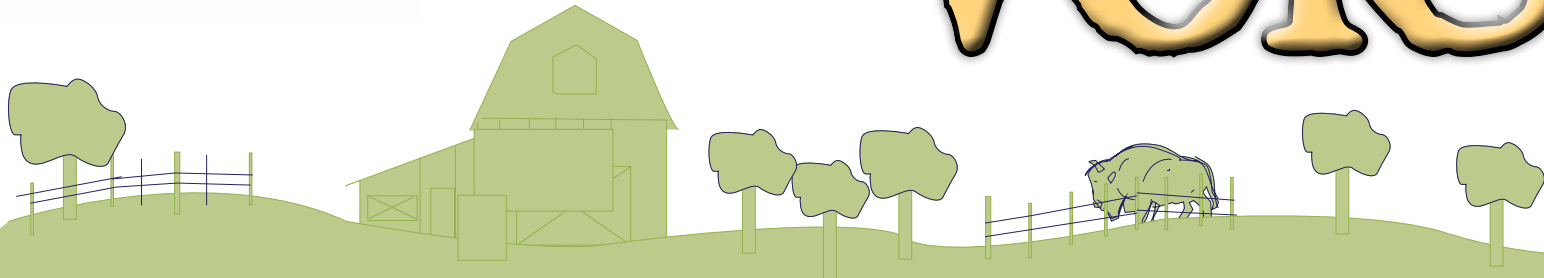


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The Appalachian VOICE

August/September 2011



Living *off the* Land

From backyard chicken coops and community kitchens to logging with horses and existing completely off the grid, the back-to-the-land movement is broader—and more popular—than you think.

ALSO INSIDE: Three Weeds to Feed Your Needs • Microhydro • The Art of Mushrooming

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.

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A Note From the Executive Director

Dear Readers,
 The majority of Americans anticipate a bright future of renewable energy and energy efficiency, and an end to pollution of our water, air and land. Yet Congress is out of touch with this vision, working instead to take us back to pre-1972 America, when rivers caught fire, swimming could be hazardous to your health and smog routinely killed people.

Sound's crazy, right? Not when you realize that last week, the U.S. House of Representatives actually passed a bill—the Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act of 2011 (HR 2018)—revoking the federal government's ability to enforce pollution limits and giving authority to individual states. The two lead sponsors of the bill are cronies with agriculture and mining interests.

We have clear thinkers in the Senate to help us work towards the bill's demise, but it is evident there is a strategic, determined attack on our right to clean water and air.

Every American must get involved in the fight for these environmental protections and their enforcement. Our work in Kentucky—where we have identified over 40,000 violations of the Clean Water Act—illustrates that state regulatory agencies can be 'captured' by local industries. Kentucky regulators failed to take action until we filed notices of intent to sue, and, shockingly, made moves to protect the offending coal companies. Our saving grace comes from having the law on our side (the Clean Water Act), and so far we've prevailed in court. Without this cornerstone law, we would have no rights.

We need your voice in this fight. As economic pressures increase, industry will keep harping on tired myths that regulations kill jobs while they continue to pollute our nation in front of our very eyes. An unhealthy environment can never lead to a healthy economy, so join us today and keep flaming rivers and toxic air where they belong; in the past.

For our water,
Willa



CORRECTIONS

In our June/July issue, we incorrectly located the Dolly Sods Wilderness on our map of West Virginia. The area we identified as Dolly Sods is actually the Cranberry Wilderness. Dolly Sods is farther north and east. Also in our June/July issue, the photo of the salamander on page 18 was identified as a long-tail salamander, but in fact is a red-spotted newt. In addition, in the June issue we inadvertently left off some photographer's credits on the Waterfall Guide Page. Following is the complete list: Crabtree Falls (Va.) — Joe Tennis; Peach Tree Falls (W.Va.) — Jaime Petry; Princess Falls (Ky.) — Barb Richardson; Fall Creek Falls (Tenn.) — Rich Stevens of ncwaterfalls.com; Tom's Creek Falls (N.C.) — Rich Stevens of ncwaterfalls.com; Tallulah Gorge Falls (Ga.) — Cindy Montgomery; Cedar Falls (Ohio) — Thomas Ramsey. We apologize for any inconvenience these errors may have caused.

ABOUT THE COVER



(L-r): Eco-Goats owner Brian Knox with two of his goats. Photo courtesy of Brian Knox; Biological woodsman Ian Snider hauling tulip poplar with his horses Frank and Tray in Ashe County, N.C. Photo by Kim Hadley; Young Sophia Park investigates one of her mom's new chickens in Foscoe, N.C. Photo by Katie Boyette. Farm design by Meghan Darst.

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Forward Thinkers Move Back to the Land

By Rachael Goss

When we think about the 1960s, certain iconic images pop up. From flower children and festivals to fierce protests and racial unrest, the decade was marked by a turbulent change in the social and political fabrics of our nation.

In the late 1960s, many idealistic young Americans turned away from the mainstream and sought refuge in a rustic lifestyle. After an issue of *The Mother Earth News* waxed poetic about the beauty and value of land in West Virginia, many literally took to the hills.

Back-to-the-landers came to nearly every county in the state. Lincoln, Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties drew particularly large crowds. While hostilities did arise between the old and new West Virginians, many of the state's newest citizens found that the values associated with their new life on the land—hard work, thrift, community and simple pleasures—were also held

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by their deeply rooted neighbors.

Many new residents took keenly to traditional crafts and music, establishing a greater bond with the rich Appalachian culture. In fact, the back-to-the-land movement in West Virginia sparked a renaissance for traditional mountain music and art forms.

As elders began to pass on their knowledge to newcomers, West Virginian arts and crafts traditions were strengthened and revitalized. The

movement sparked the creation of Tamarack: The Best of West Virginia, a state attraction that commemorates the state's cultural heritage and unique history by showcasing traditional arts, crafts and foods.

The simple living crusade forever changed the face of West Virginia. The environmental values espoused by *The Green Revolution* magazine, published by an intentional community near Hamlin, spoke to a common thread

of activism shared by many of the homesteaders.

In the 1970s, as the national conscience became more in-tune with a growing environmental movement, West Virginia saw many of its natives and newcomers joining forces to speak up for the land and culture they so valued.

Ultimately, the rural relocation trend served to highlight many of West Virginia's natural and cultural treasures. In addition to advocating a simpler, more hands-on lifestyle, the new arrivals brought attention to Appalachia's vast litany of art forms and heritage crafts, creating a niche market for tourists and Americans outside of the region to appreciate.

By celebrating our regions' heritage, vistas and landscapes, we too can see what the back-to-the-landers seized on forty-odd years ago: that Appalachia is a natural and cultural treasure worthy of preservation.



Become a member of Appalachian Voices — YOU name the price! Donate what you can, or what our work is worth to you, and become a part of a movement committed to clear air, clean water and something that is truly priceless: a healthy environment for generations to come.

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Hiking the Highlands

Hiking, Biking, Running, and Skiing on West Virginia's Greenbrier Trail

By Joe Tennis

Near a quiet place called Renick, W.Va., though the railroad is long since gone, a crossing sign remains. And so does the former path of the Greenbrier Division of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, now the Greenbrier River Trail.

Stops called Horrock, Beard, Thorny Creek and Stony Bottom line this railroad path, converted into a multi-use trail spanning 78 miles and a century of history in the Greenbrier Valley of West Virginia.

Every mile or two, another wild scene of the Greenbrier River unfolds—inviting, especially on a warm summer day. Here and there are tiny waterfalls; nothing big in the first six miles of the trail in Greenbrier County, near Hopper, but still just as delightful as the river and the picnic tables, ferns, rhododendron and rocky cliffs scattered along the trail.

The Greenbrier River Trail parallels the Greenbrier River for most of its journey, providing not only great scenery but also a quick place to cool off.

About halfway between White Sulphur Springs and the lovely town of Lewisburg, the trail heads north-

GREENBRIER RIVER TRAIL

WHERE— Links North Caldwell, W. Va., to Slabtown, W.Va., about a half-mile from Cass

LENGTH— 78 miles

GETTING THERE— Several access points are located near Lewisburg, W.Va., and White Sulphur Springs. The southern terminus lies 1.3 miles north of U.S. 60 at Caldwell on County Route 38 (Stonehouse Road), about halfway between the two towns. The trail proceeds 5.8 miles to the next parking area at Harper (Hopper). To reach the Renick access from U.S. 219, go east for 0.4 miles on County Route 11 (Auto Road) to the parking area at trail mile 24.5, and follow the trail north to mile 30.9 to reach the Droop Mountain Tunnel, just north of Horrock.

WEB— www.greenbriertrailstatepark.com

INFO— (304) 799-7416



A gentle, one percent grade makes the Greenbrier Trail perfect for multiple sports, such as biking, trail running and skiing in the winter. Below, the entrance to the 402-foot-long Droop Mountain Tunnel. Photos by Joe Tennis

ward, breezing past the rocky banks of the Greenbrier. Here, the trains once rumbled past North Caldwell, the trail's southern terminus, near Stonehouse Road.

The train opened up development in West Virginia in communities like Renick, which bustled with activity in the early 1900s. Now, in Renick, mowed fields border what used to be the railroad.

About six miles north, on either side of the 402-foot-long Droop Mountain Tunnel near Horrock, a young-growth forest provides a lush, green jungle around the path, visited by thousands each year on foot, bicycle, horseback and cross-country skis.

Inside, the Droop Mountain Tunnel appears almost spooky. It's dark, damp

and pitch-black at its center.

The well-maintained trail's smooth, crushed-limestone surface boasts a one-percent grade; it drops only about 220 feet in elevation from north to south. The trail looks like a quiet county lane with grass growing in the middle; every five or six miles, you'll find another parking area.

"(The Greenbrier River Trail) is well-maintained and not really crowded," said David Hungerford, a retired wedding photographer from Port Tobacco, Md. "We could bring our horses down here and ride it, and snowshoe in the wintertime. It's a good trail."

On a rainy Friday morning, Hungerford and his wife, Susie, explored the trail on bicycles, tracing about 30 miles in a day.

"It's more than the trail," David Hungerford said. "It's also just the surrounding countryside, the towns, the people. It's a nice area. It's some place you feel comfortable."

Much of the trail itself remains refreshingly remote despite its popularity, as it lies adjacent to the Monongahela National Forest and Seneca

State Forest, with both places giving trail-users even more room to roam.

Now overseen in conjunction with Watoga State Park, the Greenbrier River Trail owes a debt to Mark Ligon Hankins, whose continuing efforts persuaded the CSX Corporation to give land for the trail's development. Hankins then worked with state and federal agencies to turn the rail into a trail. A sign along the trail describes Hankins as "a caring man."




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Rays of Solar Progress Peeking Out in Appalachia

By Jeff Deal

While Appalachia has not yet realized the progress made in solar electricity generation in the United States' West Coast or Northeast regions, solar energy development within our region is slowly moving forward.

The town of Newland, N.C., will host a 900kW solar electric facility that will generate enough electricity to power up to 240 homes.

Not only are electric utilities and large energy developers generating solar electricity in Appalachia—

neighborhoods and communities are now joining this burgeoning green energy movement. The First Congregational Church in Asheville, N.C., just installed a 10 kW solar electric system that was financed and developed by community and church members.

This same type of grassroots solar energy development



was also utilized in Williamson, W.Va., which recently developed an 11 kW solar electric system on a downtown office building. More good news on the manufacturing front of the Appalachian solar movement: an international manufacturer of solar electric panels, Jetion Solar Corp., will locate its headquarters, and 36 jobs, in Charlotte, N.C.

Activists Protest Nuclear Weapons Facility Expansion

By Paige Campbell

A study by the Army Corp of Engineers released in July estimated a \$6.5-\$7.5 billion price tag on the proposed expansion of a nuclear weapons complex in Oak Ridge, Tenn. Meanwhile, peace activists and Oak Ridge community members continue their nearly six-year-long protest against the project.

The expansion, which would add a uranium processing facility to the National Nuclear Security Administration's Y-12 weapons complex, has seen a tenfold increase in estimated costs since the project was first announced in 2005.

Over the years, the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance

(OREPA) has protested the ballooning costs and raised alarms about the environmental impact of the structure. Most critically, according to OREPA coordinator Ralph Hutchison, the group objects to a nuclear-based defense policy that it says actually makes the world less secure. Y-12 officials, on the other hand, call the facility a "key to global security."

