

# Friends of Blackwater



Mark Hunt



Bobbie Hatfield



Mike Manypenny



Don Perdue



Tom Azinger



Larry Faircloth

## CANDIDATES RESPOND TO SURVEY ON BLACKWATER AND A NATIONAL PARK FOR WV

Last month Friends of Blackwater sent out a survey\* to West Virginia candidates asking them if would support purchasing Blackwater Canyon and putting it in public ownership. We also asked if they supported a study for a National Park. The results are in! And they are overwhelmingly positive, wonderfully supportive and bipartisan.

Candidates for House of Delegates who responded in support of both issues were: Mike Davis, Huntington, Martin Shaffer from Clarksburg, Clyde McKnight 31<sup>st</sup> Raleigh County, Mike Manypenny, Grafton, Steve Skinner, Shepherdstown, Gary John Grass, Wyoming County, Larry Barker, Madison, Mark Myers from Spencer, Larry Kump from Falling Waters, Berkeley and Morgan counties, Mike Caputo, Fairmont, Ron Fragale, Clarksburg, Phil Diserio, Follansbee, Danny Wells, Charleston, Bill Morefield, Princeton, Mark Hunt Charleston, Bobbi Hatfield, Bonnie Brown Charleston, Tom Azinger, Vienna, Toni Barill, Morgantown, Margaret Staggers, Fayetteville, Don Perdue, Pritchard in Wayne county, Ron Hedrick Cool Ridge, Raleigh County, Barbara Fleischauer,



Morgantown, Larry Faircloth, Inwood, Lynne Arvon, Beckley, and Michael Bright (running for Senate) in Ripley.

There were many wonderful and supportive quotes. Here are a few. Danny Wells said, "Thank you for the work you do and the compassion you have for Blackwater Canyon! Tom Asinger said, "We should be the Tourist Mecca of the East". Don Perdue absolutely supports Blackwater Canyon protection ... "with America's continuing pursuit of fossil fuels for energy the threat of elimination of most things "natural" is very real."

Larry Barker says YES! YES to Blackwater protection and purchase and ABSOLUTELY to a national park study.

Larry Faircloth in Berkeley County endorsed the park study for job growth, tourism and preservation. Mike Manypenny volunteered to send letters requesting a park study. Phil Diserio in the northern panhandle said, "The beauty of West Virginia should be preserved and used to help all West Virginians prosper!"

Thanks to all of you running for office for participating in survey! We will post further responses on our website.

### Survey Questions

- Robert C. Byrd once described Blackwater Canyon, located in Tucker County, as "West Virginia's Crown Jewel." Rich in natural beauty, historical significance and natural diversity, these 2,700 acres draw thousands of visitors each year to the region. Would you support an effort to acquire this property to protect and preserve it for future generations?
- Some have proposed creating a High Allegheny National Park and Preserve out of part of the Monongahela National Forest. The area in question is roughly the same size as The Great Smoky Mountains National Park in western Tennessee. According to figures provided by the National Park Service, the Great Smoky National Park brings \$725 million a year in revenue and creates 14,000 year round jobs in Western Tennessee and North Carolina. By way of contrast, a recent WVU study said that Pendleton County (a county in the region of the proposed park and preserve) would lose 13.6 % of its population over the next twenty years because of a lack of jobs and economic opportunity. Because of its proximity to population centers on the East Coast some believe that a Park & Preserve in this region has even more economic potential than the Great Smoky National Park. The proposed Park and Preserve would not take any private land and would permit hunting and fishing in most areas. Under these circumstances, would you favor having the National Park Service conduct a study of the feasibility of creating such a park and preserve in this region?

