage," said League. "I don't know if I have a good voice, but I have learned I have a loud voice."

A few years ago, a bill was introduced in the Tennessee legislature that would create a buffer of protection around streams near mining. It was a good bill – except for a loophole that eliminated most of the protection.

"The regulators said it wouldn't matter, because they were only tiny streams," said League. "But we had members who fish and kayak these 50-foot wide streams, and they brought in pictures and stories, and the legislators listened. They fixed the bill, it passed and we learned later that this protection set a precedent for all of Appalachia."

Photo by Jamie Goodman

In addition to her work in Tennessee, League is a leading member of the Alliance for Appalachia, often traveling for lobbying visits.

"Ann has a tireless presence in the hallways of Congress," said Bill Price, a community organizer for the Sierra Club. "She is a true force to be reckoned with and could go against a paid industry lobbyist any day of the week and come out ahead."

Fellow organizer Chris Hill adds, "From the hills of Tennessee to Capitol Hill, Ann is one of the most energetic and caring individuals I know. With her humor and passion, Ann always brightens up the room."

Ann League knows how to find the common denominator between people – and these connections often involve food.

"I have a philosophy that I deal with people with respect and camaraderie till they prove to me otherwise. If we can find a way to work together, then I'm willing to share a barbeque recipe with them."

Teri Blanton: Turning Suffering Into Strength

Teri Blanton began organizing in Harlan County, Ky., when a toxic Superfund site ruined her community's water. As a fellow with Kentuckians for the Commonwealth Canary Project, Teri has become one of the region's most powerful voices for a just, sustainable future.

"It's important to build new leaders so that everyone is speaking for themselves," said Blanton. "I hear stories of injustice every day that makes me sick. I met a little girl just two weeks ago who is sick and coughing from coal dust. To a coal company and their profits, this little girl's life means nothing. People are paying a real price for so-called cheap energy."

"To keep going, you have to take this suffering and turn it into a source of strength," said Blanton. "When people tell their stories, it can't stop there. We have to turn them into action." -- *By Dana Kuhnline*

Dr. Margaret Janes - Creating Policy and Catching Polluters

If you think you can handle the sticker shock, Senior Policy Analyst Dr. Margaret Janes can tell you a lot about the true cost of coal and industrial agriculture. As a 16-year veteran of The Appalachian Center for the Economy and the Environment (ACEE), Janes has worked on issues ranging from industrial agricultural pollution to mountaintop removal coal mining. Thanks to Jane's in-depth research and the talented team at ACEE, mining and agricultural polluter's have been required to clean up their act while the laws and regulations which safeguard the health of the region have been improved. Find out more about Jane's and the Center's work at appalachian-center.org. -- *By Jeff Deal*

Vivian Stockman singlehandedly stops a coal truck from barging into a 'stop mountaintop removal' rally. Photo by Janet Keating

Vivian Stockman: A Picture's Worth a Thousand Mountains

If you have seen a photo of mountaintop removal, there is a good chance it was taken by Vivian Stockman, whose work in West Virginia with Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition has helped knowledge of mountaintop removal spread as far as Ghana, Germany and Japan."My grandpa had an inspiring connection to the land and he taught me that," said Stockman. "All life is important; salamanders can't read a sign that says don't drink the water."

"I do this work because the people impacted are my family. Whenever I drive away from an event, I think, I love us! The people in this movement help keep me going." -- *By Dana Kuhnline*

Dr. Margaret Palmer - Creating Healthier Ecosystems For All

Margaret Palmer, a professor at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science and Director of the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, has done much to shed light on the biological impacts of mountaintop removal on streams. Although she received her Ph.D. in oceanography, she turned her attention to freshwater systems, focusing on ecologically effective restoration of rivers and streams. She was a lead scientist on a study showing the impacts of mountaintop removal to be "pervasive and irreversible." The study garnered national attention, even bringing the issue of mountaintop removal to a more unusual audience when Palmer was interviewed by Comedy Central comedian Steven Colbert.

-- By Sandra Diaz

Dr. Anna George: Enhancing the Life of Our Southern Waters

For Dr. Anna George, Director and Chief Research Scientist of the Tennessee Aquarium, the waters of our Southeast might just be heaven's own aquarium.

"The Southeast has more than half of all freshwater fish species found in the U.S., including some very colorful groups like shiners and darters," said George. "Unfortunately, 30% of these beautiful animals are at risk of extinction, and they need more champions."

Dr. George has worked to design a best practices guide for threatened and endangered fish and has actively documented and researched the devastating effects of the billion gallon Kingston Fossil Plant coal ash spill since it happened in 2008 in Harriman, Tenn.

"While documenting the impacts of the [spill] has been one of the hardest parts of my professional career, I also feel hopeful when I watch the recovery and resilience of a community, whether it is the fish or the humans," said George. -- *Written by Jeff Deal*

Jane Branham: "I just think that my people need help"

Growing up in Pound, Va., in a family supported by her father's coal mining wages, Jane Branham could not wait to get out of the coalfields and change the world. She lived all over the southwest and worked as a traveling nurse, but plagued by dreams of her home she returned to Wise County. When she first saw mountaintop removal from the top of Fox Gap, she said to herself, "right here is where I need to be changing the world."

Branham became involved with the Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards in 2006, and has served as a board member and leader of the organization since 2007. She uses her words and music to spread the message that mountaintop removal must end.

Through her activism, Branham's eyes have opened to a new vision for Appalachia. Better access to quality, affordable health care, good education systems and new political leaders in the coalfields are amongst her many passions in the struggle for justice. "We need education, jobs, resources, and we need to preserve what we have," said Branham.

-- *Written by Hannah Morgan*

Ann Pickel Harris: Safety is the Tie that Binds

By Sarah Vig

The truth will out, as Shakespeare says, and in Tennessee, Ann Harris is around to help it along.

Harris, 71, has become something of a mentor for whistleblowers and a well-known source of information and guidance on nuclear and advocacy issues since she acquired a reputation as a whistleblower at Tennessee Valley Authority in the '80s and '90s.

Harris went to work for TVA as a clerk in 1982. "I got sucked in," she explained. She didn't know much about the nuclear industry at the time, except that they needed workers and were paying good money. "To be honest, I don't even know if I could spell nuclear at the time."

Within a few years, however, she was learning more and more about where corners were cut at the plant and where regulations were slack.

Photo courtesy of The Tennessean

At first, she says, she wasn't written off by TVA and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, because she thinks they saw her as only a high-school educated woman. But according to Harris, understanding the safety violations was a simple matter of recognizing the mismatch between what was written on paper and what was actually happening at the plant, and then having the courage to report it.

"I come from a long list of strong backbones," Harris said.

Her mixture of conscience, persistence and deep commitment to protecting family have fueled her activism for nearly 40 years, first at TVA and—after a family tragedy where Harris' son-in-law murdered her daughter—on the issue of domestic violence.

For Harris, the two issues are intertwined, the common thread being safety and protecting families. "I find that with women and safety, regardless of what your cultural origins are, there's a connection around the world," she said.

Harris still speaks at rallies and files complaints when she believes poor decisions are being made at TVA or in the nuclear industry, such as the construction and rapid ramp-up of new generators; the lax nuclear waste disposal regulations in the state that allow radioactive waste material to go in the same landfills as household waste; and the production of isotopes for military weapons in commercial power generators at Watts Bar.

Though Harris' activism shows no signs of ceasing, her role as a mentor has shifted her focus to providing others with the information and skills they need to make decisions and fight for their safety.

"My legacy," she said, "is that I didn't write down a prescription and tell them to go get it filled… I don't have a magic wand, what I've got is a pathway."

Pat Banks: River Warrior on the Rise

By Jesse Wood

After hearing Robert Kennedy, Jr. speak in 2000 at Eastern Kentucky University about environmental problems in Appalachia, Pat Banks knew something had to be done, so she helped lay the ground work for integrating the Kentucky Riverkeeper into the Appalachian Studies program at EKU.

For the past few years, Banks has fought coal companies—and the government—while protecting Kentucky's waterways as the Kentucky Riverkeeper.

