

# Coal River Mountain Watch Messenger

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Volume 4, Issue 2

## Coal River residents promote green jobs plans in Appalachia to White House officials

By Luella Kirk and Earl Long

West Virginia coalfield residents met with Special Advisor for Green Jobs, Van Jones, on June 19, to propose their ideas for sustainable development in Appalachia. In his new role as Appalachia point-person for the White House's Council on Environmental Quality, Van Jones eagerly listened to the coalfield residents' visions for everything from community-owned wind to energy efficiency to renewable energy education. Delbert Gunnoe even educated the White House official about ramps and molly moochers!

Raleigh County residents Luella Kirk and Earl Long submitted a statement about the importance of community-owned wind, where individuals and groups of individuals own their own wind turbines instead of leasing the land to larger companies. After hearing this statement, Van Jones announced that he finally "got" the importance of community-owned wind. Luella and Earl are in

the preliminary planning stages of their wind project, which they've named "Angel Wings." Luella and Earl's statement:

When private ownership is involved it is rare that much money of the earnings stay in the community. This benefits the individual. Communities are held together with mutual respect for your neighbor and



Raleigh County residents Luella Kirk, Earl Long, Delbert Gunnoe, and Bobby Jarrell pose outside the White House office.

your surroundings. Thus a community-owned business or project encourages neighbors to come together working toward one common goal to benefit everyone including self. It is human

(See **COMMUNITY**, p. 6)

## Local citizens prove their power Residents halt blasting!

By Bo Webb

If our communities in the Coal River Valley are to survive the assault from mountaintop removal operators that routinely disregard surface mining laws and regulations, we, the everyday citizen, must be willing to stand up and force the WV DEP to impose enforcement.

We can do that; YOU can do that.

(See **POWER**, p. 3)

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**MISSION**  
The mission of Coal River Mountain Watch is to stop the destruction of our communities and environment by mountaintop removal mining, to improve the quality of life in our area and to help rebuild sustainable communities.

## Summertime, and the heat is on!

We hope this newsletter finds you happy and healthy. As you'll discover, this newsletter is jam-packed -- a reflection of the rapid pace of our campaigns, state and national decisions relating to mountaintop removal, and the growing momentum to end this devastation and create a just, sustainable Appalachia. While we've chosen the most compelling and timely issues to cover, we could double the size of the newsletter and still have more to report!

As always, take care and keep in touch! - Your friends at Coal River Mountain Watch.

## Prenter wins temporary water fund

By Patty Sebok

As the Prenter community waits to finally enjoy permanent, clean, safe water from a city water line, the Prenter community mediation team has managed to negotiate free emergency water for some families. Thanks to the negotiations, coal companies must provide money for temporary emergency water delivery service.

On June 11 the Tyler Mountain water truck started making its first deliveries for people on the lawsuit in the Sandlick, Laurel Creek and Hopkins Fork communities of Prenter Rd. Each family had a choice of four boxes each, containing six 1-gallon jugs of water or a Tyler Mountain cooler with five 5-gallon jugs of water.

We've been told that they hope to start digging the Public Service District waterline in October, and that Phase I should be finished by April 2010. I've had three new people sign the PSD water contracts and a couple more that I'm waiting to be filled out.

*Patty Sebok was born into a coal mining family and is the proud wife of an underground coal miner. She began organizing around the overweight coal trucks endangering communities. After learning about how mountaintop removal was destroying the land and the people of her homeland, Patty began working at CRMW.*

## Victories for Clean Water

*Sludge Safety Project members win emergency water, moratorium on slurry injection!*

### Citizens force legislators, DEP to examine coal slurry dangers

By Matt Noerpel

After 2 months of weekly lobbying, the Coal Slurry Injection Ban Bills in both the WV State House and Senate died without ever being brought up for discussion in committee. The Senate Bill (SB 596) was introduced to much fanfare as Sen. Randy White raised a toast on the Senate floor to the people impacted by coal slurry:

"I raise this glass to you, here's to me, here's to the people in Prenter, in Rawl and all the West Virginians who deserve clean water. I salute them and I ask you to raise your glass in what they drink that we drink today." And with that he took a big swig of "Coal slurry."

In the House, Del. Mike Manypenny introduced a similar bill; however, Speaker Rick Thompson assigned the bill to a committee that was done meeting for the session, effectively killing the bill.

But that doesn't mean our efforts were in vain. Our weekly visits to the legislature educated our representatives on coal slurry and the realities of living in an area impacted by coal slurry. Perhaps most importantly, our efforts fired up the legislature



enough that they called DEP secretary Randy Huffman before the Senate committee in February to question why the DEP hadn't completed the study on coal slurry that the legislature mandated they finish by Dec. 2007 as a result of previous lobbying efforts.

This forced Huffman and the DEP to actually complete the report on coal slurry. Huffman presented to the legislature during the June interim, 15 months after the deadline. Along with the report, the DEP announced a moratorium on new coal slurry injection permits.

The moratorium is not the permanent ban we wanted and does nothing to prevent further injection at sites where injection, but it is a step in the right direction and an admission by the DEP that coal slurry is in fact dangerous.

SSP will build on this success next year by reintroducing bills to ban all slurry production in favor of dry processing methods which are in use in drier areas.

Contact [info@sludgesafety.org](mailto:info@sludgesafety.org) if you would like to get join us in our lobbying next session or get involved in other ways.

### Poem for Prenter

By Billy Pyles

On a dreary, drizzly, early morning's delight,  
Drinking coffee made with poison water.  
The people would sit on the porch at first light,  
Unaware their bodies were being altered.  
The water for generations was fine,  
The children grew strong and healthy.  
It tasted better than any great wine,  
But, alas, someone decided to grow wealthy.  
Who do you think would do what was done,  
With the people at surviving already doing their best.  
With such a callous disregard for everyone,

One guess, you should know all the rest.  
How do you deal with people like that?  
My thought is for 20 years to begin.  
Not a concern for others, they just want bank accounts fat,  
Make them drink for 20 years Prenter water in their gin.  
It's so sad today, it's really true,  
How some came in and took all away.  
How they thought, "We, they can screw,"  
Now our health and words have no sway.  
People, ones like me are with you in heart,  
Sometimes we cannot do like we desire.  
Sometimes, some of us are slow to start,  
Just know that we are with you in your fire.  
This situation certainly does create,  
A very serious danger to us all.  
No one that cares can hesitate,  
This is a time we must all get on the ball.

(from POWER, p. 1)

Massey Energy recently obtained a permit to expand its mountaintop removal operation above Marsh Fork Elementary School to 2000 acres. Apparently they thought their new permit also allowed them to totally disregard the Federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.