The Department of Energy was expected to announce its official approval of the project, called a record of decision, within a month of its release of an environmental impact study in March. For unclear reasons, that announcement was delayed. At press time, the department planned

to release the record of decision by the end of July. Once released, the record will be available at nepa.energy.gov/records_of_decisions.htm.

Speaking to the Appalachian Peace Education Center in May, Hutchison said that the expansion would allow the Oak Ridge facility to produce 80 warheads every year. Hutchison detailed OREPA's efforts to draw attention to the project and fight nuclear proliferation.

Regardless of the record of decision's contents, Hutchison said, OREPA's opposition efforts will continue, beginning with an August 6 ceremony commemorating the day a Y-12-manufactured atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima, Japan, in 1945.

Bill Proposed to Protect Tennessee's Wild Side

By Jillian Randel

In May, Senator Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker of Tennessee introduced a bill to increase protected lands in the Cherokee National Forest. The Tennessee Wilderness Act of 2011 would protect nearly 20,000 acres along Tennessee's eastern border in the Appalachian Mountains.

A recent public opinion survey

by Tennessee Wild—a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting wilderness in the Cherokee National Forest—showed that "90 percent of East Tennesseans, whether Republican, Democrat or independent, rated the preservation of the proposed new wilderness additions in the Cherokee as 'extremely important.'" Tennessee Wild, along with a

coalition of other land protection organizations, are working hard to protect the Cherokee National Forest from detrimental logging and mining practices and ensure that the lands will be protected for hiking, fishing, camping and other outdoor recreational activities.

For more information, visit tnwild.org.

EPA Selects PA Sites for Study on Hydraulic Fracturing

The EPA selected seven sites around the country for a national study on hydraulic fracturing (hydrofracking) that will assess the impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water resources. Two sites in Pennsylvania where hydrofracking has already occurred will be examined for impacts on drinking water. The EPA will monitor two other sites in Pennsylvania throughout the hydrofracking process. The other sites are in Texas, Colorado and North Dakota. According to a press release issued by the EPA, the study will include literature review, laboratory work, computer modeling and collection of data and information from states, industry and communities. -- By Meg Holden

South Carolina Co-ops Develop Efficiency Retrofit Program

South Carolina electric cooperatives are forming a partnership with the Environmental and Energy Study Institute to develop a program that will help residents save money and energy, according to an article by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The program will provide micro-loans to consumers for home energy efficiency improvements. Consumers would then use a portion of the money they save on electricity to pay off the loans. The program is a response to the state's growing energy needs, stimulated by population growth, inefficient home systems and high energy usage in winter and summer. -- By Meg Holden

Swamp Angel Energy, LLC Charged with Illegal Dumping

The EPA states that Kansas-based Swamp Angel Energy has illegally pumped oil brine into wells in the Allegheny National Forest in Pennsylvania. Unauthorized pumping is an infraction of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act as well as EPA regulations on underground injections of fluids. According to a press release from the EPA, unauthorized pumping could pose a threat to underground drinking water sources. The proposed penalty to Swamp Angel Energy is a \$157,000 fine. -- By Meg Holden



ASU's Solar Homestead Nears Completion

The open-cell spray foam insulation is in, the plumbing and electrical are installed, and the finishing touches are just weeks away on Appalachian State University's cutting-edge Solar Homestead. Started in 2009, the student-run project conceptualized, designed and constructed a model solar home for the Department of Energy's 2011 Solar Decathlon—the world's largest green building competition. The 1,000-square-foot, 2-bedroom interior (right) will include an additional 900-square-foot outdoor living porch featuring bifacial photovoltaic panels and a living roof (above). ASU is one of only twenty universities from around the globe selected to participate in the Solar Decathlon. The Solar Homestead will be on display on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. from September 23 to October 1 as part of the competition. Prior to that, ASU will host two viewing days for the public: August 17 and 27. For more information, visit thesolarhomestead.com.

Top photo courtesy of The Solar Homestead, right photo by Jamie Goodman.



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Naturalists' Notebook

Three Weeds to Feed Your Needs

By Meg Holden

Interested in going “back to the land”? What about “back to the lawn”? Build a self-sufficient salad out of greens available in your own back yard. Here are three plants that grow as weeds in our region, but are edible both raw and cooked.

Lamb's Quarters *Chenopodium belandieri*

Lamb's quarters, also known as goosefoot or pigweed, is a common weed found on the fringes of gardens, fields and riverbanks. The plant can grow to about three feet tall and is identifiable by its triangular, serrated leaves, spiked inflorescence and honeycomb-pitted seeds.



A relative of quinoa, *Chenopodium* was domesticated by the Aztec in pre-Columbian Mexico, but cultivation of the crop was forbidden by Spanish conquistadors. Now, 400 years later, there is nothing stopping you from enjoying this delicious green.

The taste of lamb's quarters has been compared to spinach or kale. Steam the leaves with a small amount of water for a quick vegetable accompani-

ment to any meal, use the raw leaves in a salad, or substitute lamb's quarters for collards, spinach, kale, or chard in your favorite recipes.

Common Plantain *Plantago major*

Common plantain is one of the most common yard weeds besides dandelions and clover—you probably have it growing in your yard right now. Brought to America by European settlers, the plant spread so rapidly that the Native Americans called it “white man's footprint.” Plantain is now found across the United States, its oval leaves and flower stalks decorating lawns from mid-spring to late fall.

Much like lamb's quarters, the young leaves of plantain can be eaten raw in a salad or cooked like greens. As the leaves grow, they become tough, stringy and strongly flavored. Older leaves are better brewed into tea or stock. Flower stalks can be eaten raw or cooked.

Plantain's medicinal qualities are recorded as far back as Pliny, who claimed



the plant could cure a dog of madness. Whether or not that is correct, the leaves can be used as a dressing on cuts, stings and scrapes; the plant's antibacterial properties are said to reduce scarring. A tea made of plantain leaves is often used as a cold and flu remedy.

Chickweed *Stellaria media*

Chickweed seems to be everywhere once you start looking. This trailing plant grows in lawns, gardens and flower beds. Look for branching stems that grow low to the ground, rooting at every leaf junction; smooth, oval, opposite leaves; and tiny white flowers with five petals so deeply split that they look like ten.



Eurasian in origin, chickweed usually germinates in the fall, lays dormant in the winter and flowers in the spring. In cool climates, chickweed can survive through most of the summer, but hot, dry weather brings an end to its growing season. The best times to harvest chickweed for consumption are in the spring and fall.

Chickens love to eat chickweed leaves and seeds, hence its name. The plant can be fed to pet birds or livestock—if you do not want to eat it all yourself. High levels of vitamin C make chickweed a great pick-me-up ingredient in salads. The leaves can also be cooked like greens, or you can make a pesto with chickweed leaves, garlic, olive oil and nuts.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: *Never eat a plant unless you are certain of its identification. When in doubt, consult an expert. Never eat plants from roadsides or sites where chemicals have been used, and thoroughly wash all plants before eating them.*



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A New Twist on Husbandry



With large agriculture squeezing the market on more traditional farming methods, small agriculturalists are finding newer and more creative ways to make a living from the barnyard. *Stories by Jillian Randel*

Bison: The Healthier, More Sustainable Meat

Pink is the new black, tempeh is the new tofu and bison meat is the new cow beef. While modern farming techniques pose many environmental and ethical quandaries, bison are a sustainable—and healthful—alternative to cow beef.

And with bison meat boasting more protein and less cholesterol and fat than cow beef, it is no wonder more Americans are putting it on their dinner plates.

Jerry Nelon began working with bison about ten years ago. He had raised cows since the 1970s and was looking for a new adventure. Nelon now pastures his own herd of about 70 bison on Nelon Knolls Farm in Polk County, N.C.

“We are having fun doing this,” said Nelon. “At first it was just something different to try out, but after doing research I found they are a fascinating animal.”

Bison are the heaviest land mammals in North America. They stand about five to seven feet tall and weigh anywhere from 900 to 2,200 pounds. Commonly—but incorrectly—referred to as buffalo, bison are a distant relative of the true buffalo.

Hunted to near extinction by early American settlers, bison numbers dropped as low as a few hundred during the nineteenth century. Thanks in part to ranchers and protected land, the numbers now near 200,000.

The species is federally prohibited from receiving artificial growth hormones and relatively few antibiotics are needed to keep a bison healthy. Because they are native to the region and have evolved in their environment, they are able to fight disease and bacteria more effectively than other livestock.

In addition to health benefits, bison also provide a friendly alternative to environmental impacts that cattle farming has on the land.

“Bison are a lot easier on the land because they don’t eat as much,” said Nelon. “It took about five times as much feed for my cows than it does to feed my bison. They also don’t tear up the land as bad. I used to be knee deep in mud with my cows, but not with my bison.”

Nelon’s advertising is primarily



Jerry Nelon currently has about 70 head of free-roaming bison on his farm in Polk County, N.C. Photo by Robin Nelon.

word-of-mouth. He gets about eight dollars a pound for ground bison and up to thirty dollars a pound for steak.

“I would encourage any young person with land to get some (bison) because the market is going to be huge,” said Nelon. “It’s the hot thing right now.”

Nelon envisions a future coalition of bison farmers that will provide meat for local restaurants.

“Bison meat is healthier for the land and the people,” said Nelon. “I hate feed lots. I have never given my bison any treatment and they are just as beautiful and healthy as any herd. I do this because I love the animals.”

For more information, visit nelonknollfarms.com

Piggies in the Forest

The pigs at Buffalo Creek Farm give a whole new meaning to the term hog heaven.

Located in central Virginia, this family-run farm operates on one concept: because pigs are descendants of wild boar, they are healthier and happier when they roam freely through the woods.

Owner Bill Jones never has more than 200 pigs wandering over his 76 acres of pasture, ponds and creeks. Buffalo Creek also does not have the pollution problems other pig farms have.

Jones believes this is the result of maintaining a low hog population density.

Jones offers forest-fed, hormone-free and antibiotic-free meat and believes his pigs are healthier because they forage in a natural way, unlike feed lot pigs that are crammed into small pens.

“Some people like to buy our pork because it tastes better and a lot of people like the fact that it is humanely raised,” said Jones. “They feel that if it has been raised the way it has then it is a better quality product.”

Buffalo Creek Farm sells pork at Ar-

ganica Farm Club, Relay Foods and the farmers’ market in Charlottesville, Va.

To learn more about the farm, visit: forestfed.com/home.html



The pigs at Buffalo Creek Farm are spoiled with open space to forage and nest. Photo courtesy of Bill Jones.

Rabbits, Sheep, Alpaca—Oh My! What To Do With All Of That Fur?

Situated alongside the Blue Ridge Parkway, in the mountain community of Meadows of Dan, Va., is a quaint building called Greenberry House. A fiber studio representing 26 artisan spinners, Greenberry House was started by local spinner Leslie Shelor.

Shelor bred and raised German angora rabbits, a specialty breed, and spent years traveling the East Coast delivering them to customers. The idea to open a fiber studio came when she found herself shearing about a pound of fur from each of her own 30 rabbits every 90 days. She needed an outlet for all of the fiber she was spinning.

As part of southwest Virginia’s local artisans group ‘Round the Mountain, Shelor is well connected with a community of fiber spinners.



Captain Jack is a favorite because of his sweet personality and wonderful wool. His wool is often blended with other fibers to bring out the color. Photo by Leslie Shelor.

“Fiber people are a great crowd,” said Shelor. “I enjoy working with the customers and the spinners, and I meet a lot of great people.”

The fiber at Greenberry House represents a variety of sheep, alpaca and rabbit breeds. All of the artisans who sell

their fiber in the studio are female and most of them work their farms alone while their husbands work outside the home.

Many of the women spin the fiber by hand or send it to local mills to be spun.

“All of the fiber at Greenberry House comes from within a hundred miles of here,” said Shelor. “Travelers love to have a local product from the places they visit, and this one represents a strong local tradition.”

Locally-produced fiber attracts a strong support network of customers. If you look closely enough, you are sure to happen upon a fiber studio in or near your own community.

For more information, visit: greenberryhouse.com



Pure angora and shetland skeins. Photo by Leslie Shelor.

A New Twist on Husbandry continued....

Bathroom Suds With a Touch of Sass

When a long-time customer sent an email from Afghanistan asking about a remedy for raw and bleeding feet—the result of wearing combat boots for 14 hours a day—Sassy Goat Milk Soap owner Jill Wyse set to work on a batch of lotion to help.