She is involved in a current lawsuit pitting the Commonwealth of Kentucky's Energy and Environment Cabinet against three coal companies: ICG Knott County, ICG Hazard and Frasure Creek Mining, a subsidiary of Trinity Coal. Cases such as these have opened her eyes to the partnerships between corporations and government, she said.

"Messaging has been very effective in getting our population and politicians to think this is the only way," Banks said. "I think we have to come up with a better plan. It's crucial we get our people behind us."

Banks is currently working with two filmmakers on separate documentaries to be shown in public schools and viewed on public access channels.

She also collaborated with a group of multi-media artists on a presentation called *Shaped by Water*, in which artists show their work in a traveling presentation with public schools, universities and galleries. Banks took these artists to polluted rivers, coal-fired power plants and flew with them over mountain top removal sites.

"I am an artist, too, and have been an environmentalist my whole life," said Banks, also a teacher, wife and mother. "Taking the river on as a project and mission as been a natural process for me."

Ada Smith & The Stay Project: Seeing Appalachia as Home

By Anna Oakes

As a young adult, Ada Smith realized that few groups were focused on organizing youth in Appalachia—much fewer than in other regions.

Smith, 23, is the daughter of two Appalshop filmmakers, a multimedia arts and cultural organization located in Whitesburg, Ky., striving to develop effective ways to use media to address the complex issues facing central Appalachia.

"My parents really, really instilled in me at a very young age to be very, very proud of where I came from," Smith said.

Smith attended the 2007 Appalachian Studies Association conference and learned about the challenges of the youth exodus from Appalachia and the reasons for it; a lack of good educational and economic opportunities and health and safety hazards, especially in the coalfields. As a result, Smith, along with Willa Johnson, Brittany Hunsaker and Joe Tolbert, decided to form The Stay Project.

According to its mission statement, The Stay Project "is a diverse regional network of young people ages 14 to 25 working together to create, advocate for and participate in safe, engaging and inclusive communities throughout Appalachia."

In addition to her work on The Stay Project, Smith was recently hired as the operations coordinator for the Appalachian Media Institute, an Appalshop program that trains central Appalachian youth to use media to ask and answer critical questions about themselves and their communities.

For more information, email thestayproject@email.com.

Collaboration Key for Women of Appalachia Conference

The Women of Appalachia Conference will return this fall to celebrate the wonderful and awe-inspiring women of Appalachia. Through storytelling, poetry, art and cooking, the conference celebrates the contributions of Appalachian women engaging multi-disciplinary conversation that spurs additional research and scholarship. The conference will be held in October 2011 at Ohio University Zanesville.

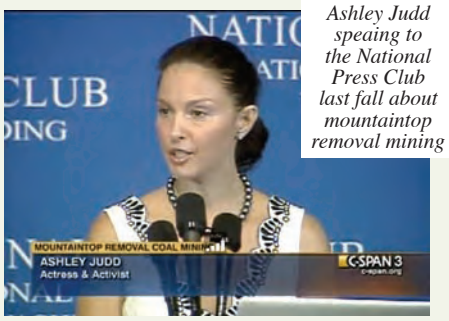
Contact Christine Shaw via email at shaw@ohio.edu or phone at 740-588-1565 for updates on the planning.

Mari-Lynn Evans & Jamie Ross: Broadening Awareness Through Film

By Linda Coutant

In 2009, two women filmmakers broadened awareness of environmental issues in Appalachia. Asheville, N.C., resident Jamie Ross' four-hour series, *Appalachia: A History of Mountains and People*, aired on PBS, reminding viewers that humanity is part of the environment, not separate from it. The series explored the intersection of natural and human histories by focusing on the region's geological formation, clash of European and Native cultures, industrial age and the search for identity in the 20th and early 21st centuries.

Also in 2009, West Virginia native Mari-Lynn Evans and Sierra Club Productions released *Coal Country*, a film examining the impact of mountaintop removal coal mining on Appalachia's citizens and economy. It included segments with Judy Bonds, who for years ardently spoke out against mountaintop removal and passed away in January 2011. *Coal Country* first aired on The Discovery Network's Planet Green channel in November 2010 and is now available to public audiences.



Ashley Judd speaing to the National Press Club last fall about mountaintop removal mining

Ashley Judd: Outspoken on the Issues

Ashley Judd, whose family hails from eastern Kentucky, is a dedicated humanitarian and environmental advocate. She has traveled the world to work on issues of poverty and social injustice, and recently focused her attention on an issue that strikes closer to home: the destruction of the Appalachian mountains through mountaintop removal coal mining. She has suffered ridicule due to her outspokenness on the issue- but stated that it, "absolutely pale(s) in comparison to what it is like for those who live every day in the war zone created by mountaintop removal mining in our beloved communities and mountains." -- *Written by Sandra Diaz*

Margaret Morley: Photographs for the Ages

Though she grew up in Iowa, the mountains of western North Carolina held a special place in the heart of writer, photographer, biologist and educator Margaret Warner Morley. Among the 20 books she authored is *The Carolina Mountains*, originally published in 1913 by Houghton Mifflin. Travelogues, historic research and biological observations were paired with Morley's own photographs, collected during her travels through the mountains by train, horse and on foot (all of this before many roads were built, let alone hiking trails, and Morley's adventures were carried out in Victorian attire). *The Carolina Mountains*, reprinted by Asheville-based Bright Mountain Books in 2006, endures as a reliable guidebook to the area. -- *Written by Alli Marshall*

Antrim Caskey: Pushing the Bounds of Journalism

Antrim Caskey has pushed the bounds of photojournalism time and again, often risking arrest and even her own safety, to document the crucial struggle surrounding mountaintop removal coal mining in West Virginia. Originally based in New York, Caskey moved to West Virginia in 2008 to cover the issue full time. She published her gripping images of the Coal River Valley region "at the center of the conflict" in the docu-photo book, *Dragline*, in 2010 and started the Appalachia Watch journalism project to provide support and training for other journalists covering mountaintop removal coal mining. In the past, Caskey documented community and social justice issues in Afghanistan and India. Her work has been published by many numerous top publications including New York Times, the Boston Globe, Smithsonian Magazine and Le Point. Visit antrimcaskey.com. -- *Written by Jamie Goodman*

Phyllis Sizemore:
Teaching About Life in the Mines

Phyllis Sizemore wants the public to experience coal from the depths of the coal mines.

While most of America's coal interactions come through light switches and thermostats, Sizemore, the curator of the Kentucky Coal Museum in Benham, Ky., is determined to highlight all facets of coal by telling the stories of the men and women and the mining that produces it.

The museum is host to Portal 31, an interactive tour of a defunct underground coal mine that allows visitors to tour eight different eras of mining, and hear from recorded first-hand accounts what life was like for the average coal miner.

In addition, Sizemore oversees the museum's other exhibits, including art inspired by the experience, and emotional toll of coal on local citizenry. With mining on the wane in Harlan County, another goal of the museum is to create a culture of tourism to help revitalize the region. Sizemore is leading the way on creating a future for her community by drawing on the legacy of the past. -- *Written by Rachael Goss*

Becky Anderson:
Handcrafting Livelihoods

When a group of western North Carolina citizens met in 1993—concerned that the region was seeing its relative economic standing in the state wane—they realized that tapping into the rich mountain tradition of crafts could provide sustainable economic opportunities, and HandMade in America was born.

Anderson, now retired, founded the program in 1995 that today facilitates the growth and sustainability of quality handmade objects in a 23-county area of western North Carolina. HandMade in America publishes guides and an online database encouraging travel to artisan studios and cultural attractions, provides resources for craft entrepreneurs and assists with community restoration. In 2000, U.S. News and World Report named Anderson one of America's Top 20 Visionaries for her work. Visit handmadeinamerica.org for more info. -- *Written by Anna Oakes*

Joy Lynn: Getting The "Coal" Experience At Whipple Store

By Jillian Randel

Above: The historic Whipple Company Store in West Virginia was built by the Coal Baron, Justus Collins. The store is one of the few still left standing.