As the new blasting began at the head of Clay's Branch there seemed to be no limits on the size of the blast. Fly-rock was raining from the sky. Boulders were coming down the mountain hollow. Their sediment control ditches were full, and spoilage from their operation was clearly beyond their permit boundaries. Blasting dust laden with silica was covering residents' homes and lungs. My neighbors and I called the WV DEP to complain, only to be told by the DEP that they phoned Massey and asked them to check the company's own seismographs to see if they were blasting within legal limits. Massey reported back that yes ma'am, we are legal. Imagine that, the enforcement agency asks the subject of their enforcement oversight to monitor themselves. Captain Kirk to Scotty, beam me up!

I asked the inspector if he would inspect the many violations His reply was, "I have bad knees and I'm not walking beneath a blast site anyway." He said he would drive to the top and look over. He had done that before and reported that everything was ok, which I knew it wasn't. Soon after this refusal to enforce by the DEP, I traveled to Washington DC to lobby Congress to end mountaintop removal. While there, I told my story to the Federal Office of Surface Mining and made a formal complaint that the WV DEP was not enforcing the SMCRA and asked the Fed's to take over the WV DEP permitting.

Soon after I returned home the Fed's came down to meet me, with the WV DEP blasting department with them. I, along with a neighbor Colten Harris, went up Clay's Branch with them. They saw the boulder and traced it back to the mine site. They saw the fly-rock. They saw the sediment ditches were full. They saw the middle of Clay's Branch was sliding down-slope. They saw all the waste that was clearly off the mine permit area that everyone but the WV DEP could see from Route 3 in Naoma.

They also examined the seismograph that the WV DEP had placed in my yard a couple months before, to check the seismograph for the complaint I had called in on the day Massey assured them everything was ok. One of the Fed's instantly noted that the box had water in it and

was not sealed properly. The DEP said they have a hard time sealing these plastic boxes they put their seismographs in. The Fed's then informed them that there are available boxes designed to seal these seismographs. In the seismograph business this is common knowledge. The WV blasting inspector said she would hook up to the "satellite" and check it that way. Hmm, guess what, they had a bad connection with their server, and couldn't check. So, someone said that she could plug it into her laptop computer and get a reading that way. She did that and said, nope there was no blast on the day I complained about nor the time I complained.

The Fed's and DEP then traveled to inspect the Massey operation above Marsh Fork Elementary and my house.

I received the Fed's report a few days later. Massey's seismograph did work and it did record the blast that I had complained about, which far exceeded blasting limits. So much for Massey reporting the truth to the DEP. The OSM cited Massey four violations: Exceeding blast limitations, fly-rock, failure to control sediment, and down-slope soil disposal.

The OSM told Massey to fix the slide in the middle of Clay's Branch, put the down-slope spoil material back on their permitted area, clean the sediment ditches, video all future blasting and keep a corresponding log made for immediate availability. They also must monitor the wind current when blasting to make sure the wind direction would not dump the silica laden blast dust on top of our community. They were told they couldn't operate in Clay's Branch until this mess was cleaned up. These orders came down on April 1, 2009. I write this on May 31: Two months, zero blasting in Clay's Branch.

This is what you can do as a citizen that exercises your rights. You don't have to sit back and take the blasting and dust abuses. And, this much is really impor-

tant to remember: Forcing the WV DEP to enforce surface mining laws has nothing to do with denying someone a job. Nothing, absolutely nothing justifies placing our lives in danger so Massey can ignore the law in order to make huge profits for fat cats on Wall Street because they think they can hire a few locals to keep our voices shut. Massey's employees should be angry with Massey for ignoring these laws, not angry with the citizens that are being affected by Massey breaking the law. Speak up for yourselves, file complaints when you see something that is wrong or your house shakes and your windows rattle and blast dust thickens the air you breathe. Look at the blast dust when it covers your porch or car. It has glass in it. That is sili-



From the OSM report sent to Bo Webb after the investigation: documentation of Massey's failure to control sediment ditches.

ca from the sand rock. Silica kills people.

We have rights as American citizens. If we don't use them, we will lose them. We also have an obligation to our families to protect them from danger.

**Helpful phone numbers:**

- WV DEP Blasting Office (OEB) Chief Dave Vande Linde 304-926-0464
- WV DEP Division of Air Quality 304-926-0465
- Division of Mining and Reclamation 304-926-0490
- Cabinet Secretary WV DEP Randy Huffman 304-926-0440
- Federal Office of Surface Mining, Charleston, WV Director Roger Calhoun (304) 347-7158
- Federal Office of Surface Mining, Beckley, WV (304) 255-5265
- Governor Joe Manchin Toll Free 1-888-438-2731 (Don't expect much help here, but give him an earful anyway!)



## NEWS FROM THE CAPITOLS

Mountaintop removal issues have taken center stage in new legislation, policies, and Congressional hearings -- statewide and nationally

### Appalachians' voices ring out in CEQ meeting, Senate hearing on mountaintop removal

By Bob Kincaid

We explained to Ms. Salzman that Mountain Removal never brings prosperity to a community; that it brings nothing but reduction in quality of life, illness and poverty. We explained that "reclamation" is a fraud. Ms. Salzman appeared, at the time, to be moved by our words. We have yet to hear back from her. It is now July.

In the meantime, the steady parade of coal industry lobbyists proceeds apace through the White House's doors. Other members of the coalfield communities have since visited EPA, CEQ and other offices, adding their voices to the ongoing plea for justice and mercy. But it will take a much steadier stream of our communities to effect the change for which we yearn.

That's why we've been back to D.C. in June for the first-in-a-generation hearing on Mountain Removal, and will return in late July, to let our younger generation's voices be heard on Capitol Hill. Teenagers and those in their twenties have the most to lose in this fight. Theirs is the twenty-first century. Their future should not be buried, along with Appalachian valleys, in the misguided pursuit of eighteenth century energy solutions.

*Bob Kincaid, from Ansted WV, is president of the CRMW Board of Directors.*

It goes almost without saying that lobbyists from the coal industry work the halls of Congress and the White House every day. Their pockets overflowing with campaign cash, they stalk the corridors of power hoping to purchase influence that will allow them to continue to poison and ruin Appalachia as they have for over 100 years.

We have begun to try to counter that. No, we don't have big sacks of money to give legislators. All we have is the truth of our lives and the living witness of our toxified communities.

That's why, in April, my wife and I, accompanied by Bo Webb and Nick Regalado, as well as J.W. Randolph and Stephanie Pistello of Appalachian Voices, made a visit to the President's Council on Environmental Quality.

Bo showed CEQ's Amelia Salzman a video he'd recently shot of blasting above his home. We discussed with her the reality of life in a coal-devastated community: the illness of people, their hopelessness, the destruction and devaluation of property. We explained to her how an alternative economy like that of Fayette County, West Virginia (tourism) are threatened by the presence of Mountain Removal coal extraction.

