Friends of Blackwater

MOLLOHAN NAMED BLACKWATER HERO 2008  
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

Also Inside:

Notes from the Director  page 2
Forget Britney, We Have “Ginny”  page 3
Inspiration to Preservation  page 3
Hot on the Trail  page 4
Golden Eagle #41  page 8
Threat to Bats Gravest Ever  page 8
Albert Highwall Enhancement Update  page 9
Nature Notes  page 9
Meet the NFWP Team  page 9
History and Heritage in the Canyon  page 10
A J.R. Clifford Project Timeline  page 10
Remembering Fun, Fearless Females  page 11
Updates!  page 12
Squirrelly Sweepstakes Winners  page 12
Harper’s Ferry Outdoor Festival  page 12
Calendar  page 12
Membership Form  page 12

Working to protect West Virginia’s Highlands, the Blackwater River watershed and the Blackwater Canyon.
Notes from the Director

March 2008

Board of Directors
Judy Rodd - President
Paul Hill - Vice-President
Jeanne Dalporto - Secretary
Sandy Fisher
Shelia McElraine

Advisory Board
Annie Dielar - Author
Larry Groce - Mountain Stage
Jason Habert
Alan Karlin, Esq.
Joyce Dorsey
Sandy Fisher

Notes from the Director

Sincerely,
land Preservation folks! Good job, Beth!
worked on this legislation in coalition with the West Virginia Wildlife Federation, the state land trust and the Farm state land purchases. Funding will come from a fee on deeds of $4.50. Beth Wheatley of the Nature Conservancy

The other exciting bill to pass was the Voluntary Rural and Outdoor Heritage Act, which sets up a fund for state land purchases. Funding will come from a fee on deeds of $4.50. Beth Wheatley of the Nature Conservancy

Dear Friends,

Inclusion in that category by any interested party or by the Secretary on his or her own initiative.

and those waters whose unique character, ecological or cultural values, constitute a valuable national or state resource. Additional waters may be nominated for inclusion in this category in accordance with the solicitation procedures specified by the Secretary for this initiative.

For more info on the Endangered Species Act:

This habitat includes the Allegheny Front, the most outstanding streams. Senator Kessler in the House to the Department of Commerce and Economic Development. Senator Kessler in the Senate to the Natural Resources Committee. Senator Kessler in the Senate to the Natural Resources Committee.

The first new law is the “anti-degradation” bill – which protects West Virginia’s most outstanding streams. Senator Kessler sent the bill to the House with full “3.0” protection language – the strongest level of protection. On the House side, the bill was championed by House Delegate Speaker Rick Thompson, who put a tremendous personal effort into passing the bill. Delegate Carrie Webster made an impassioned speech on the House floor, asking to protect West Virginia’s most vibrant streams for future generations. The bill went back to the Senate which passed it, with improved language from the House.

For more info on the Endangered Species Act:

Tale of Two Canyons: Inspiration for Preservation by Donna Skill Smith

As a child in the 1930’s growing up in the foothills of the Allegheny Mountain, Hazel (Smith) Oliff has roots deep in mountain culture. Fostered by nature, she developed an ambitious and independent spirit to meet the challenges of day to day living. Her school day began with a 2 mile walk to a general store where she joined school mates commuting to Petersburg. The Beltway types who are...
Meet the “legal eagles” who are guiding us in our efforts to Save the Canyon Trail!

Deirdre Purdy

Deirdre Purdy was born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware, and studied philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh. She and her husband Wally moved to Clifftop, Calhoun County, WV in 1974, where they homeschooled their children, Jed and Hannah. Hard to believe, but there were no jobs for philosophers in Calhoun County! So a fellow homeschool parent and court reporter offered to teach Deirdre stenotype, and she became a court reporter.

Deirdre worked as a court reporter for more than ten years. She jokes that after watching lawyers all that time, she said “Heck, ‘Objection, hearthes,' I can do that!” -- and went to WVU law school! Wally continued his work building post and beam houses. Deirdre graduated in 1998 and was taken on as a law clerk by the illustrious Judge Charles H. Haden II, Chief Judge of the federal District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia, until his untimely death in March, 2004.