Traveling down County Route 612 somewhere between Oak Hill and Scarbro, W.Va., you will find one of the oldest wooden coal camp company stores still in business—the Whipple Company Store— nowadays operating to preserve mountain heritage.

In 2006, Joy Lynn bought the historic museum—a longtime childhood dream—and invited her husband along for the ride.

The company store still contains the original hand-operated freight elevator, post office, and a third floor ballroom. The store's Appalachian Heritage Museum hosts year-round events like the Moonlight Masquerade and Haunted History Tours.

Lynn and her husband have created interactive and educational opportunities for visitors, including a game where children can mine and weigh coal, get paid in scrip and trade their scrip for toys and candy—just as coal families used to.

The store is open from May through November 11-6 daily. Visit whipplecompanystore.com for more info.

Highlander School: The Birth of Grassroots Organizing

By Rachael Goss

Throughout the history of Appalachia, women have risen to the call for community empowerment, and for 75 years, the Highlander Research and Education Center in New Market, Tenn., has served as a fire-starter and training ground for activists across the region and greater nation.

Formerly the Highlander Folk School, the Center has proven as resilient and resourceful as the people and communities it seeks to empower. From protecting labor rights in industry to cultivating the tools for the civil rights movement and beyond, a quick glance at Highlander's history reveals that many of the most dynamic figures to emerge from the Center were rabble-rousing women, who created unique histories of their own while forever changing the fabric of the American story.

Many of the matriarchs of the civil rights movement, including Rosa Parks, Septima Clark, Nina Simone and Zilphia Horton used the Highlander Center as an organizing resource, where they participated in integrated workshops and trainings. In a time of racial tension, the Center's dedication to social justice created a strategic safe haven for building the movement.

As the civil rights battle raged on, Highlander also became involved in the plight of communities in Appalachia's coalfields. With growing concern over coal mining's impact on the environment and the health of these communities, the Center started the Southern Appalachian Leadership Training program. This foray into organizing for environmental justice has trained many of the women warriors challenging the coal dynasty throughout Appalachia.

The list of organizers to come forth from Highlander is exhaustive, and the ripples created at the Center extend far into movements for social and environmental justice across the world. Today, Highlander continues to empower men and women alike, with specific programs aimed at catalyzing a new generation of Appalachian young women. The legacy of Highlander's women warriors continues to be a work in progress. Visit highlandercenter.org/.

Linda Hager Pack

"Write about what you know and what you love," quotes Linda Hager Pack, author of the alphabet book of Appalachian heritage, *A is for Appalachia!*

Pack explains that she wanted to write a book, "that would encourage Appalachia's children to be proud of their people, their place, and their heritage."

In *A is for Appalachia!* readers journey through the mountain history and culture that has shaped their region.

A native of Hamlin, W.Va., Pack grew up playing in the hills of Appalachia, a life that instilled in her a love of mountain culture. Pack has both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Education and taught in Kentucky and West Virginia for 22 years. lindahagerpack.com

Wilma Dykeman

Wilma Dykeman (1920-2006), often referred to as the "First Lady of Appalachian literature," wrote 18 books in her lifetime. A native of Asheville, N.C., she focused her attention on the culture, environment and people of her region.

Dykeman's work includes *The Tall Woman*, a story about an Appalachian woman who works to reestablish her community post-Civil War; a biography of Edna Rankin McKinnon, an early pioneer for birth control; and *The French Broad*, a book about saving the integrity of the environment.

Dykeman was a journalist, professor and phenomenal public speaker, but perhaps her biggest accomplishment was bringing Appalachian literature to the national scene.

Lee Smith

Lee Smith grew up in the Appalachian mountains of southwestern, V.A.; she started writing stories at nine years old. Smith's most ambitious work is *Oral History*. This novel tells the story of a mountain family who inhabit the hills of Hoot Owl Holler. Smith uses multiple points of view to tell the story of the Cantrell family and it is told over the period of a century. Her novels typically center around the people and culture of Appalachia, and include *Black Mountain Breakdown* and *Cakewalk*, her first collection of short stories.

Denise Giardina

Denise Giardina is from a small mining town, Black Wolf, W.V. Her influential novel *Storming Heaven*, which took its inspiration from the 1921 Battle of Blair Mountain, won the Discovery Book-of-the-Month award.

In *Storming Heaven*, Giardina tells a fictional version of the coal miners' fight to unionize and the mining companies who tried to stop them. "It's important to know that people fought back. When I found out that people fought back, I thought maybe I should too," said Giardina. She is an activist for environmental justice, once making a bid for governor in West Virginia as a third-party candidate to raise awareness about the effects of mountaintop removal. Currently, Giardina is a deacon in the Episcopal Church and teaches at West Virginia State University.

Ann Pancake

Ann Pancake is a fiction writer and essayist whose work concentrates on the people and atmosphere of Appalachia. Most of her short stories take place in rural West Virginia; she writes about characters that live differently than the mainstream American society. Her novel, *Strange as this Weather has Been* takes place in a small coal town in West Virginia that is in the midst of a coal boom and suffering from the effects of mountaintop removal.

Other most noted short stories are *Dirt, Jolo, Ghostless* and *Tall Grass*.

Helen Lewis

Helen Lewis is a leading pioneer in the efforts to document the history of coal mining in Appalachia. A native of rural Georgia, Lewis worked extensively to bring together the mining communities of South Wales with those in Appalachia.

This relationship allowed communities in Appalachia to learn from the economic and social changes undergone by Welsh communities and their labor movements— which occurred earlier than those in Appalachia.

Lewis was the director of the Highlander Research and Education Center and Berea College's Appalachian Center. She also directed an Appalshop film series called, "History of Appalachia."

She is currently working on a book about the early civil rights activity by the southern YWCA movements in women's colleges during the 20s, 30s and 40s.

Dr. Shirley Stewart-Burns

"...this love of the people and places of home led me to want to study the area and write about it."

Dr. Shirley Stewart-Burns has been an Appalachian all her life and thanks to her words in song and writing, we're able to share the experience. West Virginian born Stewart-Burns has written two books concerning mountaintop removal coal mining, vividly depicting the experience of those living in the region impacted by the mining through weaving the view points of Americans living with, and witnessing the destruction caused by the practices, with those profiting from it. Stewart Burn's talents don't stop at the pen's tip. She possesses a strong, poignant voice, and through it, genuinely articulates the story of her land and folks sharing it. Learn more about Shirley's work at shirleystewartburns.com.

George Ella Lyon

George Ella Lyon grew up in the mountains of Kentucky with a love of nature and writing. She studied english and music in school and has become a strong voice in the Appalachian writing scene.

"When we write or dance, sing or draw or practice any of the arts, we're listening to our hearts and expressing what we hear," writes Lyon.

Lyon is the author of numerous children and adult books, as well as works of poetry. She is also a songwriter and activist using her written word and voice to inspire the movement against coal. She has contributed to projects like *Songs for the Mountains*, a cd to raise awareness about the destruction of our mountains, and has written political essays for *Coal Country* and other works. Visit: georgeellalyon.com/index.html

Barbara Kingsolver

Barbara Kingsolver grew up in rural Kentucky, this taught her the importance of the effects of mining and poverty that has stricken places like her hometown. Her most notable works are The Poisonwood Bible, a story of a missionary family in the Congo and Animal, Vegetable, Miracle, a non-fiction account of her family and their attempt to eat local produce. Kingsolver has received many honors and awards, including the National Humanities Medal and the National Book Price of South Africa. Many of her books have been translated into dozens of languages. She currently lives in southwest Virginia.

Chris McCurry: Finding Inspiration in Bark

By Alli Marshall

Chris McCurry (above) is a green building entreprenuer, working to develop ethical business practices.

It was the old chestnut-bark siding that provided the inspiration. Though the chestnut blight has destroyed mature American chestnut trees, Chris McCurry wondered why the once-popular shingles couldn't be duplicated in poplar.

"We wanted to reintroduce something indigenous and match the culture; we wanted the buildings to fit the area," she explains. So, McCurry and her husband Marty co-founded Highland Craftsmen, Inc. in Spruce Pine, N.C.