Wyse created Sassy Goat Milk Soap in 2005 after she added three goats to her newly purchased farm near the Tennessee-Georgia border. Ruby, the beloved mascot of Wyse’s company, was pregnant with twins and Wyse found herself with an overabundance of goat milk.

“I started studying the theory of soap making,” said Wyse. “I went through about 30 different formulas before I found the right recipe.”

One benefit of goat’s milk is that its low pH level is similar to human skin, so it provides a gentle and soothing cleanser. Wyse combines all-natural honey, shea butter, olive oil and coconut butter to make soaps, shampoos, conditioners and lotions. The above ingredients all contain humectant properties—those that actively draw moisture to your skin all day long.

Wyse gets about a gallon of milk per day from each of her La Mancha goats and still makes all of her soap by hand in single batches. She currently has 11 grown does and two baby does and milks four of them.

One thing Wyse never skimps on: doting on her goats.

“I feed them whole grains with no

Skip the Lawn Mower This Season, Eco-Goats is On The Way

If you are looking for a new twist on farm life, here is one: using goats to clear brush, mow lawns and remove invasive species.

Brian Knox, founder of Eco-Goats, one of the East Coast’s leading goat clearing companies, became interested in goats when he bumped into a friend who had gotten to know his 50 goats so well that he no longer wanted to use them for meat.

“Goats have a lot of personality,” said Knox. “You either love them or they drive you crazy. But we started looking at the various uses of goats out west and decided to try out the goats clearing a few stewardship properties around here.”

Goats are the perfect lawn mowers for overgrown spaces, roadsides, open fields and woodland areas that need to be cleared. And here’s the real kicker—they have stomachs that can digest poison ivy, and they love eating it. Goats also love invasive species such as kudzu, multi-flora rose, Japanese honeysuckle and Oriental bittersweet.

“When the press got a hold of what we were doing, things got crazy,” said Knox.

Crazy good, he means. The business

has become wildly successful and taken over his summers. Knox is one of three commercial grazers that he knows of on the East Coast using goats to clear areas. His herd is stationed in Maryland, but in the summer he travels as far as Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York. Although Knox loves his seasonal job, traveling with goats from location to location is tough.

“You may spend five hours cutting a path and putting a fence up on a third of an acre,” said Knox. “It’s hot, dirty work through poison ivy, brush and thorns. If you don’t enjoy the work, it’s not worth the effort.”

Using these sweet, but hard-working animals is becoming a popular way to clear areas. They are agile and light on their feet, which means they are gentle on the land. Knox’s customer base really like that aspect of goat mowing.

Another benefit is that by using goats to manage weeds and other unwanted vegetation, landowners can avoid toxic chemicals from large machinery. Companies like Google



has her own jingle, which you can listen to on Sassy Goat’s website.

Thanks to her background in advertising and web design, Wyse has developed an online store with a huge market. She receives orders from all over the country. Her eye for marketing, combined with Ruby’s modeling skills, makes a highly effective sales team for Sassy Goat.

“Everybody has a goat story and everybody loves goats,” said Wyse. “I really am convinced that a good product starts with the goats and how they are treated.”

Wyse’s latest projects include a line of t-shirts and other items sporting the Sassy Goat logo and an upcoming line of soap dishes fashioned, of course, after Ruby.

To check out Sassy Goat, visit sassy-goatmilksoap.com/index.html

medication and no fillers,” said Wyse. “It is important that the goats eat fresh greens and hay not medicated with antibiotics. It really comes out in the final product.”

Wyse also prints and designs all of her own labels, using Ruby—with her signature sassy hats and deliciously red lips—to brand the company. Ruby even



Goats have been used to graze as small a plot as 12 x 60 foot backyards and as large as 20,000 acres. Photos courtesy of Brian Knox, pictured above left.

and Yahoo and city and state governments are hiring goat owners to clear and maintain their properties as a way to avoid air and sound pollution from heavy machinery.

With interest in goat landscaping services increasing, more goat owners are looking into profiting from this unique business model.

“It definitely is a way to make money,” said Knox. “If you already have goats and are looking for a way

to cut feed costs, you can hire goats out to others and fatten them up by moving goats around on other people’s property to eat up invasive species.”

Full of personality, sweet, cost-effective and hard-working—goats sounds like a good deal for anyone looking to clear some brush, or better yet, diversify their own farming processes. Got your goat?

For more info on eco-goats, visit eco-goats.com.

Education

Appalachian Colleges Plant Seeds of Sustainability

Many colleges and universities incorporate sustainability lessons into the classroom, but some exceed expectations. Take a look at three Appalachian schools that teach conscientious food habits through student-centered gardens.

Stories by Meg Holden

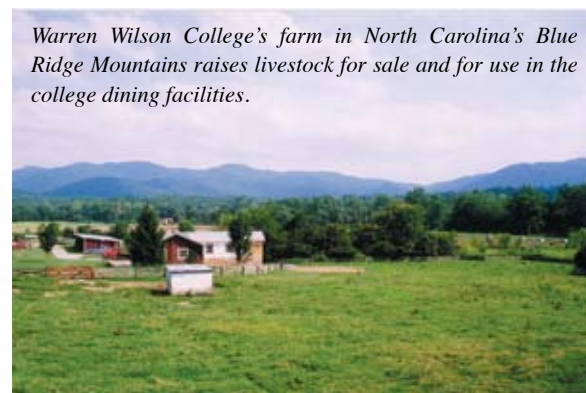
Warren Wilson College

One of the greenest small colleges in the South, Warren Wilson College in Asheville, N.C., is known for its “above and beyond” attitude toward sustainability practices. Primary among those practices is the college’s farm, where students raise cattle, hogs and cereal crops without pesticides or herbicides.

“Sustainable, local, ethical food is what attracted me to the school,” said Lucas Blanchard-Gluckert, who plans to attend Warren Wilson in the spring. “Having a campus farm means that the school is preparing their sustainable agriculture majors with real experience in a way that most other schools can’t.”

Senior social work major Nathan Cogsdale has worked on the Warren Wilson Farm for almost two years.

“Working on the farm makes me feel more connected to the process of food production,” Cogsdale said. “The primary lesson of working with animals is an understanding of the energy and mindset that it takes to raise animals to eat. Everyone who works on the farm becomes very aware of what they consume.”



Warren Wilson College's farm in North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains raises livestock for sale and for use in the college dining facilities.

Warren Wilson’s dining services are committed to using locally-grown foods, especially those grown on campus. All the beef and pork used in Gladfelder, the college’s main dining hall, comes straight from the campus farm. The student-run Cowpie Cafe uses home-grown produce in their vegetarian fare.

“Sustainable agriculture is really something the college is committed to,” said Blanchard-Gluckert. “It’s not just a sustainability bandwagon they’re jumping on.”

Berea College

In 1881, Edward Henry Fairchild, then-president of Berea College, said, “I do not think (the college garden) can be made successful ... I can make a good garden but I have never seen a student who could do it.”

Students at the school in Berea, Ky., have been working to prove Fairchild wrong for the past 130 years. Today, student workers on the campus farm raise and sell livestock such as cattle, hogs and goats.

The campus gardens and greenhouse have a more horticultural aspect. Here, students grow organic vegetables, fruits, mushrooms and garden plants. The food produced in the gardens and greenhouse are distributed to the campus food service, Berea Farmer’s Market and local restaurants and stores.

Students in Berea’s agricultural and natural resource (ANR) department gain work and management experience through the college farms. ANR majors work with field and horticultural crops, livestock, the



Students at Berea College in Kentucky learn agricultural management skills for school and for life. Photo courtesy of Sean Clark.

field mill and other farm equipment. Upperclassmen have the opportunity to become enterprise managers and take charge of various aspects of the farm. Whether they move on to careers in farming or pharmaceuticals—or anything in between—the farm at Berea prepares graduates for sustainable, ethical lives.

University of Virginia

At the University of Virginia (UVA) in Charlottesville, students uphold founder Thomas Jefferson’s agricultural traditions. UVA’s community gardens, started by a student initiative, model organic practices for the university and Charlottesville community.

The first garden was started in 2009 in a space near the center of campus. The garden size increased nearly 100 percent in the past year with the addition of a new garden plot behind the university’s biology and psychology building. The new plot is fertilized with compost made from waste from UVA’s dining facilities/halls.

“In a way (the garden is) just a natural part of the sustainability agenda,”

Educational Alternatives Support a Sustainable Childhood

For parents who have the time—and the energy—homeschooling and “unschooling” allow children more freedom than a traditional classroom. Many families use this freedom as a way to incorporate lessons, such as sustainability, that would not be emphasized in a public school classroom.

Kelli Haywood, a self-described “mother, writer and homesteader,” homeschools her two daughters in eastern Kentucky.

“While we all probably have multiple answers

Sequatchie Valley Institute: A Permaculture Learning Center

by Julie Johnson

Spanning over 300 acres on east Tennessee’s Cumberland Plateau, the Sequatchie Valley Institute (SVI) exemplifies permaculture living integrated into a forest environment.

Since SVI began as a homestead in 1971, visitors have come to learn about sustainable living and land conservation. Over 1,000 people attend the institute’s meetings, workshops and conferences yearly.

Visitors find buildings made of cob and straw and powered by the sun. SVI’s Moonshadow community is a living model of sustainable homemaking surrounded by four acres of edible landscaping.

On October 7, SVI will host a three-day solar energy installation workshop covering various aspects of solar panel design and installation. For more information on this workshop and the Sequatchie Valley Institute, visit svionline.org

said professor Tim Beatley to local paper C-Ville. “We are thinking about how do you sustain, how do you support a growing global population on fewer resources, less land, and how do you do it in a way that will protect the resource base, and that’s essentially what sustainability is about.”

With such a forward-thinking approach and rapid adoption of garden space, we may find the university buried in tomato plants by next year.

to the question of why we chose homeschooling, I believe I am safe to say that all of us felt compelled to do so by the obligation we have to our children as their parents,” wrote Haywood on her blog, *A Mountain Mama*. Haywood incorporates field trips, the family garden and chickens and the support of a local homeschooling group into her homeschooling curriculum.

So for those of you who have the ability and opportunity to homeschool, try including one small action that can get your child moving outside and thinking about sustainability.

Visit Haywood’s blog at EastKentuckyGal.wordpress.com

Turtle Island



Living off the Land With Intention and Integrity

By Jillian Randel

Eustace Conway has cooked exclusively over a fire for the past 35 years—one of many skills that attract people to his home at Turtle Island Preserve to learn about living off the land.

Conway lives on a 1,000-acre preserve near Boone, N.C. The preserve first opened in 1987 and serves as a natural model for living off the land.

On the day I visited, I took a tour of the kitchen, garden, pine forest and various barns housing horses, chickens, ducks, guinea fowl and goats. The preserve is simple, yet represents an old and endangered intelligence about nature.

“Eustace has been an archivist his whole life,” said Desere Anderson, Turtle Island’s office manager. “He’s been



gathering information and learning from different cultures and traditional elders and pooling that knowledge and experience together.”

Conway has spent the last 25 years turning his preserve into an educational getaway. Workshops and summer camps teach blacksmithing, traditional woodworking, wilderness ethics, animal husbandry and identifying and collecting edible and medicinal plants.

“We don’t have any doors here,” said Conway. “We want people to explore and ask questions. We want this to be an open space.”

As we sat in the kitchen discussing the preserve, I could hear the trickle of the creek flowing nearby. It was a calm and relaxing scene. Anderson explains that the kitchen, washhouse and garden were each constructed near the creek to

allow easy access to water for cooking, washing and watering.

“We use primitive skills as a vehicle for character development,” said Anderson. “We give the physical skills, like learning how to start a fire in a rainstorm, and that transfers into skills like confidence which are gained through actually doing the work.”

All of Turtle Island’s buildings were constructed of wood sourced directly from the preserve. Over 100 visitors participated in the building of a straw-bale shed; a summer youth group built a tree house in the shape of a boat; several other groups helped with the construction of a two-story classroom and the preserve’s bathhouse.

During my visit, Conway was teaching an adult camp how to safely use an axe. As Conway led participants to a woodpile for a demonstration, he picked up a wooden bowl that he carved by hand. He explained how integrity could be woven into even the simplest objects.

“By putting time into things, you get meaning out of them,” Conway said. “When your belongings have meaning, then you get more meaning in your life.”

Conway also uses horse-drawn carriage rides to open the door for discussion.