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# GINNY TRIES AGAIN, REHEARING REQUESTED

Thanks to all of you who sent notes of encouragement and donations to support our campaign to protect Ginny. Our lawyers filed a petition for rehearing our case to the DC Circuit Court of Appeals on October 1<sup>st</sup>. We were encouraged to take this unusual step by the strong dissent of Judge Rogers who wrote in support of our position. She stated:



*WV Northern Flying Squirrel*

leaves the Fish and Wildlife Service more insulated and less informed than Congress contemplated in strengthening the ESA in 1988. The court's approval of the FWS's covert revisions to the Squirrel's recovery plan, surprise introduction of a new recovery standard in the Final Rule, and adoption of a delisting standard unambiguously foreclosed by the ESA leaves little of the species' protections Congress provided in the ESA, much less of Administrative Procedure Act requirements."

The federal government was asked to file a brief in response to our petition which they did on October 16th and now we are waiting for the court to decide whether to give us another chance to present the case. We

continue to insist that the Forest Service protect Ginny on the Monongahela where the issue has come to a head over logging along the Upper Greenbrier River in Pocahontas County. So far we have been successful in blocking logging and herbicide spraying here, while supporting stream restoration and the removal of old logging roads that are causing silt to get in streams.

Please donate to the SOS Save Our Squirrel Campaign to protect Ginny. You can still send a letter to Obama and the US Fish and Wildlife Service at [www.saveblackwater.org](http://www.saveblackwater.org) asking them to keep full federal protections for "Ginny," the West Virginia northern flying squirrel.

## "A NEW HOME FOR LIBERTY" SUCCESS IN SHEPHERDSTOWN!



*Andy Feeney presents Tom & Judy Rodd with AT&T grant funds.*

Breaking news! -- Thanks to the work of many wonderful volunteers and sponsors, Friends of Blackwater's **J.R. Clifford Project** presented two very successful performances of "A New Home for Liberty" -- a West Virginia Sesquicentennial "Living history" Drama -- at Shepherd University, on October 20 and 21. A diverse community cast with many local dignitaries entertained more than 700 people in an evening (and matinee) of story and song, telling the story of West Virginia's creation through the lens of civil rights, and featuring Blackwater hero J.R. Clifford (1848-1933), West Virginia's first African American attorney. We'll have more details in another newsletter -- you can see photos online at [www.jrclifford.org](http://www.jrclifford.org). Special thanks to Andy Feeney and ATT Corporation for their stalwart support of this community and educational program!



*Senior Justice Larry V. Starcher and D. Frank Hill, III, Esq. re-enact the Wheeling Convention.*



*House of Delegates candidate Steve Skinner of Jefferson County, pictured with with an audience member, was a member of the local celebrity cast.*



*Tish Chafin, candidate for West Virginia Supreme Court, pictured with Kitty Dooley, was in attendance.*

# EASTERN FOREST GAS DRILLING WORKING GROUP (EFG) INSPIRES CHALLENGES TO LEASE SALES ACROSS THE EAST

Friends of Blackwater formed the Eastern Forest Gas Drilling working group (EFG) a year and a half ago. The goal is to share information and strategies about how to control runaway gas drilling on public land. National conservation groups and local forest advocates participate. Following consultation with members of EFG, Buckeye Forest Council protested lease sales on the Wayne National Forest. The Forest Service withdrew the proposed leases from the sale in December 2011. In June 2012, The Southern Environmental Law Center in collaboration with Wild South and National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), filed protests against drilling in Alabama national forests. NRDC protested selling leases to drill for gas in Louisiana and Mississippi national forests in October 2012. We are waiting to see what the Forest Service will do.

Proposed lease sales are endorsed by the Forest Service with very little review and no public involvement. Once a lease sale list is posted online, citizens only have 30 days to analyze the parcels (based on very bad maps and limited descriptions) and write comments. Often, recreational resources, clean water, and endangered species will be negatively impacted.

New drilling techniques require clearing of up to 15 acres of land for well pads with extensive networks of wide roads to bring in equipment to drill, water for fracking, chemicals and sand to go in the water and even housing for the crew. It is like creating

a small city. In addition, a pipeline system to get the gas to market must be created.

The fracking process requires large amounts of water from local watersheds which can never be returned to the creeks it came from because it becomes contaminated in the drilling process. The fracking process can pollute drinking water when leaking fracking chemicals migrate across fault lines created by drilling. The drilling process creates air pollution if the methane emissions from the well are not captured.