Highland Craftsmen has been manufacturing Bark House Shingles since 1990, and today the company offers reclaimed white pine panels, bark laminates, natural moldings, handrails and wooden slabs.

Highland Craftsmen has two criteria for the materials they use: they must be sourced locally and must be a waste product of the forestry industry.

"If people have a tree that needs to be removed [due to disease or because of construction], they know they can bring it to us," says McCurry.

Her company has the expertise to properly dry and treat such wood so that an unsuspecting homeowner won't later face shrinkage, rot, or worse, insects. "We know which products will fit into a certain application — there's a lot of thought and service behind that."

There is alot of thought behind Highland Craftsmen's pledge to environmentalism, evidenced by a B Corporation Cradle to Cradle gold certification— a multi-faceted green designation that evaluates a product's safety to human beings and the environment, as well as to future life.

McCurry isn't just about making and selling bark shingles, she is about economic revitalization and building a strong local community. McCurry is Vice President of the Spruce Pine Main Street board, which fosters economic restructuring. The board has involved the University of North Carolina's Kenan-Flagler STAR (Student Teams Achieving Results) program to evaluate potential business opportunities; McCurry herself has a background in group facilitation and collaborative efforts.

"We've suffered a lot through fire and job loss," she says of the town. "Facilitating so other people can have their voice: There's huge hope in that."

Jennifer Woodruff (center), pictured with two employees of Build it Naturally.

Jennifer Woodruff: Building It Naturally

By Alli Marshall

Build It Naturally owner Jennifer Woodruff developed an environmental mindset early in life. Her parents recycled before recycling was fashionable. Woodruff grew up composting, organic gardening, canning food and dyeing wool from the sheep on her family farm.

The seeds for an Asheville-based green building store were planted when, as an MBA student in a California-based Environmental Entrepreneurship program, Woodruff landed a job at the Natural Home Design Center in Santa Rosa. Woodruff was impressed by both the growing green building supplies market and by the business practice of her employer, "based upon a triple bottom-line that considers people, the planet, as well as profits."

Woodruff opened the first Build it Naturally showroom in 2006, and moved to its current location in the autumn of 2007. The company specializes in products for people who suffer from chemical sensitivities or just don't want to introduce toxins to their homes.

The store stocks items like green flooring made from bamboo, cork, pine resin and reclaimed wood; concrete countertops from sand and gravel collected through low-impact dredging; Paperstone countertops made of 100-percent post-consumer recycled paper; and natural cotton-fiber denim (that's right, discarded jeans!) refashioned into chemical-free insulation. They also offer water-based paints made from natural ingredients like plant dyes, essential oils, natural minerals, milk casein and bees' wax.

That Woodruff parlayed a green upbringing into a green business is a great story in itself, but here's a nice addendum: On her National Association of Professional Women profile, Woodruff lists Habitat for Humanity as, "the charity that I am most passionate and drawn to." Makes sense.

Hiking the Highlands

For this issue, we asked Jennifer Pharr Davis—long-distance hiking queen from Asheville, N.C.—to profile her favorite hike in Appalachia. Davis has hiked more than 9,000 miles, including the Appalachian Trail (twice!), the Pacific Crest Trail, the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu and the 600-mile Bibbulmun Track in Australia. In 2008, she became the fastest woman to hike the Appalachian Trail*, averaging 38-miles a day and completing the trail in 57 days. Davis lives in Asheville and is co-owner and founder of Blue Ridge Hiking Co.

Following the Foothills Trail

By Jennifer Pharr Davis

If you live in southern Appalachia and hear the term "long-distance hiking trail," you immediately think of the Appalachian Trail. However, there are several lesser-known multi-day treks in the southeast that are often more convenient, less crowded and most importantly, don't take six months to complete.

One of my favorite local treks is the 80-mile Foothills Trail. Although it touches the North Carolina and Georgia borders, the path remains predominantly in upstate South Carolina. The geography along the route is stunning; Walking through the escarpment, the rolling foothills of South Carolina turn into the majestic Appalachian mountains.

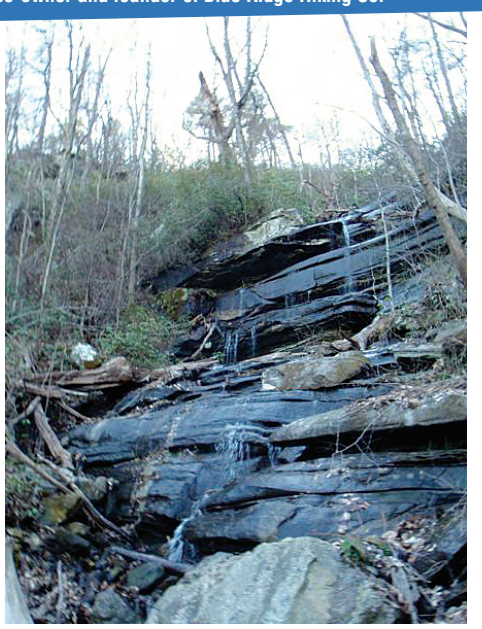


Photo of the trail by Jennifer Pharr Davis

Beyond the gorgeous rock face at Table Rock State Park and scenes from Sassafras Mountain, South Carolina's tallest peak, my favorite feature on the Foothills Trail is the water. Rivers, waterfalls and lakes line the trail and it is rare to walk more than an hour or two without passing some place to soak your feet or take a quick swim.

The trail's most breathtaking view is found at the base of Upper Whitewater Falls, the tallest waterfall east of the Rocky Mountains. Observing the power and grace of the river as it plunges over 400 feet is impressive. However, for some hikers, the still banks of Lake Jocassee or the light blue currents of the Chatooga River are just as awe-inspiring.

No matter what section of the trail you like the best, every step is beautiful and worthwhile. And the best part is, the entire path can be hiked in less than a week. Spring break, anyone?

Grandma Gatewood Put the "Tough" in Thru-Hiking

Emma "Grandma" Gatewood stands as an inspiration to hikers everywhere.

In 1955, Gatewood became the Appalachian Trail's first solo female thru-hiker after reading an article in National Geographic magazine. She was 67 years old.

Gatewood was the first person to hike the trail three times, the second time in 1960 and the third in 1963, when she was 75 (the last was completed in sections). She held the title of oldest female through-hiker until 2007.

The tiny 5'2" farmer's wife from Gallia County, Ohio, was also an unwitting pioneer of extreme ultra-light hiking, wearing Keds sneakers and carrying an army blanket, a raincoat and a plastic shower curtain for shelter slung in a homemade bag over her shoulder. She gathered wild foods along the trail, supplementing them with cheese, nuts and Vienna sausages bought in towns along the way.

Gatewood was profiled in Sports Illustrated and numerous local newspapers, and even appeared on The Today Show. In 1959, the sassy grandma walked 2,000 miles of the Oregon Trail to Portland, Ore., averaging 22 miles a day, and led a yearly winter hike in her hometown until she died at age 85, in 1973. She had eleven children, 24 grandchildren, 30 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild living at the time of her death.

Gatewood is often attributed with having said, "Most people today are pantywaist (sic)."

Appalachian Trail Stats*

25% of all thru-and section hikers who finish are women, up from 15% a few decades ago.

Oldest female thru-hiker (2007): Nancy "Magellan" Gowler, age 71

Oldest female section-hiker (1003-2004): Beverly "High 5-R" LaFollette was 80 when she completed her hike.

Youngest female thru-hiker (2002): Autumn Pratt, age 8, hiked with her parents and 6-year old brother (record-holder for youngest ever).

First female thru-hiker (1952): Mildred Norman is the earliest female thru-hiker on record, having reported a flip-flop hike in 1952. Under the name "Peace Pilgrim," Norman later walked over 25,000 miles throughout North America to promote world peace, a calling she felt on her first AT thru-hike.

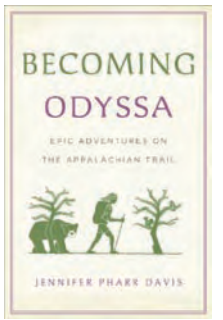
Barefoot and Backwards (2000): Two sisters from Maine did a "yo-yo" thru-hike (starting in Maine, hiking to Georgia, and then turning immediately back to Maine), walking barefoot except when they encountered snow.