Deirdre then practiced law as an associate at Bailey & Glasser, in Charleston, until 2007. Brian Glasser generously assigned Deirdre to provide legal help to Friends of Blackwater on the Canyon Trail campaign. The first time Wally and Deirdre walked the Trail with Judy, Mary Krueger from the Wilderness Society, and folks from the Forest Service, Deirdre says “I realized I had been given much more than an assignment; I had been given a great gift and a great challenge. The Trail must be saved for all the people, but a lawyer is just a point person. When these battles are won, it is because of the people, but a lawyer is just a point person.

Deirdre and Wally prepare to ride off into the sunset.

Brian Glasser grew up in West Virginia. The highlands, canyons, streams and woods were the backdrop of his childhood and now provide the setting for his life’s work: being a farmer and being an attorney. After attending WVU, Brian went to Oxford on a Rhodes scholarship, and then to Harvard for law school. But he returned to West Virginia where, among other things, he blends his passion for his native landscape and his skill at the bar to help protect the state against environmental threats.

Brian is a founding member of Bailey & Glasser LLP, a successful law firm in Charleston that has recently expanded to include offices in Morgantown and Washington, D.C. Protecting West Virginia’s wild places is not the only way he applies his skills as a lawyer, but it’s personally one of the most important.

Brian, who has provided pro-bono legal counsel to the Friends of Blackwater, recently brought his children Jed and Hannah to Blackwater for a week, and he said, “I believe in preserving places like the Blackwater Canyon for them and for the future of all of us in West Virginia.”

Congressman Mollohan Receives 2008 Blackwater Hero Award!

On February 13, 2008, Friends of Blackwater celebrated “Ten Years of Winning Achievements” at our annual reception in Washington, D.C., at the home of Rafe and Lenore Pomerance. The party was honored by the presence of West Virginia Congressman Alan Mollohan and his wife Barbara, and former West Virginia Governor Bob Wise, who was a leader in early Canyon protection efforts and now works in Washington.

Congressman Mollohan received the FOB “Blackwater Hero” award for his work in protecting the Blackwater Canyon Trail -- especially in pressuring the US Forest Service to follow their own rules and regulations regarding the use of our public land! He urged people to work for siting regulations for industrial wind turbines, a message that resonated with many of those in attendance.

Fifty guests attended the packed house event. Master Chef Dean Wartti prepared tasty Middle Eastern food on the spot. We auctioned items donated by Tucker County restaurants and resorts, and photography and paintings by West Virginia artists. Sculptor Mark Blumstein attended and donated a whimsical “garden critter.” Other attendees were Pat Munoz of the Wild Network; Heidi Black, Director of the Potomac Conservancy; attorneys Eric Glitzenstein and Kathy Meyer of the public interest environmental law firm, Meyer, Glitzenstein and Crystal; and Lori Sonken of 5150 Washington.

All in all -- a great evening!
Ten Years of Advocacy for the Blackwater Canyon

Building a Powerful Circle of Love & Protection

At our recent fundraising party in Washington, DC, we took a few minutes to look back at ten years of the campaign to protect the Blackwater Canyon. Here’s a summary of what we said:

It was in the Fall of 1997, and a friend called with the news: “The heart of the Blackwater Canyon has just been sold to a timber operator!”

Folks who love Blackwater had a million questions. Was the sale legal, since it was not approved by the Public Service Commission? (The courts said it was legal). Could the land be logged without violating endangered species laws? (Some land, yes; a lot, no.). Would public interest lawyers and scientists work to champion Canyon protection? (Yes, they would!)

And of course, we pondered on the most important question of all: can we build a movement of organized citizen power that can protect the Canyon?

Ten years have passed since that phone call, and the answer to that last question has proven to be a resounding “Yes!”

We have had many victories in many arenas. We have protected hundreds of acres of Canyon land. And we are closer than ever to moving all of the land in the Canyon into public ownership.

