

# Friends of Blackwater Canyon

Winter 2004

501 Elizabeth Street Room 3, Charleston, WV 25311 • 304-345-7663 • www.saveblackwater.org • info@saveblackwater.org

## Annie Dillard Urges Blackwater Lovers "Tell Candidates How You Feel About Canyon Protection"

*"Living this way by the creek, where the light appears and vanishes on the water, where muskrats surface and dive, and redwings scatter, I have come to know a special side of nature. I look to the mountains, and the mountains still slumber, blue and mute and rapt. I say, it gathers; the world abides."*

Annie Dillard, [A Pilgrim at Tinker Creek](#).



Dear Friend,

*As a child, I fell in love with the West Virginia Highlands. These beautiful, ancient mountains are an oasis of peace and natural beauty.*

*But today, the destructive roar of chainsaws and bulldozers is threatening the Mountain State's scenic "Crown Jewel" — the magnificent, 10,000-acre Blackwater Canyon and the wild and scenic Blackwater River.*

*We must preserve and protect this pristine landscape — home to endangered salamanders, flying squirrels, water shrews, and many more species — for our children and grandchildren.*

*That's why I am asking you to take a few minutes, right now, to let your voice be heard.*

*Please cut out and complete the enclosed **BLACKWATER PROTECTION PETITION** form (page 2) and return it in the mail. Your voice will join with thousands of others to show West Virginia's 2004 statewide political candidates that protecting the Blackwater Canyon is an important issue.*

*The creatures of the Blackwater Canyon have no voice. They are counting on you. **Please send in your form today.***

*Yours in friendship,*

We are excited that **Pulitzer Prize-winning nature writer and author Annie Dillard is helping Friends of Blackwater in our 2004 Blackwater Protection Petition Campaign.**

The goal of the 2004 Petition campaign is to **make sure West Virginia political candidates make Blackwater Protection**

**part of their political platform.**

We hope that you will **respond to Annie Dillard's heartfelt call to action.** Please send in the form on page 2, adding your name to the 2004 Blackwater Protection Petition. Petition signers' names will be delivered to candidates throughout the election season. Only your name will appear on the petition.

...read more and find out how you can help on page 2

## Historic Blackwater Heroes

J. R. Clifford, West Virginia's first black lawyer, who lived from 1849 to 1933, is an early hero of the civil rights movement in West Virginia.

Clifford won his most important civil rights case on behalf of a school-teacher in Tucker — County in the town of Coketon at the head of the Blackwater Canyon!

...read more on page 6



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## Happy New Year from Friends of Blackwater!!



*Last year was the first time we offered **memberships**, and we want to recognize and celebrate all the folks who joined!! **Regular donations from individuals are the lifeblood of Friends of Blackwater.** Anyone who sent in a white "donation envelope" in 2003 is a member. Your membership will expire a year from your last donation in 2003. We will put that date on your newsletter label, and remind you as the date draws near. We work hard to keep our records straight, so let us know if there are any mistakes in your membership record. If you have not joined as a member of Friends of Blackwater, please do so! It is so important when talking to public officials to be able to talk about our members and your support. You give us credibility and power! We appreciate so much all the folks who have donated gifts of their artwork, crafts, gourmet food, and writing. Our volunteers are deeply important; they give their time and talent to help save Blackwater Canyon. Many people have donated outside of the membership process, and we will be recognizing them in upcoming issues of the Newsletter!! Please note our new donation envelope, with many more choices. Working together, we can make 2004 a great year for Blackwater Canyon protection!*

Judy Rodd

## Cuddle-Up in Style in our third annual Valentine's Day Sweepstakes



Have you been bitten by the love bug and need to share some romantic space with a special someone? You can qualify for two fantastic grand prize packages to be given away in the Friends of Blackwater "Cuddle-Up In Style" Valentine's Day Sweepstakes. You may find yourselves nestled in a cozy cabin or relaxing on the couch, surrounded with gifts. To qualify, check "Valentine Sweepstakes" on the form below and include it with your winter donation or annual membership renewal. Donations are not required to qualify, but are certainly appreciated. Make sure your envelope is postmarked on or before February 14. Following are the prizes:

### Blackwater Valentine's Sweepstakes!\*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 email: \_\_\_\_\_

Blackwater Getaway       Virtual Blackwater

...continued from page 1

Your address, phone, or e-mail information will not be shared with anyone. We encourage you to be active in gaining support from others, who may not be aware of this exciting opportunity. Please fill out the following card, and mail it to Friends of Blackwater.

