This print "Belted Kingfisher" by Julie Zickefoose is available for purchase through Friends of Blackwater call 304-345-7663 or visit www.saveblackwater.org for more details.
WILL CLIMATE CHANGE DESTROY THE HIGHLANDS?

"Ginny," the West Virginia flying squirrel is worried about climate change -- and so are we!

Ginny's cool, high-mountain home is at grave risk from rising global temperatures – as is the habitat of dozens of other plants and animals in West Virginia’s Allegheny Highlands, including valuable forest species like black cherry and red spruce. Simply put, global warming and climate change pose a serious threat to the Highlands' high-mountain economy and ecology.

Friends of Blackwater knows that the dangerous, even frightening impacts of climate change are a serious issue for people who love the Highlands region. So, on Saturday, June 7, 2014, FOB is hosting a day-long public conference at Blackwater Falls State Park on "Climate Change and the Highlands: -- What's at Stake -- What's at Risk?"

MEET WORLD CLASS SPEAKERS:

LONNIE THOMPSON, was born in Gassaway, West Virginia. He and his wife Ellen Mosley-Thompson, both graduated from Marshall University. Together they lead the internationally famous ice core paleoclimatology unit at Ohio State University's Byrd Polar Research Center, where scientists work to reconstruct past climate by studying chemical records preserved in ice cores around the globe.

Thompson has done 58 expeditions in 16 countries, pulling ice core samples from glaciers and ice sheets, looking for clues to help advance the world's understanding of climate change. In their presentations, Thompson and his wife stress the scientific evidence that climate change is happening and that human activities are the primary cause. They also talk about the economic costs of climate change, such as huge impacts insurance companies are seeing from extreme weather events; and on efforts to convince the public to ignore the science.

CHARLES BAYLESS, Esq. is a retired Utility Executive and University President. Mr. Bayless was President and Provost of the West Virginia University Institute of Technology, a divisional Campus of West Virginia University. Mr. Bayless also served as Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Illinova Corporation, and its wholly owned subsidiary, Illinois Power Company, an electric and natural gas utility with more than half a million customers and approximately 4,500 megawatts of electricity generating capacity. He is past Chairman of the West Virginia Industrial Council and serves as a judge for the Platt's Global Energy Awards.

Bayless, who received his law degree from WVU and during his student years was a frequent visitor to Canaan Valley and Dolly Sods, loves the Highlands. He is a dynamic speaker on the dangers of climate change to the American and world economy, and his talk will emphasize the need for greater understanding and action to deal with the climate crisis – on a local, regional, and global level.

In addition we’ll have presentations by top 15 scientific researchers on the impacts of climate change on the Allegheny Highlands region.

On Saturday, June 7, 2014, join others who love the Highlands, enjoy the beauty of Blackwater Falls State Park (make a weekend of it!), and help promote "climate-smart" conversation in West Virginia!

The “Early Bird Special” Conference registration is $50 which covers lunch. After April 15 registration is $65. Limited scholarships are available for students and low income attendees. There is a block of rooms pre-reserved at the Blackwater Falls State Park Lodge for Conference attendees. You can get more information and register to attend at www.saveblackwater.org or by calling 304-345-7663 or e-mailing outreach@saveblackwater.org

Ginny and her babies are counting on us!
NEWS FROM AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY GROUPS OPPOSE FIRST-EVER PLAN TO ALLOW KILLING OF EAGLES AT WYOMING WIND FACILITY

(Washington, D.C., February 12, 2014) American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and Biodiversity Conservation Alliance (BCA), voiced opposition to a federal plan that would allow a proposed mega wind facility in Wyoming to kill from 46 to 64 Golden Eagles annually. The two groups have submitted a 15-page letter in response to a request from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for comment on the eagle-killing proposal, called an “eagle take permit.”

“ABC and BCA support the development of renewable energy resources such as wind, but it has to be done responsibly,” said Dr. Michael Hutchins, National Coordinator of ABC’s Bird Smart Wind Energy Campaign. “The serious gaps in data and key information surrounding both the project and the proposed permit make it impossible to conclude that appropriate protections for eagles are being followed under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.”

http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/releases/140212.html

Thanks to your help the Camp Perry Wind Turbine Project Has Been Halted!!