“I talk about horses, the potential of horse power and horse history,” explained Conway. “That often becomes a venue for people to talk to me about starting a farm while taking a tour of our natural outdoor campus.”

Later, as Conway sat down at the kitchen table sharpening a knife, we discussed the growing movement of land-based living initiatives.

“It’s funny; twenty, thirty years ago when I was doing this, nobody cared,” reflected Eustace. “Starting about five years ago, there have been all these buzz words like ‘green living’ and ‘sustainable farming.’ They have people all hyped up.”

Hype can be a powerful tool. Only time will show the results of that hype.

Until then, Conway’s narrow dirt road through the mountains is a passage to a home built with intention and integrity that appears to be more and more the home of the future.

To learn more about Turtle Island Preserve, visit: turtleislandpreserve.com

Eustace Conway demonstrates the proper and safe way to wield an axe for a group of adult campers at Turtle Island Preserve. At left, structures at Turtle Island built with wood harvested directly from the preserve. Pictured are the horse barn and carriage barn. Photos by Jillian Randel.



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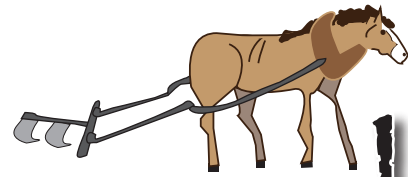
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Draftwood Horse Logging



Sustainable, Local Wood From Forest to Finish

Stories by Jillian Randel

Ode to the Future

Somewhere between clear-cutting a forest and leaving it untouched lies a practice referred to as modern horse logging. This sustainable form of forestry is simultaneously a kick back to the past and the standard of the future.

Horse logging is an evolving industry driven by a close-knit community of environmentally-conscious foresters. One of them, Ian Snider, lives and operates his company, Mountain Works, out of Boone, N.C.

Upon first sight, it does not appear a human being could gently maneuver thousands of pounds of logs, pulled by a team of horses, through the rough terrain of an Appalachian forest. But hold your breath because Ian does, and he does it well.

"The idea behind horse logging is to work smarter, not harder," said Snider. "It is about going forward with a nod to the past."

To initiate the horse logging process, trained foresters—called biological woodsmen—survey an area in search of trees to harvest. The woodsmen remove the weakest trees from the forest first, leaving the strongest standing to ensure the forest's long-term growth.

"We choose to return the forest as much as possible to a healthy ecosystem intact with large mature stems and complex soil structure," Snider said. "This is done by removing the worst trees first."

Snider borrowed the "worst trees first" mantra from his mentor Jason Rutledge, a fellow horse logger in Virginia. Rutledge is the president of the Healing Harvest Forest

Foundation, a nonprofit organization that teaches new biological woodsmen the methods of horse logging and oversees the Draftwood Forest Product brand.

In Snider's eyes, draftwood forestry is coming closer to the needs of ecologic, economic and social sustainability everyday.

"We don't just need wood now, we need wood in ten and twenty years," said Snider. "Cutting an entire forest with heavy mechanization is the standard approach in conventional forestry. Our cottage industry of horse logging and restorative forestry takes a more community-scale approach."

Horses Lead the Way

After the trees are selected and cut—through a method called directional felling

Leather, not levers, connects Ian Snider to the power of two draft horses, above. "Nothing quite like it" admits Snider, pictured here working his team of Suffolk geldings on a rubber-tired log arch. Photo by Kim Hadley, www.kimhadley.com.

Thirty-foot long Draftwood pines contain over 300 board feet. Photo courtesy Mountain Works.

One of Snider's mentors, Chad Miano from Nickelsville, Va., has found an alternative to coal mining and is raising four children from his own horse logging and sawmilling business. Photo courtesy Miano Family Collection.



that provides the best operational safety and the least damage to surrounding trees—Snider brings in a pair of horses to extract the fallen timber.

"We use what is called a modern horse-drawn log arch," said Snider. "It's like a chariot."

The horse-drawn log arch partially suspends the harvested log on a small beam of wood placed between the horses so that it does

not drag on the ground. As a team, two horses can pull greater weight while also keeping the operator safely off the ground.

Horses are the ultimate, low-impact logging tool because they place one foot at a time when they walk, impacting only small areas of the forest floor. Machines, which continuously contract and spin on the ground, harm valuable leaf litter, humus and eventually the subsoil layer.

"This is about using animals as an appropriate tool in forest management," Snider said. "Impact can be beneficial in certain management scenarios, but having (horses) as an option allows that impact to be fine-tuned."

Continued on page 17

The Process

Integrating the New While Bringing Back the Old

Draftwood forestry, though it may seem primitive at first, is actually a highly progressive and integrative approach to logging.

"We certainly use equipment—we have tractors and loaders to load my logs onto a truck," said draftwood horseman Ian Snider. "We are not anti-machine. We are, however, pro-appropriate use of any machinery or technology."

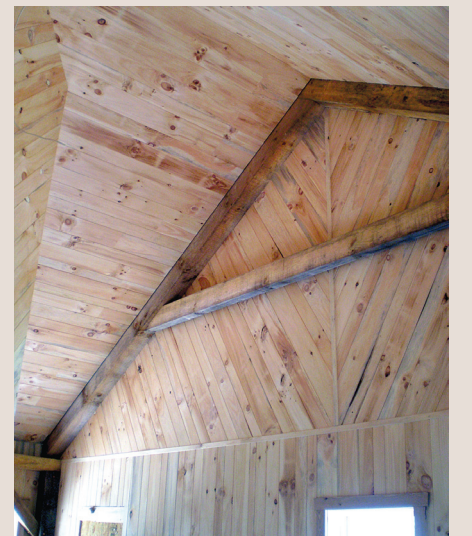
The wood itself is either processed on the spot using a portable sawmill, or taken to a local sawmill and processed there. Portable sawmills were the models of the past and have since been replaced with large, industrial sawmills. Snider uses a portable sawmill in areas where there are larger amounts of timber to mill. In areas where it doesn't make sense to have a portable sawmill, he transports the logs to a local mill.

Snider uses The Saw Doctor mill, a small sawmill and blade sharpening operation run by Brett Winebarger in Fleetwood, N.C.

Winebarger learned the art of milling lumber and producing high quality and specialty cuts of wood from his grandfather. He specializes in smaller orders that industrial-scale mills will not do.

"Because we are small, we can take the time to produce a better product," says Winebarger. "Craftsmanship is a dying art and we take pride in providing it to our community."

After the sawmill, Snider takes his wood to dry at a local kiln. He uses two regional wood drying companies, Elk-Creek Hardwoods in West Jefferson, N.C., an electric-powered service provider, and The Natural Woodworking Company in



Bret Winebarger, a.k.a. the "The Saw Doctor," packs up fresh sawn lumber at his Fleetwood, N.C., sawmill, top. Winebarger milled the wood for this beautiful home addition near his sawmill (above); Ian Snider helped selectively harvest the logs directly from the owners' property. Photos courtesy of Mountain Works.

Floyd, Va. which runs on solar power. Eddie Moretz Lumber and Millwork in Deep Gap, N.C. rounds out the network of local businesses Mountain Works partners with to create its Draftwood product brand.

Once the timber is dried, it can be made into any number of wood products. Mountain Works, in partnership with the woodsmen of Healing Harvest, sells Draftwood cabinetry, furniture, flooring, paneling, trim, decking, siding, beams for timber frames or cabins—all from the timber they harvest.

Snider calls the process "Forest to Finish"—taking the wood from a restorative harvest and using it to build a custom home, barn, or building for a landowner or group of clients.

No Longer A Rural Thing

By Jamie Goodman

During the two days that my friend's first batch of chickens were hatching, she barely left the incubator's side, even to attend her own housewarming party.

Katie Boyette, a fiber artist and kitchen manager at a local company that produces food bars, recently moved with her family to an old farmhouse in the vibrant community of Foscoe, N.C., drawn to the house for several key reasons—a large yard with an already-established garden; fruit trees scattered across the property; and, of all things, a well-tended but empty chicken coop.

"I had fond memories of gardening with my parents as a kid, and wanted my own children to have that experience," said Boyette, a 36-year-old mother of two. "I like the idea of knowing where my food comes from."

From optometrists to artists, attorneys to pet store owners, there is definitely a movement afoot among everyday folk to replace the supermarket mentality with something more tangible, incorporating various levels of sustainability into their

everyday lifestyles.

Websites and publications dedicated to rooftop and backyard gardens—such as UrbanOrganicGardening.com and Urban Gardening Magazine—are flourishing. Major urban areas like New York City and San Francisco long ago perfected the art of maximizing minimum space. Today, networks of people in cities and towns across the country are converting rooftops and landscaped backyards into edible Edens.

A few years ago, Boyette started growing vegetables and herbs in a small raised bed garden. Her current garden provides a fair amount of the family's fruits and vegetables during the summer; she supplements by shopping at local health food stores and her regional farmers market.

According to the Department of Agriculture, farmers markets are growing at an exponential rate. The U.S. currently has over 6,100 farmers markets, a 16 percent increase from 2009; nearly

Back-To-The-Land Goes to Town



Young chickens forage outside the chicken coop in Foscoe, N.C. Photo by Katie Boyette

900 of those operate during the winter months. And in spite of myths about overpricing, studies by schools such as Seattle University and New York's Bard College have shown that prices at farmers markets are typically lower than at supermarkets.

Small communities are getting into the game as well, offering more incentives for town residents to increase their sustainability and decrease their footprint. In an effort to reduce landfill waste, the town of Boone, N.C., offers free composting bins to residents within the town limits who request one. State and county agriculture cooperatives offer rain barrel discounts and give-aways to encourage using rain rather than municipal water for lawn care. And communities such as Wheeling, W.Va., now supply communal garden space for residents who have no place to garden.

As for the the chickens, Boyette's original brood of four hatched during

her housewarming party in late June; she is now incubating a second batch of 15. Her feathered friends live in a tidy coop with a roaming yard and a rain catchment system for watering.

"I hated chickens when I was growing up," Boyette said. "Now, I just want my kids to have eggs from happy chickens. And for parents, it's an incredible lesson to teach the kids how to take care of [living] things."

Asked what she thinks about the growing "back-to-the-land" urban trend, Boyette said, "I have met lots of people wanting to keep chickens in their backyards, and people who are finding creative ways to produce food with limited space. It's a very cool movement."

So whether you simply like to compost your grass clippings or harbor secret dreams of fresh eggs every day, getting in tune with going back-to-the-land doesn't mean you have to shed your city ways.

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WHAT YOU SAID

We asked our urban-living friends on Facebook to provide us with details on what they are doing to get "back to the land." This is what they said.

"I grow veggies in the flower beds in front of my duplex and in containers. I'm trying to use more cloth rags instead of paper towels and disposable sponges. I'm transitioning to all glass storage containers instead of plastic. I'm working to phase out my chemical cleaners and use alternatives such as vinegar and baking soda." **Anna Oakes — Boone, N.C.**

"In addition to Norma's beautiful and productive raised bed, organic garden, our best move was to install an outdoor wood furnace and supply the two homes on our property with hot water and winter warmth." **Alun Ward — Stanardsville, Va.**

"Greenhouse on deck above garage, container planting, non-gmo non hybrid seed investment, no lawn, raised beds for vegetables, landscaping that is wild and dog and people friendly with perennials that grow well in Alaska... Eating fresh organic foods and eating less. Living more spiritually and doing with less. Out of debt, no mortgage, learning skills, sharing with community." **Lee Smith — Wasilla, Alaska**

"Local farmers market for produce and eggs, but am picky about which vendors I buy from. Outside of the 2 counties I straddle is NOT local. Also use a butcher that stocks NC meat and fish. Very little shopping from a grocery store these days has an unexpected benefit...no packaging means less (usually un-recyclable) garbage." **Serena Jewell — Raleigh, N.C.**

"From the apt lifestyle: community gardening, composting, recycling, supporting local farmers markets/food coops, biking/public transportation, rain water catchment/water conservation methods and living in a shared space." **Mo Halsema — Chapel Hill, N.C.**



Draftwood Horse Logging

Continued from page 15

Additional benefits of horses include being solar-fueled, grazing in pastures rather than running on oil or gas and their ability to communicate with humans.

"Horses are self-repairing," Snider said. "That is very valuable in terms of maintenance. The most significant asset is that horses are self-replacing. Machines still can't have babies."

A Niche Market Becomes the New Paradigm

Horse logging is most feasible on small, privately-owned tracts of land. And the trend in forest land ownership is shifting to smaller tract sizes, with most individuals owning 60 acres or less.