#### Legislative and legal updates

For more in-depth analysis, visit <http://blogs.wvgazette.com/coalatattoo>

- May 15: EPA clears 42 of 48 pending valley fill permits in first round of review
- June 25: Senate Hearing on Appalachian Restoration Act to ban valley fills Stream Buffer Zone ruling
- June 6: Obama nominates new OSMRE and MSHA appointments: Joseph Pizarchik and Joseph Main
- June 9: WV Supreme Court decision allows second silo at Marsh Fork Elementary
- June 11: Obama administration announces "unprecedented" -- actually weak and vague -- Memorandum of Understanding to more closely regulate mountaintop removal
- June 26: House of Reps. passes ACESA climate bill, with many "gifts" to the coal industry
- July 15: Army Corps proposes ending streamlined valley fill permitting (Nationwide Permit 21), but will continue processing applications already submitted

## Power Past Coal actions culminate in delegation to Washington, DC

CRMW staffer Lorelei Scarbro represents Appalachia in grassroots delegation

By Lorelei Scarbro

The day after President Obama was sworn in, the Alliance for Appalachia and thousands of citizens across the nation embarked on 100 days of action to power past coal.

From January 21 through April 30, communities came together to stop the destructive practice of mountaintop removal and the dangerous waste left over after coal is burned.

From Appalachia to Arizona, from the Dakota's to Washington DC, we stood together with one heart and for one cause,

a just and clean energy future. With actions from Palm Springs, CA to New York, New York this 100 days culminated in Washington.

As a delegation of six representatives we met with the EPA, CEQ, had a congressional reception and a press conference at the National Press Club. We also met with representatives from Congress and the Senate, to explain the environmental justice abuses the coal industry inflicts. When meeting with the EPA and the CEQ, we were met with very attentive and seemingly supportive representatives. They are aware of some of the things that are going on in the coal fields, but said

they were thankful that we traveled there to speak with them. They said they get so busy shuffling papers in DC they tend to forget. They need to hear from us more often.

Grassroots delegates included Towana Yepa, a student from the Indigenous regions of Michigan; Sam Villaseñor, an organizer for clean energy in Chicago's inner city; LJ Turner, a rancher in Wyoming whose aquifers have dried up due to strip mining; Marie Gladue, a Navajo advocate for green jobs in Arizona; Mike Cherin, a spokesman against new coal plants in North Carolina; and me, Lorelei Scarbro.

## Rahall betrays his district “Environmental hero” lets environ- mental atrocities slide

*By a teenage resident of western Raleigh  
County*

As you may know, in March the EPA announced they were going to look more closely at valley fill permits. This announcement excited a lot of people. It was almost as if the Obama administration was putting a stop to mountaintop removal. Too bad it didn't turn out that way – 42 of the 48 permits were approved by the EPA after some heavy lobbying by Congressman Nick J. Rahall.

For those that don't already know, Con-

gressman Rahall is the Representative for the 3rd district of West Virginia, the southern part of the state including Boone, Cabell, Fayette, Greenbrier, Lincoln, Logan, McDowell, Mercer, Mingo, Monroe, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Raleigh, Summers, Wayne, Webster, and Wyoming counties. Congressman Rahall is also chairman of the house Natural Resources committee. But, despite his environmentalist policies, he has worked feverishly to protect strip mining in his district.

So, I propose this question to Congressman Rahall: Aren't your constituents as important as the other people in states where you've helped to protect the environment? And isn't it true that coal won't even be profitable to mine in twenty odd years?

I personally think the Congressman is simply afraid, afraid of the big coal companies, and what a big bite out of his campaign funds it would take if he decided to make them angry, but, I digress, that's just this humble writers opinion, and I encourage all the readers of this article to research the topic yourself, and form your own opinion. I believe though, that the mid-term election in 2010 is a perfect way to show the Congressman what the people of his district think about his pandering to the big coal companies, and letting slide environmental atrocities.

*The author is a 19-year-old local resident, who attended Marsh Fork Elementary when he was young. He loves video games and plans to study art at Marshall University.*

## EYES ON RAHALL:

As southern West Virginia's representative to the U.S. Congress, Rahall continually defends the coal industry and fights the environmental justice legislation that would protect the people and land in his own district. Here, two young (voting) members of Rahall's district describe encounters and frustrations with their representative.

## Constituents push Ra- hall to defend his own district's environment

*By Erin Stockhausen*

I was one of the 12,000 amazing individuals who attended Power Shift '09, and I can honestly say it was life changing—I've already changed career paths. Afterwards, Danny Chiotos asked me if I would schedule a meeting with my district's House representative, Nick Rahall. I accepted the challenge, telling myself this would be a great way to prove that I am seriously committed to making a change in West Virginia.

Danny helped spread the word to other organizations while I worked on getting more Marshall students involved. In the end we had six people: Bob Kincaid and his wife Annette, Robin Blake-man, Lorelei Scarbro, Danny, and myself.

I began the meeting by explaining to the Congressman the advances Marshall University is taking in order to be more environmentally sustainable. I explained the Green Fee that we passed last semester as well as our work with the Hunting-

ton Community Garden Committee. Bob brought up issues related to Ansted and the Gauley Mountain area, praising Rahall for his work in encouraging tourism but also explaining how that industry is being destroyed by Mountaintop Removal. Annette expressed her concern for her children.

Danny directly asked him how he thought we could transition to green jobs, restating Rahall's recent comment about there only being 20 more years of productive coal mining to do.

He responded that President Obama's stimulus plan should take care of most of it and specifically stated “clean coal” and coal to liquid options. Suggestions of renewable energy jobs were made, and Lorelei gave her personal narrative about her relatives' and neighbors' only job options being in the coal industry. She brought up the wind project and stressed that her friends and family could have good jobs much longer with a wind farm. Rahall acknowledged that he knew about the project and expressed willingness to consider the project as part of the solution.

Robin left him with a modified quotation from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose picture was on the wall: “We must be the headlights of society, rather than the tail-lights.” She expressed hope that West



Virginia could be the headlights of society in green energy and job development.

All in all this was a great learning experience for me. We didn't get all the answers we wanted, but, as Annette put it, he was in a “testy” mood. The main tactic that I'm taking from this is to keep things personal. Lorelei gave her personal narrative, and Bob shared his empathy. Robin and Annette expressed concern for their children and stressed the consequences if something is not done to provide a future for them.

We raised his awareness on a lot of issues. I think we should regard our efforts as a successful step in the direction of change.