#### 2004 Blackwater Protection Petition

Dear West Virginia Candidates in the 2004 Elections:

Protecting West Virginia's signature landscape — the magnificent Blackwater Canyon — is very important to me. I support moving all of the private land in the Canyon into public ownership. I urge you to make protecting the entire Canyon a prominent campaign issue in 2004, for the welfare of West Virginia, today and in the future.

Yours truly, \_\_\_\_\_ (Name)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (Address)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (City, State, Zip)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (Phone)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (E-mail)

Your information will be kept confidential by Friends of Blackwater. An e-mail address will allow us to send you updates at a low cost to us and the environment.

### "Blackwater Getaway"

This package includes a two-night cabin stay near Blackwater Canyon, two tickets to a Mountain Music Weekend show at the Purple Fiddle in Thomas, dinner for two at Siriani's Cafe in Davis, and a massage from the Highland Inn and Spa in Canaan Valley.

### "Virtual Blackwater Getaway"

Enjoy the Blackwater Canyon area from home! This package includes a romantic dinner for two consisting of West Virginia smoked trout, a bottle of West Virginia wine and a box of West Virginia chocolates, a copy of *West Virginia: The Allegheny Highlands* by Jim Clark, a Save Blackwater Canyon t-shirt, and a limited edition Blackwater Poster.

When entering, be sure to specify which prize package you prefer. All online contributions made at our website, [www.saveblackwater.org](http://www.saveblackwater.org) will be eligible for the prizes, as well.

# Board Member Highlight: Linda Cooper

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Linda Cooper grew up in Canaan Valley, with six brothers and sisters. Linda recalls the long winters in the Valley, and the remoteness and extreme quiet of their home. Her grandmother and aunt were bought out by Canaan Valley State Park, but Linda managed to save her grandmother's house. She moved it onto property that her family still owns, and converted it into a second home where she can continue to enjoy the area.

Linda remembers her father's stories about the Blackwater Canyon. "He told me if I ever had a chance to ride the railroad through the Canyon that I had better do it. He was not a poetic man, and I think that was one of the few times I heard him talk about a place with such warmth. I took it as one of his highest recommendations. He rode that railroad line as a child, and it was such a fond memory for him."

While Linda was at Berea College in Kentucky, she became concerned about the damage caused by strip mining practices. She became in-



involved in efforts to protect mountain lands from destruction. During her first summer back home in West Virginia, 1970, the Davis Power Project was proposed. Linda became a leader in opposing plans to flood the Canaan Valley to create a hydro-electric dam in Davis. Linda is one of the founding members of Friends of Blackwater.

## Blackwater Merchandise

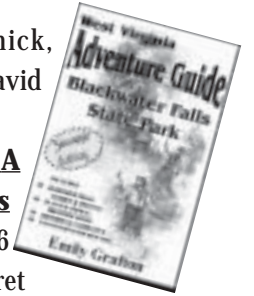
Timothy Sweet. Illustrated by David Hunter Strother.

**West Virginia Adventure Guide - Blackwater Falls State Park** by Emily Grafton, West Virginia botanist. Beautiful drawings and detailed botanical, activity and wildlife information on the Blackwater Canyon. A must for nature lovers.

**Limited Edition Blackwater Poster**, (23" x 35"). This full-color poster combines images of well known West Virginia photographers Ken

Garrett, Sam McCormick, Stephen Shaluta, and David Smith.

**Speak to the Past: A Memoir Fat With Words** by Margaret Calwell, 226 pages, Paperback. Margaret remembers her childhood near Blackwater Canyon. The book includes photos of people and buildings in Davis, West Virginia.



The **Flying Squirrel and Kayaking Squirrel T-shirts** (100% preshrunk cotton) were created by artist Brad Basil of the Art Medium in Elkins, West Virginia. **Flying Squirrel:** kids M, L; adult S, M, L, XL, XXL. **Kayaking Squirrel:** adult L, XL.

**The Blackwater Chronicle** by Philip Pendeleton Kennedy, published by WVU Press, is a "Narrative of the Expedition into the Land of Canaan in Randolph County." Edited and with a new introduction by

	Qty.	Price	Size	Total
The Blackwater Chronicle		27.50	hard cover	
The Blackwater Chronicle		18.00	paperback	
Adventure Guide		10.00		
Speak to the Past		18.00		
Flying Squirrel T-shirt		15.00		
Kayak Squirrel T-shirt		15.00		
Blackwater Poster		10.00		
		Subtotal		
		*Shipping		
		Membership Donation		
		Total		

\*\$2 for t-shirts and posters and \$2.50 for books

Thank you all so much for joining the Friends of Blackwater family!! Last year was the first time we offered memberships. All donors who sent in the white donor remittance envelope in 2003 are listed here. Other supporters will be recognized in the next newsletter. It gives us heart and keeps us going to have so many members standing behind us. We are also recognizing those people who gave gifts to the Friends in 2003. Please keep the memberships coming!!

