**Welcome**

To all our Friends of Blackwater - thank you so much for your interest in protecting Blackwater Canyon and the Blackwater Canyon Trail. Your support is our most important weapon in protecting West Virginia’s scenic “Crown Jewel.” Here are some of our accomplishments so far:

**In just two short years, we have:**

- Worked with Governor Bob Wise to add 500 acres to Blackwater Falls State Park.

- Implemented television, radio, newspaper, e-mail and direct-mail campaigns to raise the public profile of the Canyon and the need to protect it. This resulted in 3,000 people sending postcards to Governor Bob Wise naming Blackwater Canyon as West Virginia’s most “special place” to preserve.

- Created watershed, nature education, scientific research, tourism, and cultural and history outreach programs - focused on the unique resources of Blackwater Canyon.

- Protested the move by Allegheny Wood Products to turn the Blackwater Canyon Trail, on public land, into a logging road. Worked with citizens across the state and nation to get more than ten thousand people to send comments to the U.S. Forest Service - a record for comments to the Monongahela National Forest!

The Friends of Blackwater campaign to protect the Blackwater Canyon and move it all into public ownership is strong and growing stronger. We are building a climate in which public officials - and the timber company - will see that the love and support that people have for this magnificent Canyon cannot be denied or overcome. A conservation purchase of the private land in the Canyon will fully compensate the landowner - and will create a public-spirited legacy for future generations, far more valuable than short-term profits.

**Come to Tucker County for the Leaf Peepers Festival, September 27-28. Call us or visit our website for a schedule of Blackwater Canyon hikes and bike rides!**

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**Blackwater Canyon Update**

**Public Outcry Gets Results: Forest Service Plans EIS**

Your ten thousand comments have had a powerful effect!!

The U.S. Forest Service office that oversees the Monongahela National Forest has requested proposals for a **full Environmental Impact Statement** analysis of the request by Allegheny Wood Products to turn the scenic and historic Blackwater Canyon Trail into a logging road!

A full EIS is the most rigorous study possible, and it means plenty of chances for public input, as well as expert evaluation of all of the options and consequences. The EIS request by the Mon Forest staff is a **great first step**, but we must remain vigilant. We will monitor the Forest Service’s actions, and if we have to get twenty thousand comments in to keep this on track, we will!

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**Openhouse at Charleston Office**

On Thursday, September 25, from 4 p.m. - 7 p.m. we will have an open house at the FOB office to celebrate the 3,000 people who nominated Blackwater Canyon as West Virginia’s most “special place” to preserve. Prizes and refreshments. Public welcome. 501 Elizabeth Street, Charleston; 345-7663 for more information.

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**Friends of Blackwater Mourns Richard DiPretoro**

**Vows to Continue His Work**

Richard DiPretoro, a longtime West Virginia environmental activist who recently died in a plane crash, had a close connection with Friends of Blackwater’s North Fork Project. Just a few days before Richard died, he completed and delivered an inventory of mine drainage data for the North Fork of the Blackwater River.

The North Fork Project is staffed by Emily Samargo and summer intern Josh Nease. The Project is headquartered in the Town of Thomas in Tucker County, at the head of the Blackwater Canyon. The Project is working to build community support for mine drainage cleanup on the North Fork, and to document the cultural and historic resources associated with the river.

We will miss our beloved friend and colleague Richard, and we will continue his work to protect the Blackwater. For more information, call 304-463-4068, or go to the website: www.northforkwatershed.org.

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**Fieldwork Update**

Ecologist and artist Anna Hess finished her summer set of botanical drawings, and she plans to get back in the Canyon in late September to capture the pristine beauty of autumn nature. Thanks to grants from the NiSource, Laurel and Hunt Foundations, Anna’s fieldwork will be part of a statewide educational project.
And we raised $9,000 of our $30,000 goal!

Special thanks to some of West Virginia’s best artists who donated their work to our auction: Arnout Hyde Jr., T. Paige Dalporto, Mark Blumenstein, Steve Payne, David Fattallah, Michael Leftfride Sr., Steve Shaluta, Jr., Kevin Boyle, Kathy Boland, Joe Chasnoff, and Sam McCormick. We also thank Michael Davis for donating a three-night vacation getaway to Cheat River Cabins. Soulful music for the evening at Taylor Books was provided by Ron Sowell, director of the “Mountain Stage” band - and our auction was conducted by Tom Rodd and Francis Fisher. Thanks to everyone for making it a terrific evening!

Taylor Books Host Committee*

David C. Bailey
Holly Holman Bailey
John & Cynthia Barrett
Tim Bradford
Joe Cometti
Sara Crickenberger
John & Jeannie Dalporto
Colleen Anderson & Michael Davis
Mary Downey
Bonnie & Mike Fidler
Francis & Sandy Fisher
Bill O’Brien and Sarah Flaherty
Lena Thoren-Glasser & Brian Glasser
Larry Groce & Sandra Groce
Michael & Deirdra Halley
Paul & Nancy Hill
Alice Hypes-Brown & Tara
Sandy & Fred Kerns
Reverend Jim & Mrs. Judy Lewis
Jeanne Chandler & Michael Lipton
Kate Long
Ana Marino & Sean McGinley
Sheila McEntee
Michael Plante
Marie Privizioso
Bobby Reishman & Maury Barnstorm & Kasey Russell
Mary Samargo
Kate Fitzgerald & Paul Sheridan
Mary Samargo
Kate Long
Dee & Frank Webb
Steve White
Robert Wilson
Maureen Conley & Carter Zerbe

*thanks for your financial support

North Fork Watershed Project Update

The North Fork Acid Mine Drainage watersheds tour and BBQ Picnic on July 26 hosted by Philip and Karin Nelson was a great success, with more than 30 community members attending.