*Erin is a senior at Marshall University majoring in Biomedical Science. She hopes to pursue a career in developing alternative fuels. At school she's involved in the Sierra Student Coalition.*

# CHANGES IN THE WIND:

Coal River residents call for wind power -- on Coal River Mountain and in their backyards  
*See p. 14 for an update on the Coal River Wind Campaign*

## Valley residents tour WV wind farms

By Delbert Gunnoe

*Local residents saw a vision of the future, when they visited the Mountaineer and Mount Storm wind farms in Tucker County, WV on April 25. Delbert Gunnoe, a Rock Creek resident planning to build wind turbines on his own land, describes the visit:*

One of the reasons I wanted to go see the wind farm was because I had not heard anything positive about them. After visiting the farm at Davis, I was impressed by the quietness of the turbines and also there was hardly any disturbance to the natural lay of the land, and they were not an eyesore. Really, I think they were an improvement to the landscape.

With the expected life of mountaintop removal mining to be only 10-15 years, we really need to get behind the wind project. The benefit of a wind farm on Coal River Mountain is far more beneficial in every aspect than mountaintop removal. I would encourage anyone to visit one of the wind farms if they can.



### COMMUNITY (from p. 1)

naturetoputselffirst: "Mylife,mychildren,my grand- and great-grand children!" However, if faced with a choice of, "Can I benefit me or mine a little?" or "By working with others we all can benefit enormously providing more for me and mine," the wise individual will

choose to come together with his or her neighbor to achieve one common goal.

Mineral reserves will eventually become depleted and just simply run out. We need desperately to conserve what we have and utilize the clean renewable sources that we have. By coming together as neighbors to work for the same common goal, just maybe our small, close-knit neighborhood could somehow grow to touch the one next to it and eventually convince everyone, that by improving our neighbor's life, it will in turn improve life for me and mine.

We all need to think more of our neighbor and less of self. AND MUCH MORE OF OUR GENERATIONS TO COME!

*Luella, born and raised in Beaver, WV, worked on a family cattle farm for years. She now works in marketing. She loves hanging out with her grandkids, dancing at the Moose Lodge, and making crafts.*

*Earl was born and raised in Shady Springs, WV. He's worked in the coal mines, construction, and the engineering department at the University of California. He loves the outdoors and fishing.*

*(Photo: Eric Mathis, Charles Ballard, and Matt Noerpel give thumbs up to wind.)*

## Speaking of wind mills

By a resident from Horse Creek, at the base of Coal River Mountain

Recently I had the opportunity to read an article in the Valley Guide, a newspaper that is printed in the Highlands of Greenbrier County, West Virginia. The article was written by Charles Garratt. He was very concerned about the lady tresser, or *Spiranthes* orchids.

In his column he spoke very harshly about the proposed wind towers power project designated to go up in a part of the Highland mountains in a designated area. He spoke of the destruction of the land that the roads and the designated site would create.

I agree with his view that the Allegheny Mountains are very beautiful and would hate to see any type of destruc-

tion of the mountains in any area, but if Mr. Charles Garratt would like to see devastation, I would like to invite him to the area of the Coal River mountains.

If he thinks a windmill is that unsightly, then he has never seen the devastation of this area caused by the stripping of the mountains for coal or the large coal corporations. They are interested only in more coal production profit, using less manpower and more destructive machines to mine with.

The proposed Highland County wind turbine project would look like a speck of sand on the beach compared to the destruction that we are witnessing in the Coal River Mountain area. If I had a choice, I would rather look at a wind turbine than at no mountain, no trees, no vegetation, or anything left that is of value.

In our case, we have an alternative method of mining coal. The coal that they

are removing from the area of Coal River could be mined the way it has been for over a century – underground – but the big coal operators would rather use less men and mine more coal and create more profit for themselves than to mine it the right way and leave the mountains intact.

In Mr. Garratt's column, he quoted a statement made by Gaylord Nelson, whom I am unfamiliar with, but I'm sure he was an intelligent man. His quote was, "The ultimate test of a man's conscience many be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard."

I myself think that everyone in the area of the Big Coal River should search their own soul and decide: are we willing to make these sacrifices, or just let the people who pioneered these mountains and carved their way through history become extinct and disappear forever?

# READY, SET, ACTION!

Frustrated by irresponsible and unresponsive legislators and the court system, citizens have organized numerous nonviolent direct actions to make their voices heard. While Coal River Mountain Watch did not coordinate any of the actions, we believe it is important to report the ways in which the devastation of mountaintop removal and sludge has pushed local, regional, and even national activists to speak out and act out.



Local resident Bo Webb tells NASA scientist James Hansen about the Massey mining operations that threaten Marsh Fork Elementary, as protesters march down the road. Lorelei Scarbro, CRMW community organizer, marches directly behind Hansen. Massey miners blocked the entrance to Massey's Goal's Coal preparation plant, so 29 protesters peacefully sat down in the road. (Photo (c) Antrim Caskey)



Lifelong activist, West Virginian Winne Fox, stands up for the mountains. (Photo (c) Antrim Caskey)

## SUMMER ACTION TIMELINE

**May 23: 17 arrested**  
**Organized by Mountain Justice and Climate Ground Zero**  
- Rally at entrance of Marfork mining complex (7 arrested)  
- 8 protesters lock down to mining equipment on Kayford,  
- 2 protesters unfurl banners on Brushy Fork Sludge impoundment

**June 18: 14 arrested scaling 20-story Massey Energy dragline at Twilight mine**  
**Organized by concerned citizens with Mountain Action**  
([www.mountainaction.org](http://www.mountainaction.org))

**June 23: 29 arrested at Marsh Fork Elementary**  
**Organized by local residents, Mountain Justice**  
- NASA climate scientist James Hansen, actress Daryl Hannah, WV rep. Ken Hechler, and 26 others arrested for protesting MTR and sludge, and demanding a sustainable future

**June 26-28: Protest against EPA**  
**Organized by Mountain Justice**  
Protesters rallied at the EPA's regional offices in Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Washington DC, to protest the EPA's continuing approval of valley fill permits.

## Marfork Protest Power Awakening to a new reality

By Billy Pyles

On May 23 I was awakened to a new reality in my life. I attended a protest. I looked around me and discovered I was surrounded by people from all walks of life, from all around the entirety of the United States. All these folks gathered in one place, with one purpose in mind. Their care, and their concern, had brought them here to aid my people in a matter of great importance. My people call them environmentalists, treehuggers, and, far more often, obscene and derogatory names. I call them Americans.

Throughout America's history, we have rushed to the side of all people in need. When we see something as vile, as corrupted, as evil as this, we have always

spoken against it, we have always tried to change it. This is now a struggle against oppression, a struggle for a people's survival. We must be totally non-violent, but our enemy is as large as most small countries.