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# North Fork Watershed Project Receives Awards; New Projects for 2004

Friends of Blackwater's North Fork Watershed Project received a West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection award for outstanding efforts in Outreach and Education. Our presentations to local organizations and school groups, and a series of newspaper articles, were cited "for creating watershed awareness and changing attitudes." We will continue our outreach and education programming in 2004.

The North Fork Watershed Project was

also chosen to receive an EPA "Targeted Brownfields Assessment" grant. The Brownfields program identifies and cleans up areas of hazardous substances and pollution. Sites selected are those that show great potential for "reuse." In the case of the North Fork Watershed, reuse will come in the form of heightened recreational opportunities on the North Fork of the Blackwater River and on the adjacent rail-trail. Assistance through the Brownfields program will help clean up

acid mine drainage in the North Fork and improve recreational and historic resources in the watershed.

The North Fork Watershed Project will be hiring for another position in April. The position will be filled through the AmeriCorps VISTA program. Responsibilities include: organizing community events, working with state and federal agencies, grant writing. For details call Emily Samargo at 304-463-4068.

## Historic Blackwater Heroes... continued from page 1



J. R. Clifford was born in Grant County. He fought in the Civil War at the age of fifteen.

He moved to Martinsburg, W. Va. after the war, where he started the *Pioneer Press*,

West Virginia's first black newspaper. He worked with younger colleague and friend William E. B. Dubois to help found the modern civil rights movement.

In 1892, in the town of Coketon, Mrs. Carrie Williams taught in the "colored" one-room school. West Virginia had segregated schools at that time. Williams was refused full payment for her eight months of teach-

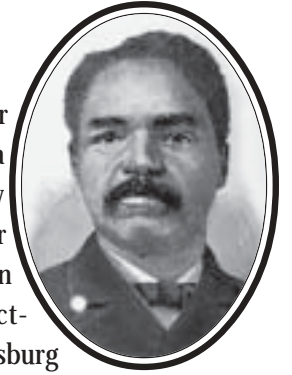
ing the African-American students of this coal mining community. The colored school was only to be open for five months, instead of the eight months provided to white students, according to the local school board.

Williams taught the full eight months, and she demanded her full pay on the principle that African-American students were entitled to an equal education. J. R. Clifford took Williams' case, tried it in the Tucker County Courthouse — and he won! The school board appealed to the West Virginia State Supreme Court, where Clifford won again, in 1898! This was the first "separate but equal case" in the United States.

The story of J. R. Clifford, Carrie Williams, and the Coketon case will be

highlighted this year at the West Virginia University Law School in a seminar on March 9, and in a dramatic reenactment in the Martinsburg Court House on April 12.

Both events are free and open to the public, and are sponsored by the West Virginia Supreme Court and the West Virginia NAACP, in connection with the anniversary year of Brown vs. the Board of Education. For more information, contact us toll-free at Friends of Blackwater, 1-877-WVALAND.



## www.saveblackwater.org - Redesigned and Improved



We are expanding our website! We invite you to use this resource to learn about our organization and the remarkable Blackwater Canyon.

Now you can read online — and see great pictures — about Friends of Blackwater's history, including our past campaigns and successes. You can even view the alarming development plans that have been filed by Allegheny Wood Products.

- View Maps.
- Find information on trails, public lands, restaurants, lodging and more.
- Learn about the Canyon's endangered species.
- View a complete list of books, t-shirts and posters available for sale.
- Keep up to date on current action alerts.
- Read newsletters on line.

Visit our website often, as we are adding more information all the time.

# A Holiday Outing Along the Blackwater Canyon Rim

By Tom Rodd

On the Saturday after Christmas, Judy and I and our sons, Ira and Solomon, took a winter hike along the Blackwater Canyon Rim.

We went through the towns of Thomas and Coketon (home of Mountainmade.com), driving another 1.5 miles to Douglas, where the road-plowing came to an end. Going by way of Thomas gave us a chance to get coffee at the Purple Fiddle –

“where the beat meet the elite” in Tucker County – live music every weekend!

We parked in Douglas and put on winter-friendly footwear. I lent Ira my Gore-Tex booties; they transform the mediocre hiking shoe into a wilderness-terrain-eating machine! We were well equipped for snow-over-the-shoe-top conditions.