Is this an appropriate use of our national forest land? Is it compatible with other forest uses such as watershed restoration, outdoor recreation and protection of rare flora and fauna? We think not. And where is the review to study possible negative impacts? One would think that before our publicly owned gas was leased that the sale parcel would be studied by the Forest Service using the process of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in a document called an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This is not happening. The Forest Service says that a review will happen just prior to drilling. However by selling the lease they make a commitment that drilling can happen and the later review becomes irrelevant.

Not only should the current protested lease sale parcels be withdrawn due to potential negative impacts, the whole process should be reformed.



Marcellus Well. (compliments of WVSORO.org)

## **WHAT IS A RONI? It is not a food!**

What do current Forest Plans say about using new fracking techniques on our public lands? We discovered that no mention is made of this looming problem in these management plans. We believe that Forest Plans should be amended to deal with an issue which may change our public forest landscape forever. Instead several national forests (the Monongahela in West Virginia and the Wayne in Ohio) have created **RONI's (Record of New Information)** which purport to review Marcellus Shale fracking issues. They state that no new standards are needed to deal with the problem. The public is not involved in this review.

Our take! What is needed to protect the Monongahela and other eastern national forests is a strong local citizens' movement dedicated to forcing reforms on the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management!

## PERMANENT PROTECTION FOR CHEAT SNAIL?

Cheat snail preserves that Friends of Blackwater helped set up in the Cheat Canyon north of Albright WV are closer to permanent protection, with a grant from the Fish and Wildlife's Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund. In their August 2012 press release, the Fish and Wildlife Service wrote:

### **\$700,000 grant will support land acquisition for W.Va. endangered species**

"In Preston County, West Virginia, funds will go to the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources to help acquire habitat for the threatened flat-spined three-toothed land snail and the endangered Indiana bat. WVDNR has partnered with The Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, and other non-governmental organizations to

acquire land that expands an existing protected block of forest along the Cheat River Gorge. This property provides about 33 percent of the global range of the threatened snail and includes hibernacula for the endangered Indiana bat. In Preston County, West Virginia, \$700,000 will help acquire habitat for the threatened flat-spined three-toothed land snail and the endangered Indiana bat. The fund provides grant funding to states for species and habitat conservation actions on non-federal lands, including habitat acquisition, conservation planning, habitat restoration, status surveys, captive propagation and reintroduction, research, and education. The land acquisition grant program elements address land based threats by preventing land use changes that impair or

destroy key habitat values on lands purchased through the grant program. To ensure that states and territories are able to effectively carry out endangered species conservation funded through these grants, a state or territory must enter into a cooperative agreement with the Service to receive grants."



Flat-spined three-toothed land snail (Cheat Snail) is getting better protection.

# LEAF PEEPERS FESTIVAL/RUN FOR IT DRAWS 800 TO DAVIS NORTH FORK TEAM LEADER, WIERCINSKI, TOWERS OVER CROWD

by Lori Haldeman

Late September in the mountains the leaves have begun to change, the colors are popping and with the sun shining on all the reds, yellows, rust and greens. There is a crisp feeling in the air that Fall is here.

I was sitting at the North Fork Watershed booth next to the Friends of the 500<sup>th</sup> watching the 800+ men, women and young people congregate for the 5K running and 2K walking races. Each group representing their respective organization walked onto the stage and was introduced along with the purpose of their group. Each group running raises money for their specific projects. The Run For It in Davis has grown over the years to include many more groups, organizations and individuals who run to raise money and to participate in an exciting community event. Some dress in costumes, some walk, and some push their strollers and some people run with their dogs.

All up and down the Main Street (William Ave.), there are vendors setting up their wares and inside the Firehall the artisan crafts are exhibited and sold. The air is electric with excitement and enthusiasm. Across from the Firehall in the parking lot are inflatable rides for children and at the other end of the lot are various delicious food options. Canaan Valley Resort had a booth with kielbasa soup which was outstanding.