Coal River Valley now faces the greatest danger to its existence since far before it was settled. The Brushy Fork impoundment alone will not "could," but *will* completely wipe out the entire lower half of the valley if it fails. In minutes everything will be gone, people, animals, homes, all gone forever. They will not come back. No one will be able to resettle, to rebuild, to live there again.

Only one entity will benefit from this: Massey Energy. They are showing no concern about the sanctity of life. They will detonate their huge explosions over and over. When the dam finally gives from all the stress put on it, it will turn out to be "the hand of god" that came down and smote it, just "incidentally" after an explosion. For

Massey it is going to be just that simple.

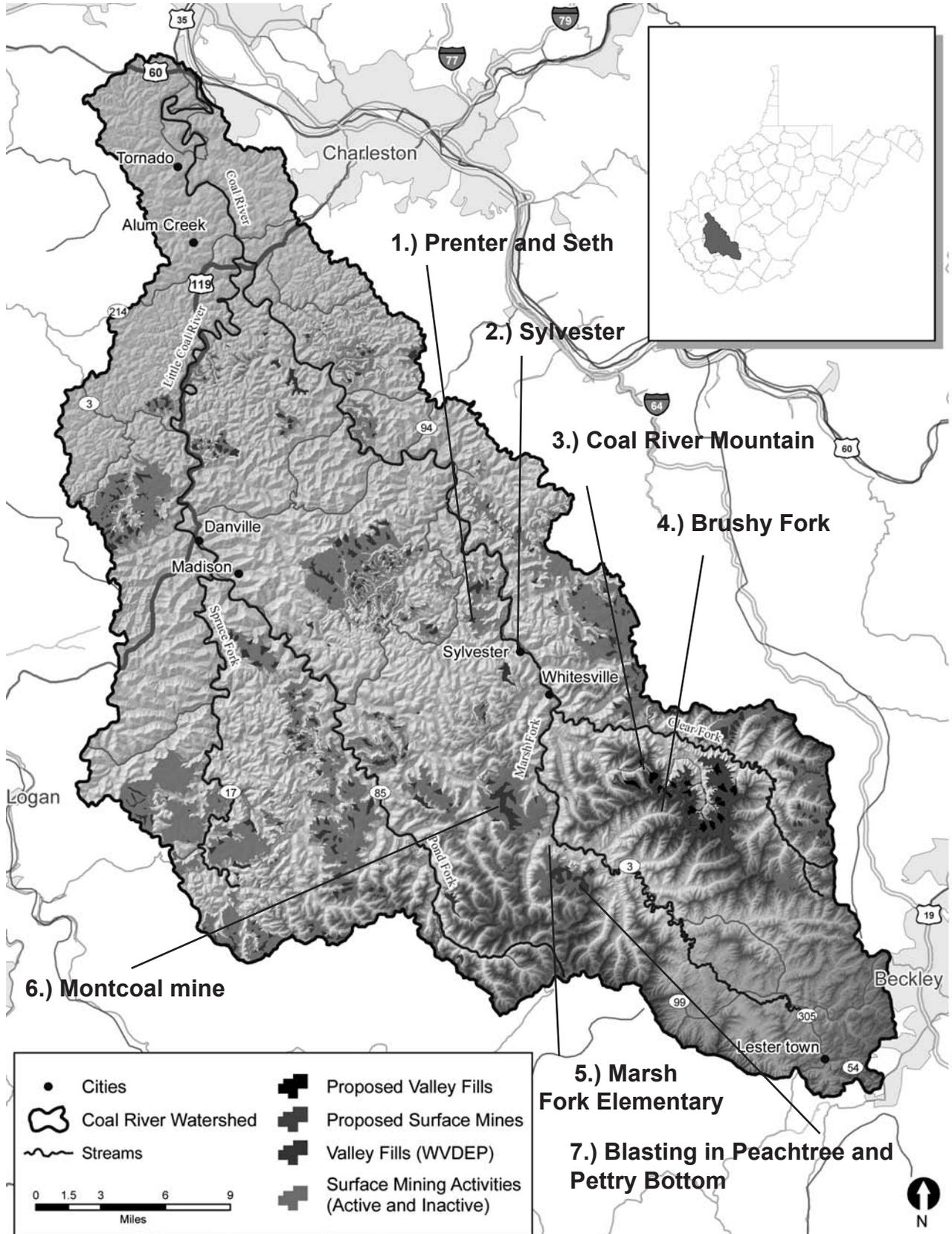
I met an elderly gentleman at the protest. Until days later all I knew was his name was Ken and he was 94 years old. I had observed throughout that people showed him respect; they watched out for and took care of him. When it was over I walked up, (he watched me like a hawk, I observed) shook his hand, and stated he was an inspiration to us all. Loking at me with sharp, piercing eyes, he waved at all the people and said, "No, all of you inspired me." Taken aback, all I could respond with was that we were all inspirations to each other. A short time later, I was still thinking about that, and I looked around me and cried in my heart, "Where were you, my people, where were you?"

*Billy Pyles lives at Girl Scout Camp, on the Coal River. He is an avid reader, prolific writer, and lover of the woods, who has hiked the Appalachian Trail.*

# Bird's Eye News

A View of the Latest from the Coal River Valley Watershed

MANY thanks to Fritz Boettner of Downstream Strategies and Jen Osha for this beautiful map!



# What's Happening Where?

## 1.) Prenter and Seth

Community wins emergency water. See story p. 2.

**2.) Sylvester** – Blasting to level the ridge beside the town, to build a second track for the coal trains.

## 3.) Coal River Mountain

Two potential futures: 4 mountaintop removal mines (Bee Tree, Eagle 2, Eagle 3, and Collins Fork) or a wind farm?

- Surface mine permits and NPDES permits approved for Bee Tree, Eagle 2 but not Eagle 3 or Collins Fork.

- No valley fill permits: Massey has still not applied for valley fill permits for any of the mines. The Army Corps of Engineers and the EPA approve these permits, so tell the EPA in advance not to approve them! See p. 14 for info on contacting Lisa Jackson.

- Bee Tree permit: Massey was granted a revision that would allow them to mine 200 acres without a 404 valley fill permit. We lost our appeal before the Surface Mine Board.

- Coal River Wind: see p. 14 for updates.

- Permit numbers: Bee Tree S301004, Eagle 2 S302805, Collins Fork S300208

## 4.) Brushy Fork Dam and Marfork Preparation Plant

Prep plant feeds impoundment permitted for 9 billion gallons (largest in the country). The sludge sits above a maze of underground mines, and Massey plans to blast with a few hundred feet of the impoundment, on a ridge also mined in several seams beneath the slurry elevation

- Rally on May 23 drew attention to the dangers of the impoundment (see story p. 7)

- Permit numbers: Brushy Fork O301095, Marfork plant O302493

## 5.) Marsh Fork Elementary

Sits by a coal silo and in the shadow of 2.8-billion-gallon

Shumate sludge dam.