"With that trend in place, it is becoming less economically viable for large, industrial-sized equipment to be profitable and appropriate for forest land management in the United States," said Snider. "Horse logging is now more likely to be considered first rather than last for someone who wants to manage a small forest."

It can take as long as a hundred

years to regrow a clear-cut forest so that it is profitable again. Horse logging in a small forest provides long-term profitability. Instead of getting one sum of money, it allows

landowners to selectively extract trees over the long term and ensure continued growth of the forest.

"Disciplined investors don't buy a stock and expect to cash in next week, they expect their return years down the road," said

Snider. "What we try to do is grow the largest amount of high value timber over the longest period of time while keeping the forest and its essential ecosystem services intact."

Snider sees horse logging not as an echo of an earlier time, but as an important step toward the future.

"A lot of people think it is an old, anachronistic thing," said Snyder. "But it is going to be essential for us to do things like this to realize true sustainability."

Ian Snider lives with his wife Kelly and their draft horses, Frank and Jim, in Ashe County, N.C. More information is available about Mountain Works and Draftwood Forest Products online at mtnworks.org and draftwood.com.



Trading the City for the Farm

Morel Bliss and August Stringer of Mascot, Tenn., have bid vacations good-bye since their honeymoon last October. Days start at 6 a.m. and are wrapped up at about 9 p.m. seven days a week. Important daily tasks, almost all done by hand, include caring for a huge garden, more than 100 chickens (some egg layers and the others for meat), a Jersey milk cow named Crema, two milking goats—Shassafras and Maple—and their kids, a herding dog named Magness and two cats.

Morel and August—both former Tennessean city dwellers—took up farming because of their love of organic fresh food straight from the source. They

developed bio-dynamic farming skills through a series of on-site farm care jobs, an internship at Mountain Farm in North Carolina, and through the Twin Oaks Intentional Community in Virginia.

Here Morel captures a chicken that escaped its movable chicken coop and run (top), while August finishes up morning chores of feeding and milking the goats (left).

Morel is a full-time farmer, while August also works weekdays as a graphic designer in Knoxville.

Photos by Rachael Bliss

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Community Kitchens Taking Food From Farm to Table

By Julie Johnson

Jack Fischer had a great idea for a product, but no space in which to make it.

"At home, I'd make nut butters out of raw, sprouted almonds and walnuts for my family," he said.

Fischer knew his nut butters were a marketable product, but because of health department regulations and the size of his kitchen, they were illegal to sell or even give away outside the home.

So Fischer took a class in specialty food production at Blue Ridge Food Ventures, a community kitchen and small business incubator in Asheville, N.C.

"They went over everything involved in production, including regulations, labeling and branding," Fischer said. "At the end of the class, they let us bring in our finished products and have them reviewed in front of a panel of people from the local food industry. Each panelist bought a jar of nut butter on the spot."

This encouragement was enough that Fischer started producing his nut butters at the community kitchen soon after. He is now selling his organic nut butters—made with raw honey from the nearby Haw River—in at least four farmers' markets a week.

"If I was trying to produce on my own, I would have had to secure major grants to set up a kitchen space," Fischer said. "My overhead would be at least double, if not triple, what it is when I rent hourly space at the community kitchen."

In counties throughout Appalachia, community kitchens are offering people sanitary, industrially equipped spaces in which to make value-added products to sell at farmers markets, restaurants, retail stores and online.

In the town of Annville, Ky., the Jackson County Farmer's Kitchen offers a restaurant style kitchen, an outdoor farmer's market stand and a dock to accommodate Kentucky State University's mobile poultry processing unit. To start producing at the facility, an entrepreneur submits their recipe to the



Local residents canning in the community kitchen at the Jackson County Regional Food Center. Photo courtesy of the Appalachian Alternative Agriculture organization.

health department for approval.

"Right now we have 16 different companies using the facility regularly," said Kitchen Manager Greg Golden. "They come in and I train them on all the equipment and supervise in case they need help."

Because the Jackson County Farmer's Kitchen is certified and inspected by the health department, products made there are legal to sell to the public.

"We've got folks that sell at farmer's market stands, some that wholesale to retail outlets and others who sell online," Golden said. "One of our kitchen users just shipped his product to Switzerland."

For a flat rate of \$100 per day, a farmer can bring as many chickens as he has to be processed in the KSU mobile unit.

"When the poultry unit comes out, farmers from all over come to take advantage of that," said Golden. "The whole operation is certified, so poultry processed there can be sold anywhere in the state."

The Jackson County Farmer's Kitchen has also provided jobs for four women in the community. The women have been trained on all the kitchen equipment. People who come in to use the facility can choose to hire them by the hour if they need help with production.

The idea for the kitchen was born out of Kentucky's post-tobacco-farming decline. The Jackson County Agricultural Extension Service saw that local farmers were struggling because markets were scarce, and decided to create a multi-purpose agricultural facility so farmers could have better access to a market stand and kitchen.

Appalachian Alternative Agriculture of Jackson County was instrumental in securing grants and funding to get the project off the ground, and they opened their doors in 2008.

The rate for kitchen use is \$35 an hour, so an eight-hour day comes to \$280. The first person to use the kitchen made 2,000 jars of salsa in a single day, resulting in an overhead of 15 cents per jar.

The Jackson County Farmer's kitchen holds classes in micro-processing at the facility. The hope is that entrepreneurs will have enough success with their products that they will grow out of their home kitchens, and then the Community Kitchen will be ready for them.

The local high school chapter of the Future Farmers of America and many local non-profit organizations have been granted free access to the kitchen to make products to sell for fundraisers.

"The reason this place was built was to help people develop a product, make a little at a reasonable cost, see if it

Ready to take your product to market?

Below are just a few of the many certified kitchens operating in Appalachia. Contact your county's Agricultural Extension Service for information on kitchens in your area.

North Carolina
Stecoah Valley Food Ventures, Robbinsville
stecoahvalleycenter.com/community

Virginia
Carroll County Cannery, Hillsville
276-728-7571

West Virginia
Boone-Raleigh Community Center, Whitesville
304-854-7913

Ohio
Appalachian Center for Economics Networks (ACE Net) Food Ventures, Athen
acenetworks.org

Tennessee
Sunday Kitchen, Decatur
423-802-2661

Georgia
Shared Kitchens, Suwannee
sharedkitchens.com

works out and next time grow the number of cases they make and expand on their business," said Jeff Henderson, an agent for the Agricultural Extension Service. "It is important to our community to help people become entrepreneurs."

The Art of Mushrooming

Appalachian mushrooms are indispensable

By Meg Holden

From portabellas and button mushrooms to the more exotic truffles and shiitakes, there's no "fun guy" like the edible mushroom. These tasty fungi bring flavor to stir fries, burgers, salads and more. But you do not have to go to a restaurant or the grocery store to take advantage of mushrooms—many edible varieties can be found growing in the wild. You may be able to wildcraft, or forage, mushrooms to supplement your next meal.

There are many native mushrooms growing wild in the Appalachian woods—morels (*Morchella* spp.), chanterelles (*Cantharellus* spp.)

and *Craterellus* spp.), lion's mane (*Hericium* spp.), maitake (*Grifola frondosa*), and lobster mushroom (*Hypomyces lactifluorum*), to name a few. But wildcrafting around here takes more than just knowing the common mushrooms.

"Common" for mushrooms doesn't mean that they are easy to find," said Dr. John Walker, mycologist and assistant professor of biology at Appalachian State University. "You have to be in the right habitat at the right time and have a

bit of luck on your side unless you have a known patch."

For first-timers, it is recommended that you forage with an expert and consult a book for every mushroom you gather from the wild. Keep in mind that mushrooms will absorb toxins from the environment. Even a perfect morel will be unsafe to eat if it has been exposed to toxic substances such as pesticides, herbicides, or car exhaust.

While searching for edible mushrooms, the most important thing to remember is that many mushrooms are not edible—and accidentally putting one of these in your omelet

can be deadly.

"It is urgent that collectors know exactly what they are collecting and they should also be familiar with toxic look-alikes," said Walker. "Most of the common species are distinct and can be reliably identified by inexperienced collectors with proper initial guidance."

All wildcrafters should be conscious of what, how, and how much they harvest from the wild. While the commercial use of some native plant

species, such as the wild onions known as ramps, has led to a decline in their proliferation, responsible harvesting of native mushrooms should help wildcrafters avoid a similar fate for their favorite fungi, according to Walker.

Most mushrooms grow individually from a large, underground mass called a "mycelium," much like apples grow individually from a tree. As long as harvesters do not damage the mycelium, mushrooms will proliferate in the same area year after year.

Another way to avoid harming wild populations of native mushrooms is to cultivate them domestically. Shiitake logs have proven to be a popular way to grow mushrooms, and similar methods may increase production of native Appalachian species. Oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus ostreatus*), lion's mane and maitakes have all been cultivated successfully.

Appalachian mushrooms, though often overlooked, are a vital part of the mountain ecosystem. According to Walker, fungi perform critical functions such as breaking down woods debris and providing water and nutrients to forest plants. Some mushrooms are even able to filter out pollutants—oyster mushrooms are known to remediate compounds such as DDT.

With mushrooms being so invaluable, from helping trees grow to helping feed Appalachian residents, protecting

Ready to try your hand at wild-crafting mushrooms?

Find an expert to help you identify edible fungi, or consult a resource like *Mushrooming Without Fear* by Alexander Schwab (Skyhorse Publishing, 2007).

The Appalachian Voice reminds you never to eat wildcrafted plants or fungi unless you are certain of its identification. When in doubt, consult an expert. Never eat plants or fungi from roadsides or sites where chemicals may have been used. Thoroughly wash all plants and fungi before eating them.

these fungi is vital. According to Walker, European mushroom populations, including edible species, have been declining in recent years, most likely due to declining air quality. Preventing pollution and harvesting responsibly will allow Appalachian mushrooms to proliferate, letting wildcrafters enjoy these "fun guys" for generations to come.

Don't be fooled by these mushrooms

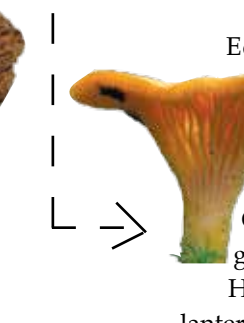
Morel vs. False Morel

Though true morels are delicious with a light, earthy flavor, false morels contain a volatile substance, monomethylhydrazine, which is highly toxic and used in rocket fuel. True morels have a hollow stem and a completely attached cap.



Chanterelle vs. Hygrophoropsis

Edible chanterelles can be confused with gilled mushrooms (*Hygrophoropsis* spp.) and the jack-o'-lantern mushroom (*Omphalotus olearius*), which can cause stomachaches. Golden chanterelles lack true gills and smell like dried apricots. *Hygrophoropsis* has true gills. The jack-o'-lantern mushroom glows in the dark.



Threats to the Land:

Nitrate Pollution Poses Severe Health Risks

By Jillian Randel

Since large-scale farms of today have replaced the small farms of old, the bucolic nature of farming has given way to more industrialized techniques that may represent a turn for the worse.

Large-scale farming operations pose a significant threat to the health of America's waterways. A major source of contamination in drinking water is runoff from fertilizers that contain high levels of nitrates.

Nitrates are essential for plant survival. Because plants deplete the soil of this essential nutrient over time, large agricultural operations must use fertilizers to supplement the soil with nitrogen.

Nitrate overflow can occur when too much fertilizer is applied on fields and the plants cannot absorb it all. The result is a high level of nitrates flowing out of

crop fields. As the nitrates get flushed out of the soil, they contaminate groundwater sources.

"Nitrogen contents in water will end up some place, and generally in streams and lakes," said Dr. Ariel Szogi, research soil scientist at the U.S. Agricultural Research Service.

In a September 2010 report, the U.S. Geological Survey monitored and documented nitrate levels above 10 mg/L—the maximum contaminant level set in the Safe Drinking Water Act—in over 20 percent of shallow household wells in agricultural areas.

Nitrates can severely harm human health. Upon entering the digestive tract, nitrates convert into nitrites, which cause sickness in infants. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, some communities in agricultural areas spend millions of dollars a year treating



their water supplies to remove nitrates.

Concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) are another source

of nitrogen pollution. CAFOs are small areas where livestock are crammed together in close quarters.

The high amounts of urine and manure produced in CAFOs is transported to lagoons that often break or leak, sending dangerous microbes, bacteria and nitrates into nearby water supplies.