Our route was Forest Road 18, which runs along the Canyon Rim for six miles. Below us, Douglas Falls was crashing. The sky was blue and cloudless, fresh snow sparkling on the trees and ground. Some kindly soul (one could also say “nut”) in a four-wheel-drive had thankfully “broken trail.”

As we walked, we could see the evergreen spruce on the far side of the Canyon, a half-mile away — good habitat for the West Virginia flying squirrel, and one reason why



development plans for this part of the Canyon were scotched — after a citizen lawsuit, of course.

Judy and I lingered at bends in the road, where the warm low winter sun breaks through the trees. We caught up with our sons where a crystal-pure stream crossed the road. We looked across the Canyon at the magnificent Lindy Point overlook — now owned by the people of West Virginia, also thanks to hard-fought citizen efforts.

We could see another Lindy-Point-style overlook, this one on our side of the Canyon. “We must go out there!” said Sol, plunging off the trail into the undergrowth. Judy and I followed. Ira said, “I’ll stay and call 911,” — but in a minute, he was on our track.

We all climbed down a rocky slope, across a couple of icy ledges, and then up a rock staircase. We emerged on a wind-swept rock platform, looking out over a 270-degree vista of the Blackwater Canyon. The Blackwater River carved its ancient way, a thousand feet below us.

Sky and water, rock and trees. No condominiums. No logging jobs. Silence. Beauty.

“Now, Mom, let me stand near the edge here and take a picture . . .”

“No, don’t go so close!”

What is more fun than torturing your worry-wart parents? Did I mention that my sons are in their thirties? Those bums!

It was dark when we got back to the car. Time for a pizza at Siriani’s in Davis. We shared a table with folks from Fairmont who have a retirement home on the Dry Fork. Their son had hiked every trail in Dolly Sods, deer hunting.

To help save Blackwater Canyon (it’s worth it!), please join Friends of Blackwater. Call 1-877-WVA-LAND; or visit [www.saveblackwater.org](http://www.saveblackwater.org). Happy New Year, everyone!

Check the website for trail locations.



## Washington DC Fundraiser a Great Success

The Washington DC Garden Party for Friends of Blackwater was held under a magnificent magnolia in Rafe and Lenore Pomerance’s back yard. The patio was filled with friends, old and new, on a surprisingly warm November evening. Guests traded stories about trips to the Canyon, watched Blackwater videos and enjoyed updates about Friends

of Blackwater projects. Many Blackwater lovers live in the greater Washington area and enjoy getting together to share their enthusiasm for West Virginia’s scenic “Crown Jewel” and to support the cause of Blackwater protection with their donations. Local musicians “Herb and Hanson” provided entertainment.

## Friends of Blackwater

www.saveblackwater.org  
501 Elizabeth Street, Rm 3  
Charleston, WV 25311



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### Blackwater Updates:

The Forest Service reports that they are doing a content analysis of the 10,000 comments received in 2003 demanding protection for the Blackwater Canyon Trail.

Articles on threats to Blackwater Canyon Trail and its scenic beauty appeared recently in the [Charlotte Observer](#) and the [Akron Beacon Journal](#).

## Capture the magic of Blackwater Canyon on film, send us your entries, Win Cash Prizes!!



### Categories:

- A. Wildlife and Botany
- B. Recreation
- C. Landscapes/Vistas

### Dates:

Entries will be accepted until November 15, 2004.

### Guidelines:

1. All entries should be accompanied by: name, address, phone number, e-mail, image title, equipment and technique used.
2. Photographs must be taken in the Blackwater Canyon Area of Tucker County, West Virginia.

3. Entries must be submitted as an 8" x 10" color print. Photos may be landscape or vertical orientation. Prints should be matted and mounted on foam core.

4. Photographs become property of Friends of Blackwater and cannot be returned.

5. A short description of the photo, including location, on an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper must accompany the photo.

6. Individuals may enter as many photographs as they wish. Open to all ages.

**Judges:** David Fattaleh, Bruce Haley, Arnout Hyde Jr., Steve Payne, and Steve Shaluta Jr.

Winners will be selected from each category; a Grand Prize winner will be chosen. Grand prize: \$100; Category Winners: \$50 each. Dates of public display will be announced at a later date. For additional information please call: 1-877-WVA-LAND. **Mail entries to:** 501 Elizabeth Street, Room 3, Charleston WV 25311.



Look, it's another "baby" flying squirrel!  
And this one is Miles Case. Be on the lookout for other members of our flying squirrel family.