- Second silo **approved** by the WV Supreme Court.

- Take action: call Sen. Byrd to ask for money for a new school in the area, under the Green Schools Act. More info p 14.

- 29 arrested at rally on June 23 to protest mountaintop removal – including NASA climate scientist James Hansen, actress Daryl Hannah, and Ken Hechler.

- Permit number: O001885

## 6.) Montcoal mine: Upper Big Branch #1, Independence Energy

- Last violation Dec. for overflow sediment ditch – 31 violations since 2002, 7 in 2008 alone

- Permit number: S301999

## 7.) Peachtree mine sites: Edwight mine (Alex Energy) and Shumate Powellton (Independence)

- Blasting continues to shake the homes of nearby residents, including shake off part of one home's propane tank and fill the house with poisonous gas.

- Citizen power: Thanks to the work of residents in Peachtree and Pettry Bottom, Massey operations got the violations they deserved. See story p. 1-3.

- After four residents from Pettry Bottom called to complain about an enormous blast on April 24, the DEP investigated and issued a violation.

- CRMW continues working with residents to document and report blasts and blasting damage, and to put together a nuisance lawsuit. Call (304) 854-2182 for more info.

- Permit numbers: Edwight mine S301299, Powellton Shumate S301100

**CHECK ON PERMITS at [www.wvdep.org](http://www.wvdep.org) (under the tab, "E-DEP")**

## Residents speak out against blasting

*From an interview with Tom Beckner*

*In the communities of Pettry Bottom and Peachtree regularly shaken by the blasts from the Edwight mine, CRMW is working with residents to document and report blasts and blasting damage, prepare for a nuisance lawsuit, and organize on a larger scale against mountaintop removal. Tom Beckner, from Pettry Bottom, describes the impacts of mountaintop removal.*

It's a tragedy and a sin. I've lived here all my life. It used to be real quiet, you'd

go back on these mountains and you'd feel like you're in heaven. It was probably the closest thing to heaven on earth.

Now they've got it torn all to pieces, it's sinful, and all for a dollar. When I'm sitting here on the couch, it starts shaking so bad, you feel like you're in a big wind tunnel. It's like an aluminum can getting squashed.

The worst thing to me that I've ever endured in my life is this thing. The saying that the U.S. and the world needs coal – they use that like a hostage.

Sometimes it catches you off-guard; it scares you. You're worried about your life, what's going to happen, like if the house is going to fall over the hill.

It causes the house to leak, where it's sagged down. We had to replace two walls and a lot of roofing, and put a ton of bricks under the house. The doors won't close right.

It's just not right, doing all this for money, and the little people like us, swept away like dust. Seems like we're the underdogs. Whenever they got the government and the money on their side, but I'll tell you one thing they don't have: God, because he doesn't want these mountains torn up.

*Tommy Beckner has lived in Pettry Bottom for 40 years. He's worked for Ohio Steel, cutting timber, and as a security guard at Montcoal. He worked in the mines for 11 years.*

# REMEMBERING THE PAST, WORKING FOR THE FUTURE

An important part of Coal River Mountain Watch's mission is to rebuild sustainable communities. We believe in honoring our rich heritage of connection to the land and sense community, to guide us as we work together for a truly healthy future. In each issue, the Coal River Mountain Watch Messenger will piece together memories, stories, and dreams for the future of our mountain home.

## THE SEASONAL ROUND: SUMMER CANNING

*Up and down the valley, skillful and future-minded cooks are capturing summer's bounty in glass jars to stow away for colder months, as they have for generations. Judy Gunnoe, her cousin-in-law Rita Howell, Rita's husband David, and Rita's 95-year-old mother Tacy Bradford share summer canning stories and recipes.*

### **From an interview with Judy Gunnoe:**

I can cabbage, beans, spaghetti sauce, tomatoes, apples, chow-chow, hot peppers, and just about anything you can name, I try to can it. I do jellies and jams – grape and strawberry.

I enjoy canning. I like to do it late of the evening when nobody's around. I can sit here and let it cook.

It's the convenience -- if you need something, you don't have to run out to the store and buy it...if it's an emergency, or if someone needs something, you can share it.

My neighbor taught me to can. I never canned any until we moved up here. When we came up here we got to be real good friends with him, we planted a garden up in his upper field, all together, and he basically learned me to can. He even offered me his canner. I never did can growing up. I was the churn person. When I was home, I would always churn. We always had a milk cow.

Now I've been canning over 20 years. I'll do it till I can't. My spaghetti sauce is my favorite. You always have a lot left and then you use it again...and it'll last forever. (See page 9 for Judy's recipe!)

*Judy Gunnoe was born in Arnett, but she's lived in Rock Creek 32 years. She works at the Naoma post office. She likes to quilt and work jigsaw puzzles when the cat doesn't mess it up.*

### **From an interview with Tacy Bradford, Rita Howell, and David Howell**

Tacy: I learned to can when I was just a small thing; mom would can, and I was just at the edge of her shirttails, and I would follow her wherever she would go and help her. I would go up to the Mountain Farm [at the head of Dry Creek] and get apples and peaches and carry them home in sacks and can them. It was just open to anyone who wanted to use it.



*Tacy Bradford and Rita Howell display their pantry: many summers' lush gardens transformed into a rainbow array of jams, pickles, and preserves.*

Rita: She used to get old Charlie, that was the horse, and go in the woods to get the firewood and carry it out. Once she wrecked with old Charlie – it was real slick, and she wrecked.

David: They would drive the horse and buggy clear up to Sycamore. There was peaches and pears and apples and grapes, all kinds of stuff, anything you'd want to can.

Tacy: And then there's blackberries up in there, just wild, you know, growing out in the open. I'd go into the head of this creek, way up in there, and I'd hunt apples and pears and plums. And Poppy would hook up the sled, and when I'd come home it'd be all full. I'd climb to the tip top of the trees and pick [the fruit]. I canned anything I could get my hands on. I've canned over 300 quarts of things in one year.

David: If it hit the ground, she'd can it.

Tacy: We'd make big kettles of apple butter and can it up for the winter.

David: When you'd get to making apple butter, a lot of people would come stir.

Tacy: We'd have good times, didn't we? I'd wager better times than it seems like people have today.

Rita: At Clay's Branch they would have bean stringings, and they would have all the young people to come and then they would put up the beans.

Tacy: And then we'd dance till 2 o'clock in the morning, and they'd make us quit and go to bed.

Rita: I know my dad (Tacy's husband, Tom), he always prayed, any time he planted something in the garden. He would pray that he could reap the bounty, and he always did good. They were always thankful and appreciative, and that's how they survived.