Our strategy has been the same from the start: to build a powerful circle of love and protection around the Blackwater Canyon. Here are some of the “links in the chain” that form our Blackwater Canyon circle:

1. Defending Nature – we work to protect the rare and endangered species of the Blackwater Canyon – like “Ginny”, the West Virginia Northern Flying Squirrel.
2. Outdoor Adventure and Recreation – we promote hiking, boating, fishing, biking, skiing, birding, and other outdoor recreation and tourism in the Canyon region.
3. Good Jobs and Sustainable Development – we work with local businesses to promote using high-value natural treasures like the Blackwater Canyon as an engine for prosperity in the West Virginia Highlands.
4. The Power of Science – our diverse scientific teams provide cutting-edge, unbiased expertise on land use and environmental issues; and we expose “junk” science promoted by special interest groups.
5. Law and Advocacy – our brilliant, hard-working lawyers challenge illegal agency land-use decisions in court, and support environmental law enforcement.
6. Arts and Heritage Education – we bring scholars, artists, and communities together to celebrate the Canyon region’s rich human history and heritage.
7. People Power! – our Blackwater Canyon circle includes many diverse political, cultural, economic, and age groups. We pool our efforts in letter-writing and public comment campaigns, to bring powerful pressure to bear on public officials, agencies, and legislators.
8. Publication – colorful newsletters, e-mails, and websites spread the message of Blackwater Canyon protection far and wide.
9. Friendship, Family, Prayer, and Meditation – in all of our work, we draw on our spiritual connection with the Canyon – and with those who came before us and those who will follow us.
10. Celebration and Commitment – over a decade we have had many successes, and we celebrate every one. Our work is about winning, not whining!

So, looking back ten years, and putting it all together: for protecting the Creation, for good jobs in the West Virginia Highlands, and for our children and grandchildren – we are building a powerful circle of love and protection around West Virginia’s “Crown Jewel” – the magnificent Blackwater Canyon! The financial support of Canyon lovers allows us to continue this work. Thank you!
Golden Eagle #41: WILL HE FLY FREE--OR BE CUT DOWN BY BLADES!

Golden Eagle #41 (we like him "the Phoenix") was caught in a leg trap in December of 2006, near Strieby WV, just below the majestic SPECIES: Gray bats, Indiana bats, Ozark big-eared bats. In total, the American bats, including four endangered and kill several different species of North Easting species: gray bats, Indiana bats, Ozark big-eared bats. In total, the bats range from New Hampshire to Arkansas and Michigan to Florida. biologists throughout the Northeast have been virtually every significant bat hibernation site year, the fungus has been observed on bats at in four bat hibernating caves in New York. This "white-nose syndrome." It was first discovered last year that tens of thousands of bats are dying from an immediate action to prevent further harm to Blackwater. Citing a threat to bats from a new disease affecting West Virginia's bat population. To see the project site, hear an outline of the project, and ask for clarifications on any item within the project specification. This project is being bid in part by friends of Blackwater and the North Fork Watershed Project, and is another example of why we need strict siting regulations for all wind turbine proposals.

Conservation Groups Petition to Save Imperiled Bats From Deadly New Disease

Citing a threat to bats from a new disease that is widespread, severe, and imminent, the Center for Biological Diversity, Heartwood, and Friends of Blackwater Canyon petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on February 18th for immediate action to prevent further harm to endangered bats. The organizations are asking that federal projects that will harm imperiled bats and close bat hibernation sites to the public. "We think the government is doing an immediate action not only to find the cause and cure for this mysterious disease, but also to prevent it from spreading to other bats. This would protect many more species of bats in the U.S. and elsewhere in the world," said Judith Rodd, director of Friends of Blackwater. Loggin, logging, road building -- all these actions harm imperiled bats. These hibernation sites are the perfect place for bats to estivate through the winter months. The organizations simultaneously submitted petitions to the Federal Highway Administration, Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, Tennessee Valley Authority, and the U.S. Forest Service to immediately stop implementation of any federal projects that will harm imperiled bats that are being harmed by white-nose syndrome. In West Virginia, industrial wind projects are a particular threat to bats. At the Mountaineer wind project in Tucker County, up to 3,000 bats are killed annually. The Nedpower Project on the Allegheny Front is scheduled to put up 200 turbines that could cause a mortality of 15,000 bats a year. Between industrial wind turbines on Appalachian ridgelines and white-noise syndrome, whole species of bats could be wiped out.