*(*All Appalachian Trail stats are self-reported and are not confirmed by the Appalachian Trail Commission)*

An Odyssey along the Appalachian Trail

Review by Jillian Randel

An adventure in the woods becomes a journey through the mind for Jennifer Pharr Davis, as readers discover in her book, *Becoming Odyssa: Epic Adventures on the Appalachian Trail*.



The summer after she graduated from college, Davis set out on the 2,175 mile trail giving herself time to think about where her life would go next.

"I started to realize how what was important in my life had changed," writes Davis. "Out here I wasn't worried about the government or the economy, fashion or pop culture... For the first time in my life, I was experiencing real pain. And even though it hurt, it made me feel more alive than I did in the controlled comfort of society."

Meeting obstacles along the trail, Davis is challenged both physically and mentally, but she addresses each new hurdle with humor and grace, allowing a sense of openness to guide her through the unexpected.

"It struck me that every person I had ever met and would ever meet knew something I didn't and could do something I couldn't," she writes. "It was a simple truth, but I finally realized that the more people I invested in, the smarter and better equipped I would be."

Davis provides unique insight into the challenges of the trail for a young female. She certainly provides a beautiful odyssey through her emotional and physical transformation. For anyone looking for a funny, yet thoughtful, adventure on the trail, Davis is your girl.

Becoming Odyssa: Epic Adventures on the Appalachian Trail; Jennifer Pharr Davis, 2010.

Google Sees the Forests... and all the Trees!

On December 2nd, Google Inc., announced an ambitious 21st century innovation to help protect and monitor the World's precious forests. Via their Google Earth Engine, the company seeks to enable scientists and researchers around the world to study, track and clearly report their findings as to the health of the world's forests in a timely internet-driven fashion.

The Google Earth Engine utilizes Google's "cloud" computing infrastructure, a vast array of powerful computers linked to deliver resource intensive calculations in a prompt, near-realtime fashion. Find out more at http://blog.google.org

Windy West Virginia - Open for Green Business!

One hundred and fifty union workers in West Virginia have begun construction on a 130 Megawatt, 61 turbine wind farm along an eight mile section of ridge in Barbour and Randolph counties. The $250 million Laurel Mountain wind farm will provide enough electricity for between 20,000 and 50,000 U.S. homes, depending on their level of energy efficiency. Wind energy today is the second fastest growing source of US electricity and accounts for about 2% of the United States' electricity production.

Slurry Bill Introduced in WV Congress

The Alternative Coal Slurry Disposal Act— a bill introduced in the West Virginian Legislature on January 25— would prohibit new permits, modifications and renewals of existing permits for injection of coal waste or slurry into abandoned underground mines. The bill also makes provisions for the creation of safer more responsible coal processing methods via support for technological innovation.

The bill is considered an achievement by those in the state of West Virginia seeking to protect residential and municipal drinking waters from toxic coal mining wastes.

Read more about the proposed legislation at sludgesafety.org

President Obama's State of Energy and Appalachia

In his beginning of the year State of the Union address, President Obama called for 80 percent of America's electricity to come from clean sources by 2035, including "wind, solar, nuclear, clean coal and natural gas." While some of these sources of energy, such as wind and solar, are largely clean, no solutions or plans were presented for dealing with the damaging effects of the extraction, processing, and waste disposal of nuclear, coal and natural gas energy production fuels.

Appalachia is host to some of the most aggressive strip and mountaintop removal coal mining in the United States and the massive Marcellus Shale natural gas bed.

Order Up! One New Subcommittee Name - HOLD THE ORGANIC …

The incoming U.S. House of Representatives has changed the name of the former Horticulture and Organic Sub-Committee to the Horticulture and Nutrition Subcommittee, dropping the name organic. While speculation abounds as to the reason for the change, proponents of local organic food systems are concerned what this may mean for the future initiatives of the committee on behalf of pesticide-free foods in the U.S.

Editorial

Will Duke Make "Progress" in Cleaning Up Its Act?

It may look like a fairytale wedding to some, but many environmentalists wonder if the merger between Duke and Progress Energy—reportedly to take place by the end of this year—will end happily ever after or result instead in a climate change who-dun-it.

The vast combined resources of these two energy giants—soon to be the largest single energy utility in the country—could provide Duke/Progress with a unique opportunity to become the most innovative renewable energy provider in the Northern Hemisphere.

But the real question is whether the new mega-utility will assume the mantle of socially responsible hero, or use its monopoly to influence regulators to act in the company's own best interests?

According to Duke Energy CEO Jim Rogers, the merger will increase the utilities' ability to "deploy a 'tsunami of capital' to retire and replace old plants, upgrade the grid, meet stricter environmental regulations and improve energy efficiencies."

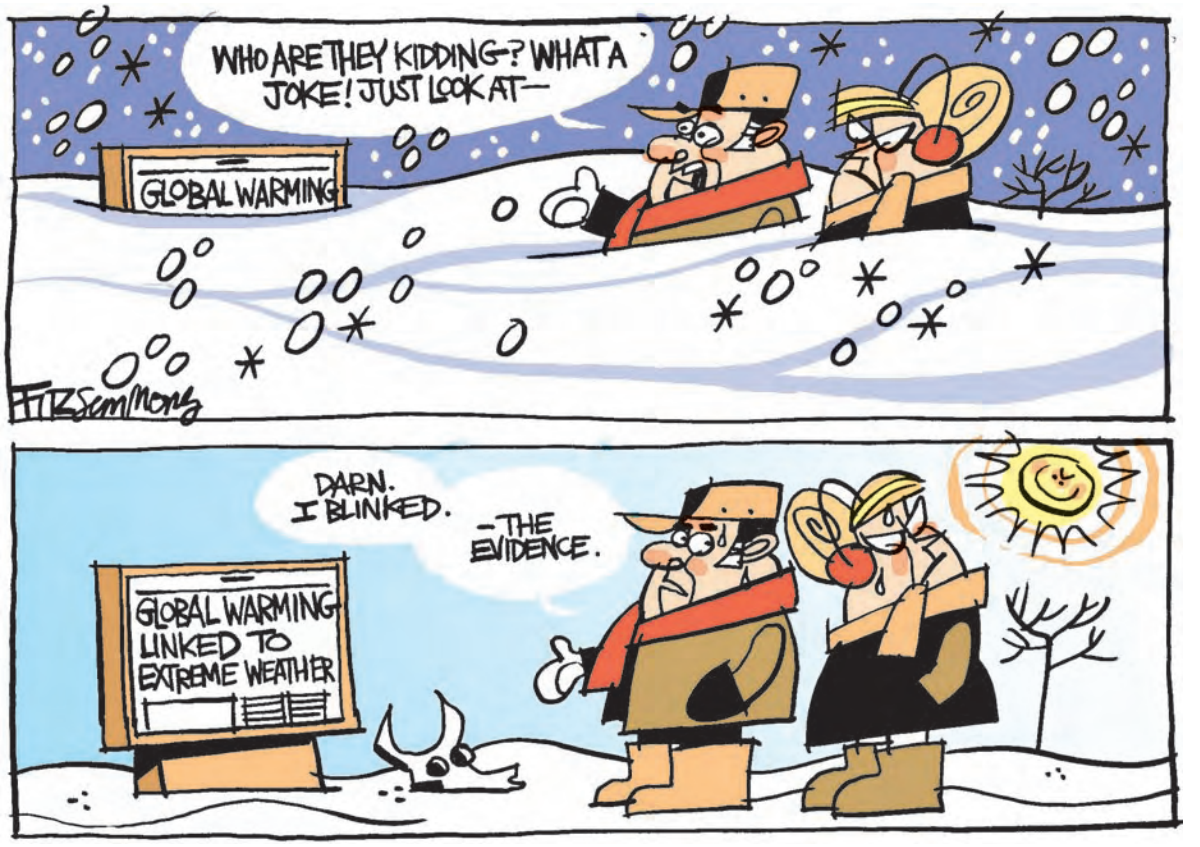
Unfortunately, the track record of these two utilities when it comes to defending the rate-payer and the environment is relatively dismal. Progress is currently facing a lawsuit for a proposed rate hike on a $17 billion nuclear plant that might never be built and actually lost a suit for overcharging customers for coal fired power plant fuel. Duke's original "Save-A-Watt" energy efficiency program sought to charge consumers well beyond the expenses incurred by the efficiency program itself. In direct conflict with claims of environmental stewardship, the utility is constructing a new 800 MW coal-fired power plant in its home state of North Carolina.