As people came to our booth we talked about monitoring the North Fork of the Blackwater River which is impacted with acid mine drainage (AMD). We shared pictures of the trails we have created in the Thomas City Park and along the waterfront in Davis behind the newest coffee shop and our office. The coffee shop is named Boomtown Java, as Davis was a lumber industry boomtown at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Here are some amazing statistics for our 2012 RUN FOR IT.

- This year there were 888 participants in the races with 702 last year.
- \$106,499.43 was the total dollars raised by the teams
- There were 33 teams in the running with the oldest participant 94 years and the youngest in a stroller.
- Race sponsors donated over \$28, 000 and there was over \$38,000 awarded
- 49 causes benefited, with teams from 8 counties including our "Team North Fork."
- One of the biggest 5K races in the state of WV.
- There were lots of community



Team North Fork

volunteers helping to put all this together with strong support from the highway department and state police.

**So now is the time to start planning for 2013. See you there!**

## I RAN FOR IT

by Ben Wiercinski, FOB VISTA

My first "Run For It" was an unforgettable experience, never could I imagine when I first saw Davis that I would be running through its streets with a group nearly twice the size of the town's population. The day started off with crisp fall air and a synchronized chaos foreshadowing the excitement to come. I started to realize how big of an event "Run For It" and the whole of Leaf Peepers was as everyone started to organize themselves into teams. After the parade of teams everyone rushed to the starting line to try and secure a place in the front. I did not realize the importance of this pre-race dash and consequently spent the first half mile dodging little kids who beat me to the start. Throughout the race runners and spectators offer either encouragement or more likely trash talk as you punish your body going up the hills of Davis. When you pass the Shop'N'Save and enter into the home stretch you are greeted by cheers by all those who arrived early for the music, crafts and other fun. The race was a great success and I would like to thank everyone at our neighboring office, the Tucker Community Foundation's Run For It office, for creating an amazing event.



VISTA Ben Wiercinski (circled) representing Team North Fork.

## WELCOME TO BOOMTOWN JAVA!

Boomtown Java opened its doors late this summer, becoming Davis' newest small business. When walking in you will be greeted by Raul Ramirez, Boom Town's operator and one of Davis' newest residents. Raul made his way to our mountain town from New York and is glad he made the move saying, "The leaves and the simple beauty of Tucker County have encouraged me to stay but the opportunity to operate and build Boom Town Java has led me to stay." The coffee shop currently offers a variety of coffees, teas, and baked goods. Raul said that at the moment his focus is on coffee and his customers but hopes to add more food options, including sandwiches, in the future. As a special promotion, Boom Town will be donating a percentage of the sale of history photographs on their walls to Friends of Blackwater through this year. Next time you are in town please stop by and meet our new neighbors.



*Raul welcomes customers to BoomTown Java!*



*An NCCC team member moves material with a wheelbarrow while building the Davis Riverfront Trail.*



## NCCC HELPS BUILD DAVIS RIVERWALK TRAIL ALONG BLACKWATER RIVER

For the first two weeks in September the North Fork Watershed Project (NFWP) hosted another AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corp (NCCC) in Davis with special help from our partners the Appalachian Coal Country Team. The NCCC Team, named Delta 4, came to Davis from the NCCC Southern Region Headquarters in Vicksburg Mississippi comprised of a diverse cast of 11 young people from across the country. The Team's main task during their two week stay was to complete the Davis Riverwalk Trail, a trail along the Blackwater River that connects our office to the Davis Town Park and allows for increased access to the Blackwater River. The team also worked with Blackwater Falls State Park, Camp Horseshoe, Canaan Valley Wildlife Refuge, The Nature Conservancy and

Cottrill's Opera House. While in Tucker County, the team was given free housing at Camp Horseshoe in Parsons and Blackwater Falls State Park. This is not the first time the our Davis office has hosted an NCCC team, in May we hosted the River 7 team who worked on the Thomas Trails. Delta 4 is now back in Mississippi getting ready for their next service site, the swamps of Florida. We would like to thank them for the hours of hard labor they invested into making Tucker County an even more beautiful place to enjoy. Visit our office, walk the trail and camp by the Blackwater!