Tacy: Used to be you couldn't even eat it all, a whole farm, so you'd just give it away. We had beggars, and I'd fix for them, and I'd set what I wanted for them to have, away from my stuff.

# Remember When...?

...Whitesville and Sylvester bustled with activity, when neighbors flocked to the movie theater, bars, restaurants, and stores? In our new regular feature, "Remember When?" we are collecting old photographs and stories to remind ourselves what we have loved about this place and to keep us fighting for the memories of what our home once was – and for the possibilities of what it can still become if we save it in time. If you have old photographs or stories you would like to share, please contact CRMW at (30) 854-2182 or [julia@crmw.net](mailto:julia@crmw.net).

## Summertime Fun: Fritz's Dairy Barn and Drive-ins

By Carrie Lou Jarrell

Jur Drive-in moves was where the SCP is now. Big Jim's [drive-in restaurant] was where Konnie's Kitchen is now in Sylvester. Big Jim's was *the* Friday night and Saturday night hangout for young people. All the girls, when we were in high school, we'd all get together in a car and go down there.

Down at Jur [drive-in theater], I remember when grandpa loaded us all up one night to take us, and it cost a dollar to get a carload in.

Fritz's Dairy Barn was in Whitesville. The basement of it was the old jail...then they had a community college in there for a awhile. Fritz always had a daily special. He was a character. He liked to joke and cut up with everybody, and he never met a stranger. The first time I walked in there, he came over and gave me a big hug.

When I put my eggs in a skillet and cook it too hot and it'll lace around the edges, Virgil [Carrie's husband] will say, "You've Fritzed the eggs," because that's how he would always do it.



Carrie Lou Jarrell is locally famous for Carrie's Country Corner, a restaurant, convenience store, and tanning salon which she ran for 14 years. At Carrie's Country Corner she would host the Boone Jamboree country band every Saturday night. Her favorite things to do in the world are search for old cemeteries and line dance.



## Judy Gunnoe's Spaghetti Sauce

- ½ bushel tomatoes:
- 3 lbs onions
- 5 green peppers
- 1 bunch garlic
- 3 hot peppers
- 1 c. sugar
- ½ c. salt
- 1 tbl. basil
- 1 pt. Crisco oil
- 1 tbl. Oregano
- 5 cans tomato paste (12-oz size)

- 1) Clean the tomatoes, cook them in a big pot until they come to a boil, and put them through the colander.
- 2) With the onions, green peppers, garlic, and hot peppers: place them in a blender until they're like applesauce OR cut them by hand and leave them chunky.
- 3) Add sugar, salt, basil, Crisco, oregano, and tomato paste.
- 4) Cook all ingredients 45 min. Can and seal.

Marsh Fork High School burned December 18, 2005. The school had not been used, however, since the graduation of 2003.

This was not the first time that Marsh Fork High burned. The school was built in 1925 when Jacob Scarbro was the President of the Marsh Fork District Board of Education. The original school had only two rooms, but was added onto as need arose.

Marsh Fork High had been enlarged to eight rooms and a gymnasium when it burned on March 7, 1943. A new school was built "along the most modern lines" and opened in 1944. Claude Worley was the principal. Claude fought many battles, including quashing a "sex club" in 1954.

But when mountaintop strip mining came to be, then that meant the school had to go.

Rick Bradford, born in Hazy, now living in Edwight, taught history to schoolchildren in the Valley for over 30 years. He taught

## Lost Landmark: Marsh Fork High School

By Rick Bradford



from Clearfork to Marshfork, to Mountain View, to Shumate, where he would fire up a Burnside stove. His two books, *Edwight: Near the Mouth of Hazy* and *Coal River Valley Through My Lens* use stories and photographs to make the past come alive again and honor the land, people, and places of the Coal River Valley.

# Mountain Inspiration

*The beauty of the mountains, the devastation of surface mining, and the injustices of industry and politicians have inspired music and poetry for generations. Recently, we've been blessed with an outpouring of creativity from local residents. See p. 2 for another poem, about Prenter.*

## If Mountains Could Speak

*By a resident of Horse Creek, WV*

Fight on, you young children, the keepers of these,  
The mountains, the flowers, the rocks, the trees,  
The valleys below where water runs clear,  
We thank you so much that someone might care.  
So proudly we stood on the peaks so high,  
The limbs of our branches once touching the sky,  
The fields below us once covered with grass,  
Is not most covered with rubble and trash.  
The hollows and streams, which once ran so long,  
Was once clear and clean till man came along,  
The Indians, the animals, that cherished us dear,  
In their way and life they passed us no fear.  
We provided their food, the land filled with corn,  
The trees with nuts, the bushes with thorns.



*View of Coal River Mountain -- from a mountaintop removal site on Kayford Mountain.*

They fished the rivers so clean and so clear,  
To us today it would look like a mirror.  
Then came the man from faraway places,  
With ships and guns and beards on their faces.  
As time passed along and years take their tool,  
They soon needed more wood, and then came the coal.  
They built their cities, filled with smoke towers and ashes,  
Then came the cars, chemicals and gases.  
Now we are weak, torn by man,  
Trees cut down and lots of us flattened,  
But still we survive in some of the places,  
With tears on our leaves and scars on our faces.  
We thank you young children for being so kind,  
And when you pray, just keep us in mind.

*I would like to thank all who share the view of the trees and mountains which we all cherish dearly in the Coal River Valley.*

## A Story of the Future

*By Matt Parsons*

Dug down in a deep dark hole  
For the business man's greedy soul  
Way way down to mine the coal  
A long long time ago.

The hole is gone and they've moved to the world  
It's oh so hot and I feel so cold  
Folks don't know just what they sold  
A long long time ago.

Politicians are bribed with silver and gold  
While the mountain peoples pay their toll  
The companies never were so bold  
A long long time ago.

Killin' folks both young and old  
It's not murder is what they've told  
But it's lies not truth that'll damn their souls  
Like a long long time ago

There's a movement now startin' to unfold  
A story great in futures told  
We want our land and not your dole  
It was ours from a long time ago.

The mountains here make a man feel whole  
Let him work all day and have a welcome home  
But they don't care what the laws uphold  
Destruction is all they know.

*About Matt, from Matt: I'm 15, born on the coldest day ever recorded in Kentucky. My father is Will Parsons, a bluegrass musician and professor at East Tennessee State. My mother is Wendy Johnston, a librarian and a history major in Mercer County. I've been playing music since I was old enough for my father to put me on his lap and put my hands on the strings, but seriously I really started when I was about 6 or 7. I've been writing since I was 12 or 13. My favorite quote is, "Clothes make the man, naked people have little or no influence in society." ~ Mark Twain.*

The story behind "A Story of the Future": Matt's grandfather, Sid Moye, was one of the protesters arrested at the Picket at Pet-tus, at the mouth of Marfork on May 23. The morning after the arrest -- after Matt and other family members of Sid's had bailed Sid out of jail -- Matt wrote this song. You can watch him perform it at the Aurora Lights Release Party on August 23 (more information on p. 15).