The United States, and especially the southeast, lags far behind the Western world in developing renewable energy options. As one of the largest coal burning companies in the world, the new Duke/Progress utility will bear a mountain of responsibility for making massive cuts in carbon emissions to reduce climate change and the resulting environmental and human impacts.

While Duke deploys more than 1000 MW of wind and solar, mostly in Texas and other western states, the utility has constructed less than 3 MW of solar electricity in the state of North Carolina, barely enough for 400 - 600 residences.

If the mega-utility newlyweds were to use their vast combined resources to actually implement ambitious programs—like installing large solar arrays on sprawling parking lots and rooftops in cities like Charlotte—substantive electrical generation from renewables would be an affordable reality. They could become champions of human and environmental health—all the while keeping electric rates affordable and still creating moderate profit for shareholders.

Let's hope this marriage will benefit the community and not just the happy couple.



Viewpoint

Going Back to the Garden: Stepping Up to Godliness

By Rev. Pat Watkins

Creation is Good! "In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. And God saw that the light was good."

Seven times in the story, God saw that creation was good; God called creation good six times before humanity ever came on the scene, by the way. It's important that we remember that. Perhaps our task as God's people is simply to also observe just how good creation is, not how good it is in its ability to make us wealthy or comfortable, but how good it is simply because God made it and because of its incredible beauty.

The fact of human domination of the planet is, I think, beyond dispute. The writer of Genesis would not have imagined in a million years just what we've learned in terms of asking the earth to serve us. God created an ecosystem that has worked great for several billion years now. So far, we've not been able to do better, and I fear we never will.

Perhaps dominion has to be balanced with another truth of creation; "So God created humankind in God's image, in the image of God he created them."

Long story short, Adam and Eve lost their relationship with the garden; God kicked them out because, according to God, "See the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil." No longer does God have the exclusive right to determine good and evil. We have taken on that responsibility ourselves. Our task is to define good the way God defines it, for example, as God sees creation and calls it good; and to understand evil the way God understands it.

Gus Speth, dean of the School of Forestry at Yale University, recently addressed a group of religious leaders. He said, "I used to think the top environmental problems facing the world were global warming, environmental degradation and ecosystem collapse, and that we scientists could fix those problems with enough science, but I was wrong. The real problem is not those three items but greed, selfishness, and apathy. And for that we need a spiritual and cultural transformation. And we scientists don't know how to do that. We need your help."

When our relationships are not right, relationships with each other, with God, and with God's creation, greed, selfishness, and apathy emerge. It's not about hugging trees; it's about greed, selfishness, and apathy; it's about the reconciliation of all things in heaven and on earth, to Christ Jesus our Lord. I know of no organization other than the church that can effect such a spiritual and cultural transformation. I'm afraid the mantle falls to you to make that happen! Who else is going to do it? Who else is there? No, I'm afraid it's up to you! Amen.

To read this fine sermon in its entirety visit appvoices.org/2010/09/12/rev-pat-watkins-sermon-naked-vegetarianism/.

EPA Vetos Spruce Mountaintop Removal Mine Permit

On January 13, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a veto of the largest proposed mountaintop removal permit in West Virginia history. Arch Coal's "Spruce Mine #1" permit would have impacted more than 2,000 acres and buried more than eight miles of streams in Logan County, W.Va.

"The proposed Spruce No. 1 Mine would use destructive and unsustainable mining practices that jeopardize the health of Appalachian communities and clean water on which they depend," said EPA's Peter Silva.

Historically, the EPA has been slow to reach for its veto pen. The decision on the Spruce mine permit was only the thirteenth such veto the EPA has used under section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and the first time ever on a water permit associated with an Appalachian surface mine.

The EPA offered an alternative proposal to Arch Coal that would have lessened the aquatic impacts of the Spruce mine from eight miles to three miles of streams, for a cost of around fifty-five cents per ton of coal. However, EPA officials said that Arch Coal walked away from negotiations.

Citizen groups in Appalachia were generally pleased with the EPA's veto of this mountaintop removal permit. Robert F. Kennedy Jr., speaking with Appalachian Voices, called Lisa Jackson "the most courageous EPA Administrator this country has ever had."

The groups said that if the EPA was going to be consistent, they needed to continue to deny mountaintop removal permits that use valley fills.

"The EPA's action is the kind of bold step we need to ensure the health of our communities and safety of our natural heritage," said Ann League of Tennessee's Statewide Organizing for Community Empowerment.

The coal industry and its allies opposed the veto, particularly the fact that the EPA could veto the permit after the Army Corps of Engineers had already signed off on it.

Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) plans to make it his first act as senator to introduce legislation to remove the EPA's ability to veto Clean Water Act permits. In a letter to his colleagues, he said, "While it is not unusual for the EPA to object to a coal mine permit, this particular decision is shocking in that the EPA, for the first time in more than three decades, has "vetoed" a coal mine permit that had been thoroughly reviewed by the EPA and other regulators, awarded by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and put into action by the mining company."

Congressman Nick Rahall (D-WV) added, "The good news, if there is any, may be that by EPA's finalizing this threatened action, the matter can now be taken before the courts, where I hope it will receive a thorough hearing and expeditious reversal."

Bill To Limit Va. From Effectively Enforcing Federal Water Laws

The coal lobby backlash to the EPA's efforts to limit mountaintop removal began in the Virginia General Assembly this January. Legislation was introduced by southwest Virginia state senator Phil Puckett to tie the state's hands by limiting the authority of the Water Pollution Control Board and the DMME Director to even consider effluent toxicity testing or water quality monitoring as evidence of water quality violations. Under this legislation Virginia regulatory agencies would be unable to test or regulate discharges from surface coal mining operations, coal waste impoundments and preparation plants.

By conservative estimates, over 150 miles of streams have been buried in Virginia. Scientific consensus concluded that stream burial has severe impacts on downstream waterways, including toxic metals overload and potentially irreversible damage to aquatic life, along with human disease and mortality. Appalachian Voices and others are working to ensure this legislation does not pass.

NEWSBITES FROM COAL COUNTRY

DUKE & PROGRESS TO MERGE: Duke Energy and Progress Energy announced they will merge at the end of 2011 to become the largest electric utility in the country, serving more than 7 million customers; half of the combined electricity generation will be provided by coal, including new power plants under construction in North Carolina and Indiana.

RETIRING WITH A "BLANK" CHECK: Massey Energy's mountaintop removal mining czar, Don Blankenship, announced his retirement in late 2010. Massey had the worst mine safety record in America under his 10-year leadership. Blankenship's retirement package includes a $12 million bonus, health care for two years, and a 2-year, $5,000 per month consulting retainer.

WHAT EGG-ACTLY? Groups of the newly formed Water Advocacy Council, including the United Egg Producers, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and the National Mining Association, recently asked Council on Environmental Quality chair, Nancy Sutley, to oppose the EPA's veto of the Spruce No. 1 surface mine's Section 404 permit, stating that the decision to revoke a previously authorized permit could have implications on all previously authorized 404 permits, including those for agriculture, home building and transportation. The agency, however, has been sparing in using its veto authority; The Spruce mine veto is only the thirteenth in thirty-nine years, and the first ever of an Appalachian strip-mine permit.

COAL FIRED POWER SOON TO BE UP IN SMOKE?: According to a report by The Brattle Group, "emerging EPA regulations on air and water quality for coal-fired power plants could result in over 50,000 MW of coal plant retirements and require $180 billion for remaining plants to comply with likely mandates." The report also says that by 2020, coal plant closures will reduce coal demand by 15% and reduce CO2 emissions by 150 million tons. Coal consumption has lowered more than 10% in the past several years, supplying only 44% of the country's total electricity needs (as of October 2010).