(Washington, D.C., January 29, 2014) One of several wind turbine projects planned for the shores of Lake Erie, in one of the greatest bird migration corridors in the Western Hemisphere, has been halted following submission of a letter of intent to sue from American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO). The two groups had vigorously opposed the project due to its exceptionally high risk to federally protected wildlife.

The announcement formalizing the decision to halt the project was made via a letter from Air National Guard Headquarters to the public interest law firm Meyer Glitzenstein & Crystal (MGC) of Washington, D.C, which represents ABC and BSBO. The petition campaign and letter of intent to sue the Ohio National Guard (ONG), along with an ongoing petition campaign that has acquired over 5,000 signatures, charged that efforts in connection with the wind project at Camp Perry Air National Guard Station violate the Endangered Species Act.

FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER AT THE LEGISLATURE

Tucker County Days was the most fun day at the legislature because Preston and Tucker Counties went together to cook and serve buckwheat cakes and sausage in the marble halls under the statue of former Senator Robert C Byrd! The legislators came in droves as the smell wafted through the Capitol giving us an easy opportunity to talk to legislators about JR Clifford, Tucker County Heritage, acid mine drainage pollution issues and Saving Blackwater Canyon! Many Tucker County businesses had booths including the Purple Fiddle, Green Rivers, Three Castles Antiques, Buxton Landstreet Art Gallery, the Potomac Highlands Food and Farm Project and the Tucker Community Foundation.

History Day was a chance to pass out more of our Sesquicentennial Posters, to talk about JR Clifford and the new roadside markers honoring his famous civil rights case and to explain railroading and the historic coal and coke industries of Tucker County. Amy Saunders of the West Virginia Humanities Council was there. She had featured our historic markers in their newsletter. Our booth was next to the Wheeling National Heritage Area folks who had supported our “New Home for Liberty” Drama at Independence Hall in Wheeling. We saw former Delegate John Doyle and thanked him for his sterling portrayal of the West Virginia Constitutional Convention Chair in the film being made of “New Home for Liberty.”

Environment Day was energized by lobbying against the horrible chemical spill that polluted drinking water for 300,000 people in West Virginia’s Kanawha Valley. At this writing no final bill has been passed regulating above ground storage tanks such as the ones that contaminated the Elk River and Charleston’s water supply. Many of our members were affected and still refuse to drink their tap water. Our water monitoring in Tucker County should eventually lead to cleaner water for the residents of Morgantown and all the way downstream to Pittsburgh! Thanks for helping us bring all these issues to the attention of elected officials.
2ND ANNUAL WINTER WILDLANDS BACKCOUNTRY FILM FESTIVAL

Thanks to all who braved a snowy night to attend FOB’s Back Country Film Festival in Thomas on Valentine’s Weekend. John Garder hosted the festival. Hard work by local staffers Doug Gilbert and Lori Haldeman made it a fun evening!

As part of the evening’s events a raffle was held to assist in the fundraising efforts. Raffle items were donated by White Grass, National Parks Conservation Association, Winter Wildlands Alliance, Ski Barn, Flying Pigs, Nathan Baker, Robin Quinlan, Sara Hubbard, Wild Ginger and Spice, The Purple Fiddle, Buxton and Landstreet Gallery, Star Pottery, Tip Top Café, Foot Traffic Only, Mud, Sirianni’s, and Timberline.

Thanks for supporting our work!

The big thank you to the Archuletta family of Tip Top Cafe for allowing us to utilize the cafe for this event

The film festival played to a packed house at the Tip Top Cafe on February 15, 2014. Thanks to all who attended and supported Friends of Blackwater.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING WORKSHOP WITH FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER IN THOMAS WV MARCH 29

Help protect the Blackwater River and Canyon as a volunteer with Friends of Blackwater (FOB). Currently FOB has a number of volunteer opportunities available for interested individuals. FOB will be hosting a volunteer workshop on Saturday, March 29th from 10am to 1pm at the Thomas Education Center in the upstairs conference room. The workshop will highlight the many volunteer opportunities available through FOB, which include water quality monitoring throughout the Blackwater River watershed; assisting with our West Virginia Northern flying squirrel hair snare project with Purdue University; trail building and maintenance in Thomas City Park and Blackwater Fall State Park and the creation of our first annual State of the Blackwater River report, to name a few. Anyone interested in attending the volunteer workshop and serving to protect the natural heritage of the Blackwater River and Canyon should contact Doug Gilbert by email at doug@northforkwatershed.org.