*Davis Pulp & Paper Company, on the Blackwater River in Davis, WV.*

The next step for the Davis Riverwalk Trail is interpretive signs explaining the town's industrial past.

## PHASE I OF RECLAMATION PROJECT AT TUB RUN OF THE BLACKWATER COMPLETE

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection recently completed the first phase of a two phase project to restore Tub Run. The recently completed Phase 1 started on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and should have a positive effect on water quality. The Tub Run project's main goal is to restore an area of abandoned mines a few miles south of Thomas. Work on the site will include the backfilling of existing highwalls that should limit water percolation into underground mine tunnels which creates acid mine drainage that ends up in the Blackwater. The project also replaced existing culverts with concrete boxes. Phase 2 of the project begins next year on Long Run of the North Fork. Thanks WVDEP! for helping clean up the Blackwater.

## TROUT TO RETURN TO BLACKWATER HEADWATERS

The new Appalachian Stewardship Foundation has generously supported the Friends of Blackwater's trout restoration project for Canaan Mountain on the Monongahela National Forest. Here headwater streams are sterile because acid rain makes the water too acidic to support aquatic life. No bugs, salamanders or crayfish means no trout for fishermen. Friends of Blackwater's scientists have verified that the streams here have all the right characteristics to support the native brook trout that Porte Crayon wrote about in his visit to Blackwater Canyon in 1853. However air pollution over the last century

has changed the water chemistry and the only way to fix it is to sweeten the water with lime.

The terrain is difficult but with sufficient numbers of volunteers to create a bucket brigade we can get the needed limestone to the headwaters and bring back the native trout fishery. We are in discussions with the Forest Service about access routes that won't have negative impacts on the Forest. The streams run from the Monongahela through Blackwater Falls State Park where they enter the Blackwater River. The project will improve water quality and fishing all along the river.



*Anglers love fishing along the Blackwater.*

## FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER JOINS OTHER CONSERVATION GROUPS CALLING FOR CHANGES AT NATION'S DEADLIEST WIND FARM

On October 1<sup>st</sup> a coalition of eight conservation organizations called on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to make changes at a wind energy facility in Western Maryland to reduce bird and bat mortality. According to recent data, the 28-turbine, Criterion Wind Project, located near Oakland, Maryland, now ranks as the deadliest to birds in the United States on a per-turbine basis.

The environmental groups calling for action are Save Western Maryland, American Bird Conservancy, Friends of Blackwater, Allegheny Highlands Alliance, Friends of Beautiful Pendleton County, Laurel Mountain Preservation Association, Allegheny Front Alliance, and West Virginia Highlands Conservancy.

The request came in response to a FWS call for comment on three documents concerning the project, published in the Federal Register: a draft Environmental Assessment, which assesses the existing and potential environmental impact of the project; an application for an Incidental Take Permit, which is required when activities will likely result in killing or disturbance of a threatened or endangered species – in this case the endangered Indiana bat; and a proposed Habitat Conservation Plan, which must be completed before a take permit is issued.

"I cannot imagine that the state of Maryland is proud of the fact that the first commercial wind power project in the state – a short drive from our nation's capital – is the most deadly for birds in the entire

country. This is a terrible precedent for the state, and a real embarrassment for its wildlife leaders," said George Fenwick, President of American Bird Conservancy.

"Bats are getting a brutal one-two punch here. They are already suffering huge losses from white-nose syndrome, so if they continue to face high losses at the state's wind projects, the environmental consequences to the state could be significant. Bats eat massive numbers of insects that are agricultural pests, so when you lose the control they provide, you are left with a choice between two very negative alternatives: either suffer agricultural losses or use more insect-controlling poisons on crops," said Judy Rodd, Executive Director of Friends of Blackwater.