According to the National Resources Defense Council, waste lagoons emit toxic gases such as ammonia, hydrogen sulfide and methane. Negative health effects from these gases range from headaches, shortness of breath, wheezing, excessive coughing, diarrhea and sore throat to symptoms as severe as seizures, comas and death.

Many farmers use the manure itself—which contains high levels of nitrogen—as fertilizer. It is a free alternative to industrial fertilizers that can ensure higher crop yields.

The American Farmland Trust started a program called The BMP (Best Management Practice) Challenge to address long-term solutions to excess use of nitrates. Farmers in the program agree to apply less fertilizer to their fields and apply it during a time when plants are expected to absorb the most. If crop yields decrease, the program compensates them for losses.

"Nitrate levels are a major health hazard and need to be checked in groundwater," said Szogi. "The best thing to do is go to the Department of



A Cafo, or concentrated animal feeding operation.

Health and Human Services or another certified lab and they can test a water sample for a small fee."

Keeping the Cows Out of the River

A gentle cow drinking from a river seems like an idyllic pastoral scene—but that could be one harmful heifer. Cattle and their waste are major threats to open waterways.

"Farmers don't have the appropriate buffers in place to fence livestock out," said George Santucci, executive director of the National Committee for the New River. "It is a huge problem with erosion, and E. coli often poses a serious health threat."

Santucci blames historic farming practices and says it is a challenge and expense to farmers to install appropriate drinking systems that keep cattle from polluting valuable water sources.

If your water tests above 10mg/L for nitrates, you will need to have it treated for nitrate poisoning. If you are unsure of how to get your water tested, interpret lab results or report results, contact your local health department.

For more information, visit water.epa.gov/drink/contaminants/basicinformation/nitrate.cfm

This GREEN House

A Rush of Clean Energy at Pine Root Creek

Spinnin' the meter with flowing water

By Jesse Wood

Just as kayakers and farmers love rain during a drought, so does Richard Cobb.

"I just constantly hope for rain," Cobb said.

Cobb installed a 5-kilowatt microhydro system on his Mitchell County property in Buladean, N.C. in the late 1990s. Though he is environmentally conscious—green construction is his day job—Cobb's primary motivation was creating a source of power in case the Y2K prophecies proved true.

The microhydro system's energy production varies and correlates to the amount of water in Pine Root Creek. The creek is about six feet wide; the watershed consists of two to three acres and includes several waterfalls. Cobb's system involves 800 feet of pipe, called the penstock. The penstock starts upstream at the intake and continues to the turbine, which turns the rushing water into electricity. The water then flows back into the stream. During that span, the water drops 170 feet in elevation.

Winter and spring are the most productive seasons for Cobb's microhydro system. When the water level is at its highest—around 1000 gallons per minute (gpm)—Cobb says he could triple the energy production if he had three systems. A flow of 100 gpm is enough for his energy usage, though much more is needed for heat in the winter.

"When I am running full blast in

the winter, I can pretty much not only run electricity but heat my house too," Cobb said. "In a really good year, if the creek stays up, I basically run a zero-energy house."

Pine Root Creek is not always rushing, though. Cobb said a few years back the river was flowing at 10 to 15 gpm, and the system shut down automatically. When Cobb was interviewed for this article in July of this year, the river was flowing at 25 gpm and the system was producing 500W—about 10 percent of its maximum output.

Cobb said his system needs a bit more than an inch of rain a week to stay running. In the summer, thunderstorms help increase the flow of the creek, but the creek subsides soon—especially after a spell of dry weather.

"The best thing, of course, is an all-day, steady rain," he said.

Cobb's microhydro system cost \$20,000, and he purchased the materials from Sundance Power Systems in Weaverville, N.C. His system is different from others because it includes a battery bank and is connected to the electricity grid. Cobb said the battery bank doubled the cost of his system.

Except for some technical advice from Sundance Power Systems, Cobb installed the system himself. Maintenance work includes switching nozzles as water levels change, replacing parts in the turbine and cleaning the intake screen that filters out silt.



A deck leads to a shed housing a turbine and generator of Richard Cobb's microhydro system. Water is piped into the shed and the turbine creates electricity from the moving water. Water then shoots out the bottom of the shed and flows back into Pine Root Creek. Photo by Richard Cobb.

"You just have to be a tinkerer to have a hydro system," he said.

According to Cobb, the system paid for itself within five years.

"It's a pretty big investment, but a quick recovery," Cobb said. He recovered 60 percent of his total cost with federal and state tax credits and the rest he saved by making his own electricity.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Agency, the average American household uses 920kWhrs per month. Cobb's passive solar home, which also has solar hot water and insulated concrete forms, uses about 600kWhrs per month, one-third lower than the national average.

Microhydro is less versatile than

other renewable energy options because it requires a steady source of running water, but there are benefits to this.

"The thing about hydro is it runs nonstop 24 hours a day," Cobb said. "You'd have to install a PV (solar panel) system about four times as big to produce the same amount of power."

But for homes that fulfill the requirements, a microhydro system is a valuable long-term investment in sustainable energy and a sustainable future.

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WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MICROHYDRO?

Don Harris, one of the nation's leading microhydro experts, will conduct a two-day workshop at Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C. from October 8 to 9. Registration is \$300, \$150 for students. For more information, call 828-262-7333 or visit wind.appstate.edu.

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Bill to Remove Federal Water Protections Passes House OBAMA VETO LIKELY

By Jamie Goodman

A bill has passed the U.S. House of Representatives that would undermine the EPA's ability to enforce the Clean Water Act and put water quality control in the hands of individual states.

The Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act (H.R. 2018), introduced by Rep. John Mica (R-FL), passed by a 239-184 vote in mid-July after being fast-tracked through the Transportation and Infrastructures Committee. If enacted, the legislation would limit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's authority on aquatic pollution controls and water quality monitoring, giving control of those programs to state regulatory departments.

Under the bill, the EPA would not be allowed to interfere with individual states in decisions such as determining appropriate waste disposal sites or pollutant discharge

limits. The bill would also prohibit the EPA from issuing new water quality standards for a pollutant if the agency has approved a prior standard for that pollutant unless the states agree.

In a prepared floor statement, Congressman Gerald Connolly (D-VA) said, "This bill is a case study in irony. After seven months of blaming economic malaise on regulatory 'uncertainty,' this bill would eliminate predictable and consistent national clean water standards in favor of an uncertain state-based patchwork of regulations."

"The purpose of this bill is to prevent Clean Water Act regulation of those 'valley fills' which (mountaintop removal) mining companies use to dispose of former mountains," his statement continued. "Valley fills should be a clear violation of the Clean Water Act, and under the Obama Administration, the EPA and

Army Corps have finally begun to comply with the law and regulate them."

Supporters of the bill claim that federal regulation over water quality interferes with the ability of companies to do business and limits economic growth.

The Obama Administration responded strongly against the bill, issuing a statement that warned of a potential veto if the President was presented with the bill.

"H.R. 2018 would roll back the key provisions of the CWA that have been the underpinning of 40 years of progress in making the nation's waters fishable, swimmable, and drinkable," the statement read. "(The bill) could limit efforts to safeguard communities by removing the Federal Government's authority to take action when State water quality standards are not protective of public health."

Voting was mainly split along party lines, with 16 Democrats crossing to vote for the bill and 13 Republicans voting against. The bill is not expected to pass in the Senate.

OTHER BILLS ON THE HILL

Fossil fuel advocates in Congress are aggressively pushing a number of provisions that curtail protections for air, water and human health. These include bills that would streamline permits for mountaintop removal, delay and roll back emissions limits for power plants and gut renewable energy and energy efficiency programs.

Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act of 2011, H.R. 2273 (McKinley R-WV): Prohibits strong regulation of toxic coal ash

Transparency in Regulatory Analysis of Impacts on the Nation Act of 2011 (TRAIN Act), H.R. 2401 (Sullivan R-OK): Delays public health protections regarding emissions from coal-fired power plants.

American Alternative Fuels Act of 2011, H.R. 2036 (Griffith R-VA): Allows the military to buy fuels such as liquid coal even though current law forbids purchasing alternative fuels that emit more carbon pollution than conventional fuels do. The Defense Department opposes this rider.

Energy and Water, Homeland Security, Agriculture Approps (HR 2354, HR 2017 HR 2112): These bills will defund the EPA's ability to redefine "waters of the United States," and block funds for both the Departments of Agriculture and Homeland Security's climate adaptation program.

Interior and Environment Appropriations Act (H.R. 2584): This bill will gut essential provisions in the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act, limiting public protections from toxic coal ash, mountaintop removal waste, mercury, carbon dioxide and soot, among other things.

By JW Randolph

NEWSBITES FROM COAL COUNTRY by Meg Holden

Sierra Club Coal Campaign Is Blooming: NY Mayor Michael Bloomberg has pledged \$50 million to the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign over the next four years. The funds will be used to double the 100-person staff dedicated to stopping coal-fired energy from being used in the U.S.

Turning Brownfields Green: Washington County, Penn., is home to 136 brownfields, areas where the potential presence of harmful contaminants preclude use. The EPA hopes that an injection of green-\$400,000 in grants--will help the Washington County Redevelopment Association assess options for old coal mines.

Super Monopoly to Progress? Duke Energy and Progress Energy have set the date! On August 23, shareholders will vote on the proposed merger that would create the nation's largest utility, with 7.1 million customers.

Astrophysicist Admits to Accepting DirtyMoney: Climate change skeptic Willie Soon has received more than \$1 million from major U.S. coal and oil companies. No report on whether he has used any

of that money to benefit the polar bears that he claims are not threatened by human-caused climate change.

Lowering Education...and Life Expectancy: Upshur County, W.Va., high schoolers may be getting the ultimate excuse to skip class: a 1,800 acre mine directly underneath Buckhannon-Upshur High School. The mine, proposed by industry giant Arch Coal, would risk the lives of students and teachers for the sake of cheap coal.

The Coal-bert Report: Comedian and pundit Stephen Colbert, along with Talisman Terry the Frackasaurus—a character created by oil and gas company Talisman Energy—informed the viewing public about hydraulic fracturing in July. Colbert also invoked Mountaintop Mining Manny in a jibe at Massey Energy.

Coal: Now Bad for Jobs, Too? A new study comparing strip-mine locations in West Virginia with population and economic data reports that mountaintop removal coal mining does not increase local employment. The report denies coal company claims that "coal means jobs."

EPA Releases Conductivity Guidance for Mining EPA's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule Finalized

By Kate Rooth

After a year of analysis, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has released a memorandum intended to improve standards for permitting mountaintop removal coal mining in central Appalachia.

The final product, however, fell short of expectations.

Environmental and community advocates were particularly concerned about the flexibility given to states implementing the benchmarks for water conductivity for coal mining permits in Appalachia. Conductivity, a measure of salt and/or pollutants in water, is a critical indicator of stream health. EPA

studies found that nine out of every 10 streams downstream from surface mining operations in Appalachia exhibit significant impacts to aquatic life.

"The guidance was supposed to provide greater protection to streams and communities, but I'm concerned that it just takes us back to the good old days of allowing states to give coal companies free reign to pollute," said Donna Lisenby of the Waterkeeper Alliance.

This new guidance will allow states to do even less to stop water pollution in Appalachia.

To read the full memorandum, visit: water.epa.gov/lawsregs/guidance/wetlands/mining.cfm

By Meg Holden

The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's newest regulations to limit air pollution from coal-fired power plants, will take into account the fact that air currents can whisk pollutants far away from their original sources.

"Pollution that crosses state lines places a greater burden on (downwind) states and makes them responsible for cleaning up someone else's mess," said EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson. The new regulations help ensure that communities are not responsible for air pollution created elsewhere.

According to EPA estimates, within two years of going into effect, the new regulations will cut sulfur dioxide emissions by 73 percent of 2005 levels. Nitrogen oxides will be cut by over half. Both of these gases cause acid rain, contribute to holes in the ozone layer and damage

human lungs.

Teri Blanton of Kentuckians for the Commonwealth says that upgrades to air pollution regulations are long overdue.

"We have known for decades that producing energy through coal-fired power plants is disastrous to the health of the people," said Blanton. "We're all affected by what comes out of their stacks."

Implementation of the CSAPR will help Americans avoid adverse health effects including 15,000 non-fatal heart attacks, 19,000 hospital and emergency visits, 400,000 cases of aggravated asthma and 1.8 million missed days of school and work annually, according to EPA estimates.