Albion Heights Enhancement Project Moves Forward

On Thursday, March 6th, the WV Department of Environmental Protection held a public meeting to announce the Albion Heights Enhancement Project. The conference was led by Dave Broschart and Gregg Smith of the Phillipi Office. In attendance were Jane Pyle and Smalt Giants two subcontractor representatives. The pre-bid conference served as a chance for prospective contractors to see the project site, hear an outline of the project, and ask for clarifications on any item within the project specification. This project is being bid in part by friends of Blackwater and the North Fork Watershed Project, and is another example of why we need strict siting regulations for all wind turbine proposals.

Nature Notes: Polecat Weed

Skunk cabbage is widely known for its reputation of having a foul odor, but few people have seen the plant itself. Also called Polecat weed, it has a hood-like appearance as it first appears. The flower is a yellow spathe above the spadix on which the small flowers appear. Aptly named, the skunk-like odor is somewhat like Jack-in-the-pulpit with the structure of the spathe above the spadix on which the small flowers appear. Aromatic named, the skunk-like odor is evident when plant is crushed and broken open. Skunk cabbage is capable of tolerance to acidic soils, and is found in both open and shaded areas. It is also tolerant to being walked on. Skunk cabbage is drought resistant, and is found in a variety of soils. The plant is also tolerant of flooding conditions. It is found in wet prairies, swamps, and along the edges of lakes and streams.

Meet the North Fork Watershed Project Team

I moved to West Virginia to work for the Canaan Valley Institute. I initially worked as Assistant to the Natural Resources Coordinator, and then to the position of Smalt Giants Project Team.

March 2008

March 2008

Page 8

Page 9
History and Heritage in the Canyon

The image contains text about J.R. Clifford, a Blackwater hero, and the Blackwater Canyon area in West Virginia. The text discusses the history, heritage, and activism related to the Blackwater area, including the work of J.R. Clifford and the Blackwater Canyon area. It highlights the importance of preserving the heritage and biodiversity of the region.

The text mentions the Blackwater Canyon Project, which involved the work of J.R. Clifford and his allies. The project aimed to protect the canyon and its wildlife, as well as to raise awareness about the history and heritage of the area. The text also highlights the contributions of various individuals and organizations, such as the West Virginia NAACP, the West Virginia Civil Rights Commission, and the Appalachian Heritage Network.

The text discusses the importance of protecting the canyon and its wildlife, and the need to preserve the heritage and history of the area. It emphasizes the role of community involvement and the importance of education and awareness in preserving the area.

The text concludes with a call to action, encouraging readers to get involved and support the preservation of the Blackwater Canyon area. It emphasizes the importance of working together to protect the area and its rich heritage.

The text is written in a clear and engaging manner, providing a detailed and informative account of the history and heritage of the Blackwater Canyon area. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in learning more about the area and its significance.

---

Bobby James Garlin, Jr., and former WV Governor Earl Ray Tomblin, both lived and worked in the Blackwater area in Raleigh County, WV. December 2008
March 2008

UPDATES!

Cheat Canyon Report
So far 137 Acres have been set aside for Cheat three-toothed land snail habitat

WWW.SAVEBLACKWATER.ORG
Our redesigned website will premiers on March 24, 2008. Let us know what you think.

Squirrelly Sweepstakes Winners Announced!
We are pleased to announce the winners of the “Squirrelly Sweepstakes” contest.

The winner of the “Blackwater Getaway” Package, which includes two nights lodging, dinner for two at Sierianni’s in Davis (yum, yum!), and a massage from the Highland Inn and Spa in Canaan Valley, was Mr. John Roberts of Charleston, WV. John and his wife Betty are very active in their church and with their grandchildren. We certainly hope they enjoy their weekend at Blackwater.

The “Enjoy The Blackwater from Home” Package which includes a copy of The Blackwater Chronicle, a “Save Blackwater Canyon” t-shirt, a Limited edition Blackwater Poster, and other fabulous prizes, goes to Mr. Brian Thorniley of Winfield, WV.