SAFETY FIRST...IN A FEW MONTHS: In June of this year, the Mine Safety and Health Administration will issue a final rule for rock dust requirements, replacing emergency temporary standards put in place last September after the Upper Big Branch mine disaster; MSHA investigators believe that an inadequate layer of rock dust—used to control highly explosive coal dust—may have contributed to the intensity of the explosion that killed 29 miners. In March, 2011, the Mining Safety Health Association will start requiring mine operators to install proximity detection devices on mobile equipment, to prevent pinning and crushing accidents in underground mines. Since 1983, 31 miners have been killed in accidents involving remote controlled continuous mining machines.

ONE COUNTRY'S JUNK IS STILL JUNK: A recent New York Times article reported that, although developed countries are closing coal-fired power plants or limiting the use of coal over pollution and climate change concerns, the market demand in Asia, and particularly China, is expanding at a rapid pace. Demand from Asia has helped double the price of coal over the past five years, creating what the Sierra Club calls a "worse-case scenario" in the push to reduce carbon emissions.

Welcoming New Faces to Appalachian Voices

Appalachian Voices is very excited to welcome four new faces to our team this new year: two in our Boone office, one in our Charlottesville office, and one in Washington, D.C.

Major Developments

Our development team gets a huge boost with the addition of two dynamic new staff members to help us secure gifts to support the work of Appalachian Voices.

Kayti Wingfield, known for her collaborative work with Appalachian Voices through the Wise Energy for Virginia Coalition, is an addition to our Development team.

Kayti hails from Waynesboro, Va., a small town set in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. She studied political science and international relations at Christopher Newport University and received a certificate of non-profit management from the University of Virginia.

Kayti Wingfield, Development Associate

Kayti spent the last three years as the coordinator for the Wise Energy for Virginia Coalition, managing inter-organizational relationships, coalition building, lobbying, planning events and organizing extensively in regional communities. She will be based in our Charlottesville office.

Rachael Goss, Development Associate

Rachael Goss came to western North Carolina over four years ago on a camping trip and never left. A native New Yorker, she graduated from New York University with a dual degree in Politics and Journalism, served as a Special Education teacher and community organizer in Oakland, Ca., and worked on sustainable development in Malawi, Africa, for close to two years.

Rachael has worked in grassroots environmental and social justice groups for the past eight years, providing media and development support for indigenous sovereignty and solidarity projects in Bolivia, California, Utah and South Dakota; most recently she worked with Greenpeace on both coasts of the U.S.

Rachael is also a freelance writer and aspiring documentary filmmaker who believes in the power of community, the healing ability of wilderness and the potential for YouTube (cat videos aside) and citizen journalism to change the world.

Distributing More Good News

Last fall, we welcomed the addition of our new Appalachian Voice distribution manager, Maeve Gould. Maeve is a Richmond, Virginia native and Virginia Tech graduate with a degree in Urban Affairs and Planning.

Maeve Gould, Voice Distribution Manager

Before working with Appalachian Voices, she was involved in Mountain Justice Blacksburg and organized Earth Week with the Environmental Coalition. She also interned for a year with AmeriCorps Project Conserve at the Boone-based land trust, Blue Ridge Conservancy.

Maeve is enthused to be a part of the Appalachian Voices team and to work with AV on raising awareness about social and environmental justice issues in Appalachia.

John Humphrey, Legislative Associate

An Act of Congress

Our Washington, D.C. office gets a community advocate in John Humphrey, a North Carolina native who will work on promoting the Clean Water Protection Act and the Appalachia Restoration Act in Congress.

John has had an interest in helping communities since he was an activist and public policy student at Duke, where he was awarded a Lyndhurst Foundation Young Career Prize to document stories of rural communities. His career achievements include serving as director of policy development for the N.C. Department of Environment, Health & Natural Resources; as N.C. Governor Jim Hunt's local government liaison; and as research and communications director on congressional and statewide political campaigns.

John studied law at the University of Michigan and interned in South Africa. At an international law firm in D.C., he represented a Hopi organization opposing Peabody Coal's Black Mesa permit. He then became principal of a civil rights firm and studied environmental policy, public policy and conflict resolution at George Mason University.

Welcome!

Advocates Storm Capitol Hill on 1st Day of New Congress

Appalachian Voices and partner organizations greeted new and returning members of Congress in their first week of the 2011 Congressional year. In just two days, our legislative team met with every incoming member to educate them about the Clean Water Protection Act in the House of Representatives and the Appalachia Restoration Act in the Senate, bills that help to end mountaintop removal. Our team also visited over 150 previous cosponsors of the bills. Each new congress— every two years— pending bills have to be re-introduced into the system. Appalachian Voices will be working tirelessly to re-introduce these two bills this spring.

Taking the Plunge for Appalachian Voices

By Jesse Wood, special to Appalachian Voices

I am going to freeze my tail off for a good cause – the mountains.

On Saturday, Jan. 29, I will jump into icy cold waters for the 13th annual Polar Plunge in the Chetola Lake, during Blowing Rock, N.C.'s annual Winterfest.

"Brother, it is extreme, you will be singing soprano when you hit the surface," Tracy Brown, emcee of the polar plunge, said. "You should come out and jump with us."

Each person who plunges will donate their registration fee to a local non-profit of choice. I chose Appalachian Voices because I love the Appalachian mountains and the work Appalachian Voices does to protect them.

It will be invigorating to say the least. A few years ago, the grounds crew at Chetola Resort used chainsaws and axes to remove ice from the jumping area.

Brown, who has jumped 10 times, described the polar plunge as "crazy… insane…brutal…and bone-chilling."

Maybe I'll see you there.

Editor's Note: *Jesse has pledged his $25 dollar jumping fee, as well as freelance pay for articles about the event to run in local newspapers for the jump— a donation to Appalachian Voices totaling almost $100 dollars. To find out how Jesse's jump went, visit appvoices.org/thevoice/polar.*

Brrrr! The Winterfest Polar Plunge takes place every year at Chetola Lake in Blowing Rock, N.C. Photo by Parker Stevens

Appalachia Water Watch: State's Settlement Does Not Go Far Enough

Appalachian Voices' litigation against three of the largest coal companies in Kentucky has caused a big splash. After our legal team filed our intent-to-sue for over 20,000 violations of the Clean Water Act, the state of Kentucky preempted the action, and levied $660,000 in fines against the companies. While the state's action is historic, the fines represent less than .1% of the maximum that could be levied under the Clean Water Act.

Feeling that the proposed settlement did not sufficiently address the companies' violations or deter future violations, Appalachian Voices and partners petitioned the judge to intervene. The judge granted permission to file a brief in support of the motion to intervene and ordered the state of Kentucky to place the full complaint and settlement plan on their website for a 30 day public comment period.

In an article about the suit, the Lexington Herald-Leader called the state's failure to enforce our nation's clean water laws "a regulatory meltdown".

The court date in the case was scheduled to take place immediately following press deadline. To keep up to date on our latest efforts to bust big coal, please visit: appvoices.org/kylitigation.

AppalachianVoices BUSINESS LEAGUE

New & renewing Members — Dec 2010/Jan 2011

Antiques on Howard.....Boone, NC
Doe Ridge Pottery.....Boone, NC
Forget Me Nots Landscape and Stonescape.....Sugar Grove, NC
Hanging Dog Valley Nursery.....Murphy, NC
Medicine Man Craft Shop.....Cherokee, NC
Tabard Corporation.....Washington, DC
Timothy L. Warner, Inc.....Asheville, NC
Yellow Branch Cheese & Pottery.....Robbinsville, NC

We encourage you to patronize members of our Business League.

To become a business member visit AppalachianVoices.org or call us at 877-APP-VOICE

A Special Thanks to Mast Store & Patagonia

Appalachian Voices would like to give special thanks to Mast General Store and Patagonia Footwear who joined forces to help support us this past September. For the entire month, the two companies donated a combined $10 for every pair of Patagonia shoes sold at Mast. Thank you Mast General Store and Patagonia Footwear for supporting us with over a $700 donation!