Come by our Davis Office located between Boomtown Java and the Potomac Highlands Food and Farm Project of the Tucker Community Foundation to learn more about our work or call 304-259-5600.
Limerock, the little railroad town in the western end of the Blackwater Canyon, was officially established in 1888 by James W. Bowman, with the construction of a branch of his mercantile store. This was the year that Davis Coal and Coke owner Henry Gassaway Davis deployed his engineers and employees to construct the railroad line from Coketon to Hendricks. The line was completed by 1889. Bowman also constructed dwellings to house railroad workers -- who numbered over 1000 men.

One of the first settlers in Limerock was John Eckard, with his three adult children. John, Elizabeth Eckard Wratchford and her husband Ben, and sons Martin and Jonathon arrived in Limerock in 1877. In the 1900 census, Martin Eckard is listed with his wife Sarah Wolford Eckard and their three sons: Miles, Samuel, and John. Samuel and Lela Wratchford Eckard had a son, George, who was born in 1918. George's son, Ron Eckard, chronicles the family history in the book “From the Rhine to Limerock” which can be purchase from FOB.

The railroad built by H.G. Davis was originally called the West Virginia and Pittsburg Railway. At the time it was the steepest railroad grade east of the Rockies. Homer Fansler, in his “History of Tucker County” (1962), chronicles many famous train wrecks along this famously steep and remote railroad grade. In 1894, a handcar and a work train collided at Flatrock Run, where Limerock was located. Andrew Riggelman and Kenneth Summerfield were killed, and Ben Wratchford on the handcar was injured. In 1901, the back end of a train broke loose at Tub Run, and wrecked on the Big Run curve four miles east of Hendricks -- on the steepest part of “the Canyon run.” Another train lost its brakes at Canyon Point, where the North Fork enters the Blackwater River, and with 28 loaded cars tore down the mountain and wrecked on the Big Run curve, killing the engineer John Jankey. Other notable train wrecks happened in 1902, 1905 and 1914 -- all at Big Run. The area was so famous for wrecks that a song, “The Freight Wreck At Big Run,” was sung in shanties along the railroad line.

Arguably most notable train wreck in the Blackwater Canyon occurred in 1922. Coal miners were threatening to strike in Coketon and Thomas, and Sheriff Close called in the National Guard to arrest them. The miners were held overnight in a wire enclosed tennis court, and then loaded on an old passenger car at Coketon, to be sent down the Canyon grade to the Courthouse at Parsons for trial. The train wrecked at Limerock. One miner was killed and many were injured. Rumor had it that the company tampered with a wheel of the coach, causing it to wreck. Anna Komac, widow of the dead miner, sued the Western Maryland Railway Company and received compensation.

As you hike and bike down the Blackwater Canyon Trail, and pass the huge cut stone archway at Big Run, try to picture it in the wild days of railroading. Remember the folks who labored in the woods and coal mines here, who kept the trains running, and sometimes died in the process.

Thanks to Roy Teter and Dave Strahin for help with this article.

LIMEROCK REUNION JUNE 29TH AT HENDRICKS CITY PARK

On Sunday afternoon June 29th the Tucker County Historical Society, Friends of Blackwater and the City of Hendricks will sponsor a picnic for descendants of folks who lived at Limerock in Blackwater Canyon. Bring photos and memorabilia to the Hendricks City Park Picnic Shelter. Hear presentations on historic Limerock and the Western Maryland Railroad while enjoying great food and country music. Tour the old cemetery and the remains of buildings at Limerock. Share your memories and photo collections. Open to the public Call 304-345-7663 Friends of Blackwater or contact Rose Davis at the Historical Society: jdavis001@frontiernet.net for more information.
FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER MOURNS THE LOSS OF PHYLLIS AND HAZO CARTER

On January 18, 2014 Honorable Judge Phyllis H. Carter (1948 - 2014) acting director of the West Virginia Human Rights Commission and wife to former West Virginia State University (WVSU) president Hazo W. Carter, Jr., passed away. Just a month later her husband President Emeritus Hazo W. Carter, Jr. died. Carter was the ninth President of this traditionally Black College and served there for 25 years. Both Phyllis and her husband were strong supporters of the JR Clifford Project helping us distribute our educational materials, attending our events and promoting the JR Clifford story among their colleagues. Judge Carter worked as chief administrative law judge for the West Virginia Human Rights Commission. She also had been an assistant attorney general for West Virginia, chaired WVSU’s History and Culture Committee and helped establish the Booker T. Washington Institute and the WVSU National Center for Human Relations. They will be missed.