The Coketon Labor History Seminar Series began in July. North Fork staff will work with local historians and scholars to document and promote the rich cultural resources in the watershed. Special thanks to summer intern Corrine Evans who helped with the collection of historical data.

We also want to welcome to the North Fork Project, a full-time summer intern supported by the Office of Surface Mining. Joshua Nease is from Bridgeport, WV, and is a recent graduate of West Virginia Wesleyan College. Nease has always had a great interest in the effects of mining on stream water, and he would love to see improvements in the North Fork Watershed. He enjoys fly-fishing and hiking. Thanks, Josh, for great work.

The West Virginia Stream Partners Program awarded us a grant that will support our office this coming year. With the help of the grant, our inventory of water quality data will be completed soon, and we will be ready to move into a remediation study phase.

New Grants

This year, Friends of Blackwater has received funding from Patagonia, the Laurel Foundation, the Roy A Hunt Foundation, NiSource, the DEP Stream Partners Program, the Education Foundation of America, Norm Thompson, the Martin and Carlson Family Funds and the West Virginia Humanities Council.

Congratulations Blackwater Sweepstakes Winners!

Congratulations to Sallie Hunt of Charleston, West Virginia! Sallie won our “Blackwater Getaway”: one night’s stay at the Bright Morning Inn Bed and Breakfast, dinner at Srianni’s Cafe, Mountain Music weekend at the Purple Fiddle, and a relaxing massage from Highland Inn.

The winner of the “Blackwater Canyon From Home” package is Josh Whetzel, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Josh wanted to share some of his bountiful winnings with other Friends of Blackwater members, and Josh asked us to select two other entrants who would receive some of his prize package. We chose Mary Sackett, from Novato, California to receive Josh’s “Blackwater poster. We sent Josh’s Blackwater Falls Adventure Guide to Sandra Staggers in Charlottesville, VA. But we absolutely insisted that Josh receive the Blackwater Chronicle, by Philip Pendleton Kennedy, as a reminder of the times Josh used to “jump the rocks way down in the Canyon.”
**Board Member Highlight:**

**Sheila McEntee**

Sheila McEntee of Charleston, a stalwart Friends of Blackwater board member, has hiked, camped, and watched birds in Blackwater Canyon - but her favorite activity there remains sitting on the craggy rocks at Lindy Point, clutching a tattered volume of poetry by Gerard Manley Hopkins, and “watching the hills being their magnificent selves.”

A longtime wildlife advocate, Sheila worked throughout the 1990s on behalf of the West Virginia Audubon Council to achieve permanent funding for West Virginia’s Wildlife Diversity Program (formerly the Nongame Wildlife and Natural Heritage Program). This statewide effort by citizens and groups culminated in the passage of a constitutional amendment in 1996, and the subsequent establishment of West Virginia’s wildlife motor vehicle license plate, the proceeds from which are dedicated to the Wildlife Diversity Program.

Sheila has contributed many articles on state wildlife to Wonderful West Virginia magazine, including one on the endangered West Virginia northern flying squirrels that reside in Blackwater Canyon. She is a contributing editor for Wonderful West Virginia magazine and a writer/editor at Appalachian Educational Laboratory, a research company headquartered in Charleston. Sheila especially enjoys walking in Kanawha State Forest with notebook, pen, and her dog, Seamus.

**Summer Interns Get “A” in Communications**

From updating our mailing list to stuffing envelopes, Brian Bausley and Carrie Nyden worked very hard this summer in our Charleston office. Not only were they a big help in getting FOB’s word out, but they brought a lot of intellect, energy and inspiration to each project.

Brian is a freshman studying music education at Marshall University. He is a Promise Scholar and received multiple scholarships from the University for his musical and vocal talent. Brian is a classically trained pianist who enjoys his spare time as the choir director of Pilgrim Home Missionary Baptist Church. Brian is the son of Shelly and Sherri Bausley.

Carrie is an avid athlete. For Capital High, Carrie runs with the long-distance track and cross-country teams. Last year, Carrie was inducted in the National Honor Society, and she hopes that her excellent academic standing will carry her to her dream school, Boston University. Carrie likes mountain biking and going to the gym. Carrie is the daughter of Paul Nyden and Sara Sheets.

We are very glad that these very special teenagers took time to help us through a very busy time.
Margaret Calwell is a strong supporter and source of encouragement to Friends of Blackwater. Her love for Tucker County and the Canyon is fueled by memories of growing up in Davis. Calwell's amazing childhood comes to life in her first book, *Speak to the Past: A Memoir Fat With Words*. Her stories tell of Davis' rich cultural and industrial history. Calwell describes clambering over huge boulders to take “the old way” to the foot of Blackwater Falls and how she swam in the deep pool where the raging waters fall and dove into the cave-like areas behind the Falls.

Calwell, now lives in Charleston, and she attributes her inspiration for writing the book to her Aunt Pearle Digman Mott, who was the vital statistics clerk of Davis and the author of *History of Davis* and Canaan Valley, published in 1972.

If you would like to order a copy of Calwell’s book, please contact the Friends of Blackwater office.