The CSAPR will affect 27 states, including all nine states in the central and southern Appalachians. For more information, visit epa.gov/crossstaterule.

BILL ADAMS

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Picture of Bill Adams at Riverfest by Frank Ruggiero, *The Mountain Times*

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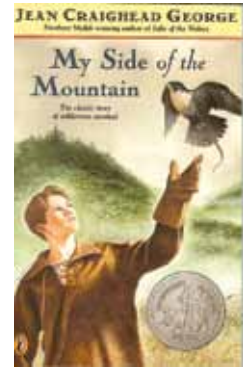


YOUR READING GUIDE TO LIVING OFF THE LAND

FIVE RESOURCES FOR A SUSTAINABLE LIFE by Meg Holden

My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George (1959)

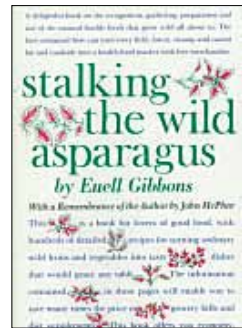
How do you survive with little but a pocketknife and an idea about living off the land? "My Side of the Mountain" tells the story of 13-year-old Sam Gribble, who leaves his New York City home to live in the Catskill Mountains. Using only the few possessions he brings with him, Sam



learns to hunt, fish and forage and even creates a home in a hemlock tree. This book is geared toward children.

Stalking the Wild Asparagus by Euell Gibbons (1962)

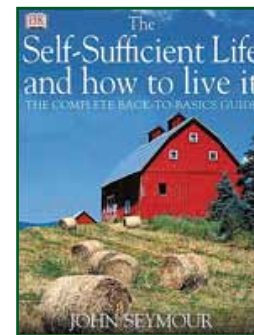
Starting in his childhood in New Mexico, Euell Gibbons dedicated much of his life to finding food in the wild. While many foods listed as "edible" in guidebooks disappoint the palate, Gibbons shows his readers how to find and prepare delicious wild foods ranging from the wild asparagus of the title to fresh-caught bluegill. "Stalking the Wild Asparagus" and its sequels are as fresh and relevant today as when they were first published in the 1960s.



inspiration both to mountain readers and to those living outside the region.

The Self-Sufficient Life and How to Live It by John Seymour (2003)

John Seymour is known as the "Father of Self-Sufficiency," and rightly so. This comprehensive guide to living off the land explains, with full-color illustrations, everything from preparing a "deep bed" for a garden to making cheese to carpentry and basket-weaving. The book inspires "Little House on the Prairie"-esque fantasies about raising pigs, canning food and harvesting grain, and gives you the information you need to fulfill these dreams.

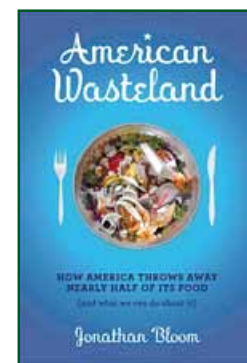


Do you daydream about living in the forest, hunting and gathering to eat? Would you find peace on a farm, raising chickens and corn? Does your imagination thrive in a back yard garden? Live vicariously through these books, or use them as stepping-stones to a new life of sustainability. Some of these books are old favorites, and a few are modern classics, but all will entertain and inform.

sustainable gardening. The book covers no-mow lawns, green roofs, water conservation and other topics. Whether you are just starting to consider your yard as more than a patch of grass or are a seasoned gardener, the essays collected in "The New American Landscape" offer plenty of food for thought about the importance of gardens.

American Wasteland: How American Throws Away Nearly Half its Food by Jonathan Bloom (2010)

In Jonathan Bloom's first book, *American Wasteland*, the journalist and blogger of WastedFood.com chronicles how we waste food from farm to fork, and the impact this waste has on our nation. According to a review by Kirkus, *American Wasteland* is "an eye-opening account of what used to be considered a sin—the willful waste of perfectly edible food."



The New American Landscape: Leading Voices on the Future of Sustainable Gardening edited by Thomas Christopher (2011)

With contributions from Rick Darke, Eric Toensmeier, Elaine Ingram and many others, "The New American Landscape" offers various perspectives on



Editorial

A Politician A Day Keeps The EPA At Bay

What is it about politicians that calls them to be so obedient to the worst of the bad apples in big business? The mantra of the 112th Congress seems to be that we should use the pain of an economic recession to justify more unsustainable and dirty practices that harm the environment, public safety and human health.

Bills that threaten to undermine every shred of human protection won by generations of Americans are now crowding the floor of the U.S. House, threatening our air, water and well-being. A focus on good jobs and sustainable economic growth, however, seems to be entirely off the table.

Bills like H.R. 2018, which would remove federal oversight on water regulations and hand them to the states (despite a new GAO report showing how badly states fail at water quality oversight); H.R. 2273, which would prohibit the regulation of toxic coal ash as a hazardous material; and H.R. 2401, which would delay public health protections against deadly emissions from coal-fired power plants.

Surely, Congressional representatives must understand that their constituents, friends and families will be breathing the same toxic air and drinking the same poisoned water as the rest of us. But many politicians have become so overwhelmed with the allure of large campaign contributions and slick-tongued lobbyists that the "public good" becomes mere background noise in their ongoing quest to please the status quo rather than actually represent "the people" they are here to govern.

According to Greenpeace, House Majority leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) has received an astounding \$655,547 since the 2000 election season from fossil fuel industry heavyweights like Dominion Electric. Presidential hopeful Michele Bachmann (R-MN) has taken \$131,980 in campaign financing from fossil fuel companies since 2006.

Both Bachmann and Cantor's home districts have power plants without the readily available mercury controls that would lessen the pollution spewed into the air—pollution that is poisoning their own communities, families and even, shockingly enough, themselves.

Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers' (R-KY) eastern Kentucky district is home to the most mountaintop removal in the nation—as well as the lowest life expectancy, the worst physical health and some of the highest poverty rates of any district in the country.

It would seem that the conservative Congress is dead set on trading the "heavy-handed oversight" they claim to loathe for a corporate boss who tells them exactly what to do and how to vote. It's like comparing apples to, well, apples. And in the case of politicians who would trade our clean air and clean water for anything—let alone a campaign contribution—well, those are some very bad apples indeed.



Viewpoint

On Hunting

By T.R. Kirkpatrick

I sat in my stand where I had sat through many a Christmas day and watched the deer grazing the grass of the orchard by the apple trees, and I remembered the anniversary of my first hunt, when I had walked silently into the receding light of a cold winter's dusk, through the bare and slate-gray woods of my predecessors, my father's rifle with me for my rite of passage, when a boy becomes a provider, bringing me into communion with the wilderness, and entering me into a circle that I could not become a part of otherwise.

That day I had passed along the road through the maple grove between the orchard and hay field in silence, listening to the soft wind of winter pass among the bare canopy above me and the steady live beat of my own heart within.

I did not see the buck in

the field through the brush and trees, but instead felt it as it looked up towards my direction from where it grazed. The buck turned to face me, stamping its hoof and grunting from its flared nostrils, but I remained patient and the buck bowed to graze then raised its head again, looking through the bare limbs and dead leaves.

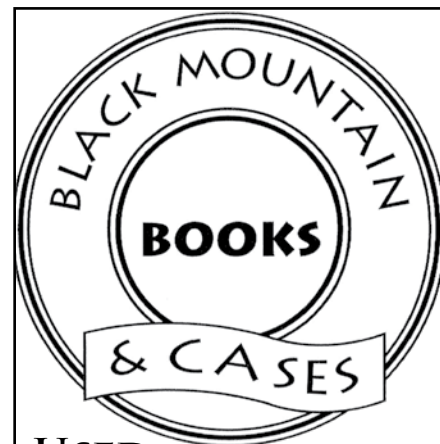
The time passed slowly and as the shadows were growing longer I stood facing the deer in still silence, and slowly the buck went to graze along the top of the pasture, turning its side to me as it walked into the clearing. I dropped to my knee, shouldered the rifle, and took the deer into my sights.

I witnessed death by my own hand for the first time, kneeling beside it and running my hand over the wild animal, feeling its death as the body ceased to quiver. In a fleeting wisp, the soul was gone. The body released the spirit in a final sigh, no longer a deer, but

only a corpse, and I was now a provider. I fell back beside my brother and mourned the blood between us.

From that time on I have fed my family on the deer that have come through those pastures, and with the deer I have shared the communion of their passing in a place where age is seldom the cause of death. So I love them more than the others in the woods, for I know them in sacred ceremony. I have been the caretaker of their fields and so they have cared for us in their sacrifice, and so on that Christmas morning, as all those past, I went into the woods without my rifle, and sat silently as they grazed before me.

Reid Kirkpatrick is a writer and carpenter currently living in Williamsburg, Va. Reid and his wife are currently planning a move to New Zealand for a year, where his wife will teach. While there, Reid hopes to work on a novel and find a position on a sustainable farm.



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SPECIALIZING IN BOOKS ABOUT BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE



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Taking A Stand in the War on Water

By Erin Savage

Though placid lakes and playful streams seem to say otherwise, a war on water is currently raging in the Appalachian Mountains. Here are just a few of the ways that Appalachian Voices is taking the plunge and combating water pollution. Read more at appvoices.org/waterwatch.

Enforcing the Clean Water Act in Kentucky

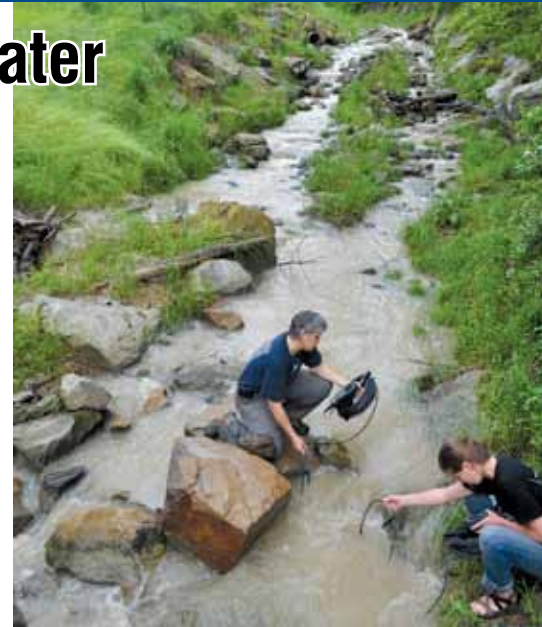
Appalachian Voices' Appalachian Water Watch team, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Kentucky Riverkeeper and Waterkeeper Alliance are making headway in Clean Water Act litigation against three of Kentucky's largest mountaintop removal coal companies: International Coal Group Inc. (ICG), Frasure Creek Mining LLC and Nally & Hamilton Enterprises, Inc.

In June, Appalachian Voices filed a second notice of intent to sue ICG and

Frasure Creek Mining for an additional 4,000 permit violations of the Clean Water Act that occurred in the first three months of 2011. The coalition group filed a previous lawsuit against the same two companies in October 2010 for more than 20,000 permit violations that took place over a several-year period.

The same coalition is also involved in a case against Nally & Hamilton coal company for over 12,000 violations of the Clean Water Act. According to research by our Water Watch team, current Nally & Hamilton reports include exact duplication of data from previous reports.

Mediation with ICG and Frasure was rescheduled for July 26 and trial is set for August 30. The Nally & Hamilton case is in the process of discovery and hearings have been set for January 2012.



Upper Watauga Riverkeeper Donna Lisenby and Water Quality Associate Kara Dodson test conductivity, pH, total dissolved solids and temperature below a surface mine in Kentucky. Photo by Eric Chance

June at the SAMS headquarters in Appalachia, Va. Additional trainings are scheduled during August in Kentucky and Virginia.

The Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act

Appalachian Voices is working to prevent passage of HR 2018, a bill that threatens our water by rewriting portions of the Clean Water Act and removing the EPA's authority over water pollution. The bill would grant individual states permitting decisions for mountaintop removal coal mines and other water polluting industries. See page 22 for the full story.

When sponsor Rep. John Mica (R-Fl) and others attempted to sneak the bill through the house by waiting until the day it passed the House Transportation and Infrastructure

committee to give notice of the bill, Appalachian Voices activated our network of supporters with an email that resulted in 6,000 letters to congress in 24 hours. Our allies, Waterkeeper Alliance and Alliance for Appalachia, quickly mobilized their supporters and generated action alerts to thousands of across the US.