Thank you to Legislators Supporting Clifford in 2014

Delegate Stephen Skinner
Senator Corey Palumbo

THANK YOU TO LEGISLATORS SUPPORTING CLIFFORD IN 2014

Dr. Hazo Carter
Judge Phyllis Carter

BLACKWATER HERO, J.R. CLIFFORD, CONTINUES TO INSPIRE

Friends of Blackwater’s J.R. Clifford Project has been very successful in distributing our West Virginia Statehood and Civil Rights Poster to schools, West Virginia Highway Welcome Centers and Visitor Bureaus. The state RESA’s (Regional Education Service Agencies) helped distribute this teaching tools to history teachers across the state at 292 schools. We enclosed order forms with the maps and got calls from teachers for more maps and JR Clifford coloring books throughout the month of February. So far 8,000 have been given out with 2,000 left to send to museums and libraries.

The J.R. Clifford Project also reached out through social media to celebrate West Virginia’s African American History. A new story or pictures or videos were posted daily, during Black History Month, on our Facebook fan page to raise awareness of this important segment of history. Subjects ranging from the military to the arts and even a love story were covered, with great reviews.

The new J.R. Clifford historic markers in Tucker County have received a lot of attention and will be featured with audio commentary and photos on the “Traveling 219” website. Listen for a story on Public Radio about the markers and JR Clifford and Carrie Williams’ famous civil rights case of 1896 which mandated equal schooling and equal pay for African American teachers in West Virginia.

To order your free poster “New Home for Liberty, Civil Rights, Slavery and the Creation of West Virginia” send in the form below or go on our updated website to see all our educational materials on West Virginia’s African American History at www.jrclifford.org.

THE NEW J.R. CLIFFORD HISTORIC MARKERS

The new J.R. Clifford historic markers in Tucker County have received a lot of attention and will be featured with audio commentary and photos on the “Traveling 219” website. Listen for a story on Public Radio about the markers and JR Clifford and Carrie Williams’ famous civil rights case of 1896 which mandated equal schooling and equal pay for African American teachers in West Virginia.

I would like to donate $_______________ to the J.R. Clifford Project.

Shipping
All items are shipped free to schools and educators.

For large quantities, please call (304) 345-7663 or e-mail outreach@saveblackwater.org

Mail completed form to:
J.R.Clifford Project
501 Elizabeth Street
Charleston, WV 25311

Orders and donations may also be processed safely and securely online by visiting www.jrclifford.org.

Please send me the free:

“New Home for Liberty” Poster _______
J.R. Clifford Coloring Books _______
J.R. Clifford Poster _______
Lesson Plans - Elementary _______
Lesson Plans - Secondary _______

Shipping Address:
Name:___________________________________________
Address:_________________________________________
City/State/Zip:___________________________________
Phone:__________________________________________
E-mail:___________________________________________

Page 6
The cheerful song of a robin at dawn is considered a sign that spring is moving across the land and winter is ended. Another sound that is just as much a part of the season is the nasal beeping of the American woodcock during twilight hours.

Perhaps while hiking through open woods or across a damp meadow, a bird springs from underfoot and flies away with a bubbling sound. You have met a woodcock which is called "timberdoodle" for its bubbling alarm notes!

Early spring is when the male woodcock turns to aerial romancing and performs a "sky dance" after sunset and at dawn. The dumpy, brown bird with its long bill seems hardly handsome, except in the eyes of another woodcock.

One place you are almost guaranteed hearing a bird performing is in Canaan Valley. Drive along the roads at sunset until you hear a nasal or buzzy sound somewhat like zeeeep! coming from the edge of a meadow or boggy opening. A cock bird may be at an interlude in his performance.