Appalachian Voices Is A River Warrior

In 2010, Appalachian Voices was awarded the 2010 River Warrior honor by the Water Heritage Trust, a project of the Resource Renewal Institute. River Warrior recognizes 25 organizations annually for their work benefiting threatened fish, rivers and aquatic habitats. They recognized Appalachian Voices as, "an exemplary organization working to protect water quality, fish, wildlife and riparian ecosystems." Appalachian Voices would like to thank the Resource Renewal Institute for their recognition and contribution of $1,000. Awards such as these keep us motivated to continue our hard work!

Protecting Waterways, Doubletime!

Thank you to everyone who donated to our Appalachia Water Watch matching grant fund! Toward the end of 2010, a generous donor pledged $37,500 to our new initiative protecting Appalachian waterways, provided that we could raise enough to match it. More than 100 donors, members and supporters got involved, and with your help we were able to reach our goal. The result: $75,000 to ensure clean water throughout the region.

Appalachia Water Watch is our newest program designed to protect the region's water from pollution related to coal mining, processing and waste disposal. Learn more at appvoices.org/waterwatch.

We Love Mountains Tour Hits the East Coast

This winter Restoring Eden and Appalachian Voices have partnered for the "We Love Mountains" concert tour with indie rock band, Dewi Sant. In an effort to bring together music, faith and activism the tour will raise awareness about mountaintop removal and the connections throughout the southeast and mid-atlantic region. An exciting line-up is planned from Jan. 27 through Feb. 8, stretching as far south as Charleston, S.C. all the way to New York City. The tour will be joined by several local bands at each show. For more information about this concert series check out appvoices.org/2011mtrtour.

The Last Mountain Debuts At Sundance

The Uncommon Productions and DADA Films piece made its world premiere at this year's Sundance Fim Festival and is scheduled to open in theatres this spring. The production follows the active debate between the coal-energy industry and citizens throughout the region over the controversial practice of mountaintop removal coal mining in Central Appalachia. Appalachian Voices contributed information and footage during the film's production. Learn more at thelastmountainmovie.com.

The Appalachian Voice
191 Howard Street
Boone, NC 28607
www.appalachianvoices.org

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A detail of Megan Naylor's "Reflecting on mountains lost..." depicting Larry Gibson looking out onto the mountaintop removal site near his home on Kayford Mountain in West Virginia. The image is a finalist in the Appalachian Mountains Photo Competition at Appalachian State University. Finalist's entries will hang at ASU's Turchin Center from February 4 - June 4, 2011. Visit www.appmtnphotocomp.org for details.

GET INVOLVED ▸▸▸▸▶ environmental & cultural events in the region

The True Story of Bats

Now-Jan 2: An exhibit to dispel popular misconceptions about bats, describe their ecological importance and give visitors an appreciation of the true wonders of the bat world through. Call: (866)202-6223 or visit grayfossilmuseum.com.

The Route 250 Project/Fellowship

Now-March. 10 Application Deadline: Looking for a team of six people that will live, work and learn at Allegheny Mountain School in Highland County, Va. Fellowship begins May 1. Visit tricyclegardens.org/the-route-250-project/ for more information.

The Hemlocks! The Hemlocks! Grief and Celebration by Lowell Hayes

Now-Mar 19: This series of paintings is a celebration of the life and beauty of the Tsuga canadensis, the Eastern Hemlock, and of the rare Tsuga caroliniana, the Carolina Hemlock. At the Turchin Center for the Visual Arts, Boone, N.C. Visit turchincenter.org.

Appalachian Mountain Photography Competition Exhibit

Feb 4-June 4: Come see the winners of the competition at the Turchin Center for the Visual Arts in Boone, N.C.

Creative Expressions of Concern for Appalachian Mountains

Jan.13-Feb.11: This event is a visual art, poetry and song exhibition for supporting the Appalachian Mountains. It is being held at Southwestern Virginia Community College in Richlands, V.A. This event is dedicated in the honor and memory of Judy Bonds.

Community and Small Wind Energy Conference-Mid Atlantic Region

Feb 8-9: Two-day conference discussing wind energy policies and implementing a community clean energy project; Penn State's Innovation Park. E-mail catherine.oneill@windustry.org.

I Love Mountains Day

Feb. 14: Spend your Valentine's Day sharing your love for mountains, and help Kentuckians for the Commonwealth rally to stop dumping of mining wastes into streams and create a clean energy future for all Kentucky. Visit www.kftc.org/take-action/ilm.

Green Film Series: *Flow*

Feb. 16: The Green Screen Film Series presents *Flow: For the Love of Water* at The Showroom in downtown Spartanburg, S.C. Includes panel discussion. Free event begins at 7pm Visit Hub-bub.com.

Blue Ridge Women in Ag Winter Gathering

Feb. 21: Learn about their work to support women farmers in the region through workshops, grants and community outreach. Join BRWIA at Hob Knob Farm Cafe in Boone, N.C. This event will include local hors d'ouvres.

Conference on Sustainable Viticulture

Feb. 23: Learn to make wine and grow grapes sustainably in Asheville, N.C. $30 cost includes lunch. Contact naturalproducts@ABTech.edu or call (828)254-1921 extension 5843.

Ten-Month Ecological Leadership Training

Feb 28–Dec 16: Learn about innovative design systems and practical solutions that create bio-regional sovereignty and empower the human potential. Program costs $8,000. Class runs Tues–Fri, 10am-6pm in Asheville, N.C. Visit ashevillage.org.

2nd Annual Mardi Gras Ball

March 5: Held at The Sun Music Hall in Floyd, Va. to benefit the Blue Mountain School. Dress up and put your dncing shoes on for a night of fun. Visit sunmusichall.com for tickets and info.

18th Annual Organic Growers School Spring Conference

Mar 5-6: The southeast's largest sustainable living conference. Registration opens in January. Held at the University of North Carolina at Asheville. Visit organicgrowersschool.org/.

Appalachian Studies Conference

March 11-13: Held at Eastern Kentucky University, this years theme is "River of Earth: Action, Scholarships, Reflection and Renewal." Featuring innovative sessions about the region's activists, cultural and scholarly heritage. Visit appalachianstudies.org/conference.

Green Screen Film Series: *Coal Country*

Mar. 16: The Green Screen Film Series presents *Coal Country* which discusses coal mining from both miner's and activist's point of views. Includes panel discussion. Free event begins at 7pm at The Showroom in downtown Spartanburg, S.C. visit hub-bub.com.

Sustainable Film Series: *Deep Down*

Mar. 22: The Green Screen Film Series presents *Deep Down*. It will be held at 7pm in the Greer Auditorium on the Appalachian State campus. Visit sustain.appstate.edu/film-series.

Email voice@appvoices.org to be included in our Get Involved listing. Deadline for the next issue will be Friday, March 18 at 5 p.m. for events taking place between March 25 and June 1, 2011.

Caring for Creation

March 31- April 3: A faith based eco-justice event at Lake Junaluska, N.C. Workshops range from Container Gardening to Ethnic Faith Groups and Environmental Issues. Visit lakejunaluska.com/caring-for-creation/.

Power Shift 2011

April 1-4: Washington, DC at the RFK stadium. Celebrate the success stories and hear from leaders of the movement. To become a Power Shift coordinator or for more information visit energyactioncoalition.org/.

6th Annual Week in Washington

April 2-6: Organized by the Alliance for Appalachia. with limited space (this year they are accepting 150 like-minded, mountain loving people. Registration ends Feb. 25. Visit ilovemountains.org/wiw.

Banff Film Festival

Apr. 1-2: Takes place at the Farthing Auditorium on Appalachian State's campus in Boone, N.C. Prices are $7 for students and $9 for all others. Also the festival will be visiting Brevard College, outside of Asheville, N.C. Visit banffcentre.ca/mountainfestival/worldtour/.

Green Film Series: *The Greenhorns*

April 12: The Green Screen Film Series presents *The Greenhorns*. This event is free and begins at 7pm in the Greer Auditorium on the Appalachian State campus in Boone, N.C. Visit sustain.appstate.edu/film-series.