Congratulations to both of our winners!

☐ YES! I WANT TO JOIN FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER
Choose a membership level and send your name, address, and e-mail to
Friends of Blackwater, 501 Elizabeth Street, Charleston WV 25311

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

My donation is in memory/honor of:

Please send card to:

☐ I want to add my name to the Petition to Protect the Blackwater Canyon Rail Trail.

☐ Add me to your volunteer database.

☐ Please send future newsletters only via e-mail.

☐ Please update my personal information.

☐ Please remove me from your mailing list.

Name

Address

Phone

E-mail

CALENDAR

APRIL

April 4-5, 2008
Woodcock Constellations at Canaan Valley Nat’l Wildlife Refuge

April 19, 2008
Stirrings of Spring/Woodcock Roundup at Canaan Valley Nat’l Wildlife Refuge

MAY

May 2-3, 2008
CheatFest sponsored by Friends of the Cheat

May 3, 2008
Family Trail Days at Canaan Valley Resort

May 7-10, 2008
Nature Photography Workshop at Canaan Valley Resort

May 8-10, 2008
47th Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage at Blackwater Falls State Park

May 9 - May 11, 2008
Wild, Women Weekend at Canaan Valley Resort

May 31 - June 1, 2008
40th Anniversary of Golf Course at Canaan Valley Resort

JUNE

June 6, 2008
2nd Annual Boreal Bird Festival at Canaan Valley Resort

June 14, 2008
Harper’s Ferry Outdoor Festival/Tim Gavin Down River Race

June 20-22, 2008
WV Day - Civil War Re-enactment at Canaan Valley Resort

10th Annual Harper’s Ferry Outdoor Festival

FOB is not the only one celebrating their 10th anniversary this year. This is also the tenth anniversary of the Harper’s Ferry Outdoor Festival (HFOF). HFOF includes the Tim Gavin Down River Race in memory of Tim Gavin who was a local kayaker, friend, beloved son, brother and father who died in a kayaking accident on the Upper Blackwater in West Virginia in March of 1998. All proceeds go to support the race and Friends of Blackwater, Friends of the Cheat, Friends of the Shenandoah and the WV Rivers Coalition.

The festival will be held on June 14, 2008 at the Harpers Ferry KOA Campground with vendors, food, games and music. There will also be a silent auction from 2pm - 8pm if you are looking for a great deal on some gear. To get more information about this event please visit them on the web at harpersferryoutdoorfestival.org.

Up to March 2008

Cheat Canyon Report
So far 137 Acres have been set aside for Cheat three-toothed land snail habitat

WWW.SAVEBLACKWATER.ORG
Our redesigned website will premiers on March 24, 2008. Let us know what you think.

Squirrelly Sweepstakes Winners Announced!
We are pleased to announce the winners of the “Squirrelly Sweepstakes” contest.

The winner of the “Blackwater Getaway” Package, which includes two nights lodging, dinner for two at Sierianni’s in Davis (yum, yum!), and a massage from the Highland Inn and Spa in Canaan Valley, was Mr. John Roberts of Charleston, WV. John and his wife Betty are very active in their church and with their grandchildren. We certainly hope they enjoy their weekend at Blackwater.

The “Enjoy The Blackwater from Home” Package which includes a copy of The Blackwater Chronicle, a “Save Blackwater Canyon” t-shirt, a Limited edition Blackwater Poster, and other fabulous prizes, goes to Mr. Brian Thorniley of Winfield, WV.

Congratulations to both of our winners!

☐ YES! I WANT TO JOIN FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER
Choose a membership level and send your name, address, and e-mail to
Friends of Blackwater, 501 Elizabeth Street, Charleston WV 25311

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

My donation is in memory/honor of:

Please send card to:

☐ I want to add my name to the Petition to Protect the Blackwater Canyon Rail Trail.

☐ Add me to your volunteer database.

☐ Please send future newsletters only via e-mail.

☐ Please update my personal information.

☐ Please remove me from your mailing list.

Name

Address

Phone

E-mail