"The Habitat Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Criterion Wind Project raise many red flags under various federal statutes, and notably fail to implement any significant measures aimed at reducing the substantial bird mortality observed at this project site constituting hundreds of Migratory Bird Treaty Act violations on an annual basis" said Bill Eubanks, an attorney at Meyer Glitzenstein & Crystal, which prepared the groups' comment letter requesting action.

In response to a lawsuit brought by Save Western Maryland and other interested parties, Criterion agreed to seek an Incidental Take Permit for Indiana bats to comply with the ESA. During its first full year of operation (2011), Criterion conducted daily monitoring for bat and bird



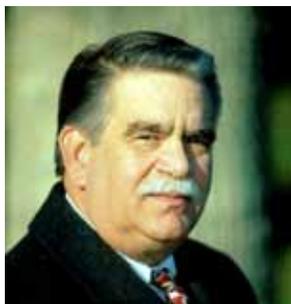
*This bird was a victim of the NedPower Wind Farm.*

mortality between April 5 and November 15. Criterion estimates that the project killed approximately 1,093 bats (39.03 bats per turbine) and 448 birds (16.01 birds per turbine). This rate is described in the draft Environmental Assessment as the highest per-turbine bird mortality ever estimated at a studied wind project in the United States, and as the highest per-turbine bird mortality ever documented in North America. Criterion estimates that if the project did not take steps to reduce the number of bats killed, it would result in between 13,238 and 26,477 bat deaths and approximately 8,960 bird fatalities during the 20-year operational life of the project.

Friends of Blackwater also commented on similar documents for the Beech Ridge Energy Project in Greenbrier County and supported comments from the Animal Welfare Institute and the Conservation Law Center.

# In Memory & Honor

## Cordie Hudkins, Jr. 1938-2012



Cordie O. Hudkins Jr., 74, of Scott Depot, died Sunday, October 14, 2012, following a lengthy illness.

As a young boy, his family took at least a one-week vacation at a state park in West Virginia. One year, when he was in the fifth or sixth grade, a park superintendent and his wife taught him to fly fish, and all through high school he thought what a wonderful thing it would be to someday be a park superintendent.

He had a desire to know why things in nature worked the way they did.

He attended Morris Harvey College (subsequently the University of Charleston) in West Virginia and graduated in 1965 with a degree in biology. Immediately after graduation, he took the civil service examination for park superintendent and was hired shortly thereafter by the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources State Park System. He began his career with this department as an assistant superintendent of the 6,000-acre Babcock State Park. From there, he worked as superintendent of Cedar Creek State Park, North Bend State Park and Pipestem State Park, often referred to as the "crown jewel" of the State Park System.

In 1977 he was transferred from Pipestem to the central office in Charleston as a district administrator for the southern part of the state. In the same year, he was promoted to assistant chief in charge of the planning section. When several projects were completed under his direction, he was appointed chief in charge of the operations section. Finally, in 1990, he was appointed chief of the West Virginia State Park System, and remained in this position until his retirement in 2000. During his career, Mr. Hudkins rallied citizens and employees of the park system in order to defeat two attempts at privatizing state park facilities. Upon his retirement, the Charleston Daily Mail wrote, "West Virginia's park system will be in someone else's hands today. No, that's not quite right. For the past 10 years, outgoing park's chief, Cordie Hudkins, has managed the system with his heart, not his hands. By all accounts, Hudkins' passion has transformed a neglected, antiquated system into one of the nation's finest. 'Cordie's contributions are among the primary reasons our parks rank among the best in the nation,' says John Rader, director of the state Division of Natural Resources. 'He will be greatly missed.'"

Cordie was active in protecting Blackwater Falls State Park from logging roads and Chief Logan State Park from gas drilling.

## Mary Moore Rieffenberger 1919-2012

Mary Moore Rieffenberger, 93, a resident of Country Club Road, Elkins, passed away Friday morning, Oct. 26, 2012, at her residence. She was the wife of Joe Rieffenberger, a member of FOB's advisory board.



## Larry Sypolt 1949-2012

Larry N. Sypolt, 62, of Morgantown, passed from this earth into the arms of his Heavenly Father on Sunday, January 29, 2012.