In mid-July, HR 2018 passed the House of Representatives. However, the President's advisors have recommended a veto of the bill, stating that it "could adversely affect public health, the economy, and the environment."

EPA Mercury Regulation

Appalachian Voices strongly supports the EPA's proposed new mercury guidelines, which would provide stronger oversight of mercury and other toxic pollutants emitted from power plants. If made a rule, the guidelines would reduce exposure to these pollutants and decrease their associated health risks, such as heart attacks in adults and asthma in children.

We produced a video in support of the new regulation that was submitted as a public comment and shown during the EPA's public hearings on the rule, which were held in May. We also emailed our supporters asking them to submit letters to the EPA voicing their support for the rule. The public comment period is scheduled to end August 4.

Community Water Testing

This summer, Appalachian Voices' Appalachian Water Watch team began community-based water testing in eastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia. The program is designed to protect Appalachia's watersheds by enforcing state government accountability through citizen water monitoring.

By equipping and training local groups to monitor water quality in areas close to mountaintop removal coal mining, the program provides valuable information about potential pollution violations and helps local residents become better informed about their watersheds and more connected with other concerned citizens.

Appalachian Water Watch provides local host organizations with high quality testing equipment and training in water quality testing and state Clean Water Act permit review. These organizations then provide the same training to their members. The data collected by volunteers will be submitted, organized and made public through the new Appalachian Water Watch website, which will officially launch this fall (stay tuned for details!).

Partner organizations include Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Kentucky Riverkeeper and Sierra Club Water Sentinels. The first training took place in



Abbadabba Sells Shoes For Mountains

Appalachian Voices would like to give a big thank you to Atlanta-based shoe store Abbadabba's for supporting us with their "End Mountaintop Removal" promotion.

In conjunction with "The Last Mountain" film's run in Georgia from July 8 to 24, the store donated five dollars to Appalachian Voices for every pair of Merrell Barefoot shoes sold. Abbadabba's CFO Kristin Smith grew up in Kentucky and mountaintop removal is a topic close to her heart.

"This cause is a deeply personal one to me as my family hails from the mountains of eastern Kentucky and southern West Virginia," wrote Smith on the store's blog. "Each time I go home, the landscape has changed again and more mountains have been lost. The ecological damage is staggering, and yet not enough people are paying attention."

Abbadabba's proves that business and ethics can go hand in hand, and we look forward to working with them more in the future!

Now 101 Cosponsors of the Clean Water Protection Act!

Appalachian Voices, the Alliance for Appalachia, NRDC and others continue to promote the bipartisan Clean Water Protection Act (HR 1375), a House bill that would make it illegal to dump toxic waste from mountaintop removal mines into headwater streams in Appalachia.

During the third week of July, the Clean Water Protection Act reached 101 cosponsors, and that number is continu-

ing to grow as more representatives learn about the impacts of mountaintop removal on communities in Appalachia.

See if your congressperson is a cosponsor by visiting ilovemountains.org/clean-water-protection-act.

Appalachian Treasures: On the Road Again

Our Appalachian Treasures tour, a multi-media presentation that educates people about the impacts of mountaintop removal coal mining on communities in Appalachia, has hit the road once again, this time to the Pacific Northwest and the Windy City.

Kate Rooth and Austin Hall—Appalachian Voices' national field staff—traveled to the Pacific Northwest for a week-long tour through Washington and to Portland, Oregon. More than 150 people attended presentations in Washington cities including Redmond, Issaquah, Bellevue and Vancouver.

"People are always shocked to know that an egregious practice like mountaintop removal is happening in the United States," Kate said. "The good news is that they are always eager to help and as a result there is a growing national movement fighting for an end to this practice."

As we go to press, Campaign Director Lenny Kohm is touring the windy city of Chicago and southern Illinois to deliver the message about mountaintop removal and talk to people about the Clean Water Protection Act and the Appalachia Restoration Act.

Since 2002, the Appalachian Treasures tour has traveled to over 30 states and talked to over 10,000 people about mountaintop removal coal mining.

Goodbyes & Hellos...

Un Adiós Encariñado

Appalachian Voices bids *un adiós encariñado*—a fond farewell—to our 2010-11 AmeriCorps Communications Outreach Associate and *The Appalachian Voice* Managing Editor, Jillian Randel.

During the last year, Jillian has brought a humanist perspective to her articles in *The Voice*, unearthing compelling stories that help connect people to the issues and to our Appalachian culture.

In one of the highlights of her service year, Jillian worked tirelessly to compile and write stories on more than 60 amazing and accomplished women for our Women of Appalachia issue, helping to highlight the often-overlooked contributions women have made toward protecting the cultural and environmental heritage of our region. The issue received numerous compliments and we believe will have a far-reaching influence on how people view our Amazing Women of Appalachia.

Jillian's intelligence, humor (always attempting Spanish!), unflappable positive attitude and desire to accomplish to her utmost level are all attributes that define her as a person of high character and quality.

Jillian leaves us for Tampa, Fla., where she will pursue writing and her yoga training certification.

We wish her all the best!

Welcoming A Capitol Guy

We would like to welcome Thom Kay, our new Legislative Associate based in Washington, D.C.

Thom is originally from the Piedmont region of the Appalachian Mountains in Spartanburg, S.C. He graduated from Wofford College in 2007 with a major in philosophy. Thom has worked with Greenpeace on chemical security legislation and climate change legislation. His most recent work was with the League of Conservation Voters, advocating for several issues including coal ash disposal rules and mountaintop removal.

Thom will be working with our Washington, D.C., team near Capitol Hill to help pass the Clean Water Protection Act to outlaw the dumping of mine waste into Appalachian headwater streams.

Welcome, Thom!



The Film Big Coal Doesn't Want You To See!

"... a passionate and personal tale that honors the extraordinary power of ordinary Americans when they fight for what they believe in."



PLEDGE TO SEE THE FILM: You'll receive an update when the movie is coming to your area -- we'll also provide you with ways to get involved in the movement to end mountaintop removal coal mining.

<-- WIN THIS: You'll automatically be entered into a drawing for this 18" x 24" limited edition Shepherd Fairey screenprint.

DONTWATCHTHISFILM.ORG

AppalachianVoices BUSINESS LEAGUE

New & Renewing Members — June/July 2011

- Ambiance Interiors -- Asheville, NC
- Black Cat Burrito -- Boone, NC
- Earth Fare -- Boone, NC
- Footsloggers -- Boone, NC
- Hob Knob Farm Cafe -- Boone, NC
- Precision Printing -- Boone, NC
- Stick Boy Bread Company -- Boone, NC

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

2nd edition
Managing Your Woodlands
A Guide for Southern Appalachian Landowners
Produced by: AppalachianVoices

Our handbook on forestry management gives you the knowledge and resources you need to make smart decisions about your forest and become a better steward of your land.

Now with a FREE DVD: "Landowner's Guide to Sustainable Forestry" - from the Model Forest Policy Program

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HONORING THE RIVER SPIRITS: Cindy Ball (left) and Tommy Lee McGee (right) guide a River Goddess puppet during the waterdroplet parade at the 2011 Appalachian Voices Riverfest. The River Goddess was loaned to Appalachian Voices by the Elkland Art Center, a non-profit organization located in Todd, N.C., that focuses on art, education and community. For more information, visit ElklandArtCenter.org. To view more photos from our annual Riverfest celebration (held on June 4 of this year), visit AppalachianVoices.org/riverfest. Photo by Jamie Goodman.

GET INVOLVED environmental & cultural events in the region

Sycamore Shoals Arts Workshops

August-September: Various workshops on topics including eighteenth century blacksmithing, natural dyeing, spinning and basketry. Other events range from a butterfly count to Revolutionary and Civil War reenactments. Rates vary. Visit: tn.gov/environment/parks/SycamoreShoals/

Asheville One Love Initiative

August 5-8: This weekend-long gathering includes workshops on leading a balanced and sustainable life, live music, and outdoor adventure opportunities. \$75, includes camping. Asheville, N.C. Visit: onelovepress.com

Spruce Knob Astronomical Observatory

August 6, 8 to 11 p.m.: The Spruce Knob Astronomical Observatory, located on the highest point in West Virginia, will open for public star viewing. Pendleton County, W.Va. Email: lgutierrez@mountain.org

Blue Ridge Women in Ag Farm Tour

August 6-7, 2-6 p.m.: Self-guided tour supports local farms and businesses. Includes wine and cheese tasting, fiber arts, worm composting, and mushroom production demonstrations, and more. \$25 in advance or \$30 on-site. Boone, N.C. Visit: brwia.org

STAY Summer Institute

August 9-13: The Stay Together Appalachian Youth (STAY) Summer Institute will focus on empowering young people through leadership development, personal relationships, and developing an Appalachian identity. Rates vary. Harlan County, Ky. Email: stayproject@gmail.com

CNN Airs Battle for Blair Mountain

August 14, 8 p.m.: Watch CNN In America's documentary, "Battle for Blair Mountain," a look at the debate over mountaintop removal coal mining, centering on Blair Mountain, W.Va. Multiple locations. Preview on cnn.com

In the Footsteps of Lucy Braun

August 17-21: Participate in Pine Mountain Settlement School's four-day forest study workshop. \$325 includes workshops, lodging, and meals. Pine Mountain Settlement School, Harlan County, Ky. Visit: pinemountainsettlementschool.com

Concert to Save the French Broad River

August 25, 8 p.m.: The Save the French Broad Campaign brings reggae superstars The Wailers to Asheville to raise money for the French Broad River Paddle Trail. \$22 in advance, \$25 at the door. The Orange Peel, Asheville, N.C. Visit: theorangepeel.net

Community Fair Day

August 27: The fair will include handmade and homegrown product competitions, games, music, a pig roast, pony rides and more. Pine Mountain Settlement School, Harlan County, Ky. Visit: pinemountainsettlementschool.com

Holiday Gorge Floor Hike

September 2, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: A guided hike from rim to river will teach hikers about the unique gorge ecosystem. The hike is strenuous and involves rock-hopping and getting wet. \$5 plus \$5 parking. Tallulah Gorge State Park, Tallulah Falls, Ga. Visit: gastateparks.com/TallulahGorge/

Clear Creek Festival

September 3-5: A weekend of workshops to generate healing, justice, creativity, and connection to nature includes musical performances and a film festival. \$25, suggested \$10 donation for camping. Berea, Ky. Visit: clearcreekfestival.org

Terrapin Hill Farm Harvest Festival

September 8-11: Terrapin Hill Farm provides the public a chance to see a working, sustainable farm as well as naturally-grown farm products. The Harvest Festival includes live music, fire-spinning, glass-blowing, yoga and special events just for kids. \$75 in advance, \$95 at the gate, for all four days. Harrodsburg, Ky. Visit: terrapinhillfarm.com/festival/

Book Signing at Malaprop's

September 9, 7 p.m.: Join Duke University professor Orrin H. Pilkey for a signing of his newest book, "Global Climate Change: A Primer." Malaprop's Bookstore and Cafe, Asheville, N.C.

Solar Water, Space and Pool Heating Workshop

September 9-10: Solar thermal expert Chuck Marken will cover the basics of solar water, space and pool heating in this two-day workshop. \$150 for students, \$300 for others. Appalachian State University, Boone, N.C. Visit: wind.appstate.edu

Kidfest at Grandfather Mountain

September 10, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Guided hikes, storytelling, music and fun. Included with park admission. Grandfather Mountain, N.C. Visit: grandfather.com

Email voice@appvoices.org to be included in our Get Involved listing. Deadline for the next issue will be Friday, September 23, at 5 p.m. for events taking place between October 1 and December 5, 2011.

Virginia Wine Festival

September 17-18, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.: The longest-running wine fest on the East Coast, the Virginia Wine Festival is now in its 36th year. Great food, wine, and live music. \$25 in advance, \$30 at the gate. Centreville, Va. Visit: floydfest.com

Hawk Migration Watch

September 17 and 24, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.: Bring your binoculars and watch thousands of hawks migrating south for the winter. Learn how hawks use air currents to make flying easier. No charge with park admission. Caesars Head Overlook, Caesars Head State Park, S.C. Visit: southcarolinaparks.com

West Virginia Mine War Tour

September 25-27: This tour through West Virginia highlights coal mines, state parks, and other historic sites. \$549. Begins in Charles Town, W.Va. Visit: coalcountrytours.com

Virginia Power Shift

September 30-October 2: Virginia students unite to share ideas and support for a future based on clean energy. Completely planned by and geared toward students. Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va. Visit: vapowershift.org