Soon the bird will spring into flight and begin an upward spiral to a great height with a whistling of its wings. After an interval of silence, a chirping and clucking will be heard as it tumbles to earth. When there is a full moon, the woodcock will often sky dance throughout the night.

With the unfolding of spring and the beginning of nesting, the urge to engage in the instinctive ritual becomes more infrequent. Even so, many cock birds will turn to the courting flight off and on throughout the summer.

Preferred nesting habitat is early stages of succession or the regeneration of plant life. Such situations were rather abundant in the early decades of the last century with the abandonment of much farmland. The young become active soon after hatching and make short flights at two weeks.

An abundant woodcock population nests in Canaan Valley where it was the subject of an extended study by state wildlife personnel for a period of years. Here habitat such as alder thickets and adjacent bogs have remained largely in a state of equilibrium over time.

The valley offers a vast area of prime conditions for essentially one great nesting ground for the tremendous number of birds found here. The number of woodcock in the valley at the end of the nesting season is estimated at well over a thousand.

The valley is one of three sites, along with Cape May, New Jersey and Cape Charles, Virginia, where birds gather by the thousands during the fall flight from Canada and the northeastern states. An estimated twenty thousand spend some part of their southward migration in the valley.

The woodcock remain largely unseen and unheard throughout much of the year when it remains hidden in a thicket or has migrated. The "timberdoodle" returns with spring to set the twilight hours abuzz with its aerial efforts at romance.

AWARD WINNING WVU BIOLOGY PROFESSOR ROLAND GUTHRIE DIES

WVU Professor Roland Lee Guthrie, PhD, 85 of Morgantown, passed away December 11, 2013. He was born April 5, 1928, in Charleston, WV. Roland went to WVU where he earned a BS in Forestry followed by an MS in Botany and a PhD in Biology.

In 1959, he began his teaching career in the Biology Department at WVU and at the time of his death was a Professor Emeritus of Biology. Dr. Guthrie taught courses in Botany, Biology, and Forestry. Dr. Guthrie was co-author with Dr. Roy Clarkson and Wm. Homer Duppstadt of Forest Wildlife Plants of the Monongahela National Forest and co-revised with the late Dr. Earl Core the Forest Trees of West Virginia. For over 30 years, Roland served as Director of the University’s Core Arboretum, guiding its development from its early years into an important teaching and research facility and community resource. Many people fondly remember the Sunday morning wildflower walks each April that Roland conducted for the public. He was a founding member of the WV chapter of the Nature Conservancy and negotiated with landowners across WV to acquire land for conservation. He considered their crowning achievement the acquisition of the Cranesville Swamp Preserve.

Dr. Guthrie was one of Judy Rodd’s favorite professors.
Contents

Will Climate Change Destroy the Highlands?  2
Eagles and Wind from American Bird Conservancy 3
FOB at the Legislature 3
Winter Wildlands Back Country Film Festival 4
Volunteer Training Workshop March 29 4
Historic Blackwater Canyon Train Wrecks 5
Limerock Reunion – June 29 5
J.R. Clifford Project Update 6
FOB Mourns Phyllis & Hazo Carter 6
Signs of Spring by J. Lawrence Smith 7
Award Winning Biologist Roland Guthrie Dies 7
Blackwater River Photo & Video Contest 8

Beautiful Blackwater River Photo & Video Contest!!
Send your photos or videos of the Blackwater River Watershed to Friends of Blackwater and win cash prizes.

Photos: May be submitted in the following categories:
A. Scenic views of river
B. Wildlife along the River
C. Recreation, people play on the river
A winner will be selected in each category along with a grand prize winner.

Videos: The subject must include the Blackwater River Watershed. Videos should be no more than 3 minutes in length. One winner will be selected from all videos submitted.

Submissions can be hand delivered to our Davis office next to Boomtown Java.
By submitting photos or videos, you agree to their future use by Friends of Blackwater.

Submissions must be received between March 3, 2014 and May 9, 2014.

Winning Entries will be on display at our Davis Office during Art Spring in Tucker County.
Please visit www.saveblackwater.org or contact Brandae Mullins at 304-345-7663 or via email at outreach@saveblackwater.org for more information about how to submit your photos or videos.