Larry was a scholar. His love of history engulfed a myriad of avenues. Larry was an historian and taught history classes at West Virginia University. He worked on Fridays at the WV & Regional History Collections at the WVU Downtown Library Campus.

As part of his duties, Larry served as a consultant for the Glenville State College Library System. He was a member of the Morgantown Library Board and Historic Landmarks Commission. Larry did oral histories and research on the Civilian Conservation Corp and with his wife Pam, attended various CCC reunion, taking great pleasure in meeting and learning from the CCC members. Larry helped organize a CCC reunion at Cooper's Rock State Forest with FOB Director Judy Rodd. Larry contributed numerous publications of historical significance.

Larry was a kind and generous man. His heart was always in service to others. Larry was a past president of Christian Help and was active with the Scott's Run Settlement House Food Pantry. Larry and Pam could be found buying school supplies for area children. Larry loved to garden, read and was an avid WVU Mountaineer fan. Larry was also an animal lover.



## Chris Schwer 1985-2012

Christopher Alan Schwer of Morgantown, WV, and formerly of Sidney, OH passed away August 1, 2012 in White Salmon, WA as the result of a kayaking accident. He was born on February 10, 1985 in Twentynine Palms, California, the son of Gregory and Rita (Macken) Schwer, who reside in Sidney.

Chris was a 2003 graduate of Anna High School, a graduate of Ohio University and was pursuing a master's degree at West Virginia University. He served at Ohio University as a supervisor, trip leader, instructor and recreation assistant. He was involved with Outdoor Pursuits, in 2006 and 2007, where he instructed people in wall climbing, ropes courses, adventure trips and the principles of kayaking. He was also an adventure guide, instructor and photographer for Wilderness Voyageurs in Ohiopyle, PA. Chris was a photo intern at the Sidney Daily News for six months in 2008. Since July 2009 he had been working as a multimedia specialist at West Virginia University.

For Chris, kayaking wasn't just a recreational activity, but a way of life and part of who he was. Chris was well known for his contagious smile, genuine compassion and love of the outdoors. He believed that God was most visible in love and nature. His smile, hugs and overflowing love will never be forgotten by those who knew him. Donations in his memory have been made to Friends of Blackwater.





501 Elizabeth Street - Charleston, WV 25311



The USDA Forest Service constructed new benches, signage and bike racks in front of the coke ovens along the Blackwater Canyon Rail Trail during summer 2012. This provides hikers and bikers, as well as history enthusiasts, a place to stop and learn more about Tucker County's industrial past.

Address Service Requested

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## Blackwater Canyon Needs Your Help!

*Logging and development continue to be possible until key acres are purchased and put into public ownership - Tell Senator Manchin to work to save our scenic "Crown Jewel".*

Dear Senator Manchin:

Our late, beloved Senator Robert C. Byrd once referred to the 10,000 acre Blackwater Canyon as "West Virginia's crown jewel". This region is a vital home for endangered species, a place of giant waterfalls and magnificent trees and massive boulders, bisected by a historic Rail-Trail, with rare cut-stone archways and heritage coke ovens. The Blackwater Canyon is an outdoor recreation mecca, and a jobs engine for the Highlands' growing second-home and tourism industries.

Nothing is more important to the long-term economic, historic, recreational -- and spiritual -- future of the West Virginia Highlands than acquiring and protecting the remaining 2,700 privately-owned acres in the Blackwater Canyon. As a lover of West Virginia, I urge you, as a West Virginia Senator who understands how beloved this Canyon is by millions, to make it a top priority to "Buy Back" the privately-owned land in the Canyon, and to permanently protect this remarkable Wild River Gorge. Please, speak out and show that you understand and care about this issue that so many people support -- on a bi-partisan basis.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Don't forget your  
Holiday shopping list.  
We have everything you  
need for the  
Blackwater Canyon fan!  
T-shirts, Stuffed  
Animals, Videos, Books!

To see a full list please visit  
[www. saveblackwater.org](http://www.saveblackwater.org) or  
call us at 304-345-7663