## Mountain Justice volunteers bring new energy to CRMW projects

By *Laura Von Dohlen, Mountain Justice volunteer with CRMW*

This past May, Mountain Justice held its 5th annual Mountain Justice Training Camp at the beautiful Appalachian South Folklife Center in Pipestem, West Virginia. This week-long event featured a slew of informational and hands-on workshops, speakers, movies and discussion panels that focused on issues of environmental justice in Appalachia and building alliances to strengthen the resistance movement to mountain top removal mining.

Workshops given during the week included Mountain Top Removal 101, Non-Violent Direct Action, Air Monitoring, Appalachian Community Economics and Connecting Campuses to Communities. The training camp also taught attendees the skills necessary to spend their summer in Appalachia working with Mountain

Justice and their allies to put an end to mountain top removal and the devastation it causes to the Appalachian bioregion and the communities within it.

Mountain Justice is a volunteer-based network of people that seeks to stop the destruction of the mountains, streams and forests of Appalachia by mountain top removal coal mining.

One of the group's key roles is connecting interested individuals with grassroots organizations from Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky. Coal River Mountain Watch has hosted Mountain Justice volunteers in the Coal River Valley since 2005.

This summer, Coal River Mountain Watch is hosting volunteers to bring new energy to existing projects, such as the Sludge Safety Project, blasting documentation, and the

Coal River Wind Project. Volunteers have also been attending community meetings and participating in listening projects.



*Larry Gibson educates and inspires Mountain Justice volunteers.*

CRMW Volunteers often continue supporting the organization and its work once they have returned to their home communities. Many volunteers come back to the Coal River Valley year after year and some even stay much longer than originally expected.

## CRMW fights to keep coal industry propaganda out of WV schools

By *Julian Martin*

Coal River Mountain Watch and allies from the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy are continuing our campaign against CEDAR – the coal industry's attempt to gain power in our local schools.

CEDAR, which stands for Coal Education Development and Resource of Southern West Virginia, Inc. is a coal industry invention. CEDAR's mission is to "facilitate the increase of knowledge and understanding of the many benefits the coal industry provides in daily lives by providing financial resources and coal education materials to implement its study in the school curriculum.

CEDAR's target group is grades K-12 in Mingo, Logan, Boone, McDowell and Wyoming counties in southern West Virginia."

"The many benefits the coal industry provides..." are key words in CEDAR's mission statement. Learning outcomes for West Virginia Schools don't include promoting the many benefits of any industry. Just promoting the many benefits qualifies CEDAR as one-sided propaganda, not education.

A year ago, I asked Dr. Steven L. Paine why CEDAR was being allowed to spread its pro-mountaintop removal propaganda in the schools of southern West Virginia.

He claimed he had never heard of it and said he would look into it. Dr. Paine is superintendent of West Virginia Schools. He had never heard of a program that bragged three years ago to being in 16 southern West Virginia schools. A year later, after hearing the testimony of Janice Nease, Lorelei Scarbro and me, Dr. Paine was instructed by the president of the State Board of Education to do what he had promised me a year earlier. He said he would look into it and that he would meet with us.

Lorelei Scarbro and Janice Nease from Coal River Mountain Watch and I finally met with Dr. Paine after the State Board of Education meeting. I will tell it like I saw it. He hadn't done his homework, didn't know our names or who we represented, and if he had read the information we gave him at the Board of Education meeting he didn't seem to remember any of it nor did it appear he had bothered to prepare for our meeting by reading it again.

A social studies supervisor said she contacted social studies teachers in the several counties where CEDAR claims to be in the schools, and none of them had heard of or used the CEDAR information. Two or three years ago CEDAR bragged on-line of being in 16 schools. They claim their program is for all grades and disciplines and pay teacher coordinators in schools where CEDAR is used.

Paine claimed it was a jurisdictional issue and seemed powerless to take meaningful action. He agreed to tell the superintendents at the next meeting with them that they should have balanced programs teaching both sides of issues.

I offered to show Dr. Paine mountain top removal up close. He didn't seem too interested and didn't seem to know much of anything about the issue. He did say he was a friend of Bill Raney.

CRMW is now gathering energy to oppose CEDAR in Raleigh County Schools, and is discussing plans for an environmental curriculum to balance CEDAR. Interested in getting involved? Contact Lorelei Scarbro at (304) 854-2182.

*Julian Martin was born at Emmons on Big Coal River and is the eighth generation to have lived on Coal River. His dad and grandpa were underground union coal miners and grandpa and his brother were in the battle of Blair Mountain on the union side. His mother lived in the Presbyterian mission home in Colcord and attended Clear Fork High School from the ninth through eleventh grades. His ancestor Isaac Barker told Mr. Skinner, who was buying mineral rights on Coal River, "You are Skinner by name and skinner by trade but you won't skin old Isaac Barker."*

## How Can I Get Involved?

- **Help get a new Marsh Fork Elementary:** Demand that Senator Byrd permanently protect the children by including a new school for the Marsh Fork community in bill HR 2187, which funds construction for modern, safe, and green school buildings. Call Byrd's office at (202) 224-3954

- **Tell the EPA to save Coal River Mountain:** Ask them to reject the valley fill permits for the proposed mines on Coal River Mountain: Massey Energy's Bee Tree, Eagle #2, and Eagle #3. Be sure to tell them who you are and why it matters to you. You can call Administrator Lisa Jackson at (202)564-4700 or email at [jackson.lisa@epa.gov](mailto:jackson.lisa@epa.gov).

- **Invite Obama to see MTR** before he decides to allow the continued destruction of Appalachia. Take action online at <http://ga3.org/campaign/obamamtr> OR write a letter to: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20500

- **Become a member:** Membership amplifies your voice, connects you to others, and helps our standing in legal cases.

### - Speak Out

- Letters to the editor and blogs: We want the world to read about our vision of a sustainable economy, not just the deep-pocket propaganda

- Talk to your neighbors: Reach out, build community, help us unite around these issues that affect us all

- **Donate:** In these financial times, every bit helps us keep going.

- **Share your story with visitors:** We're always looking for community members to tell journalists, students, and other visitors their stories about the impacts of mountaintop removal and their work to create a healthy future.

- **Keep educating yourself:** Our website ([www.crmw.net](http://www.crmw.net)) has updates and links, and our regular Action Alerts will help keep you posted.

## Coal River Wind News:

- Coal River Wind resolution died in committee before reaching WV House floor  
- No blasting or new mining activity on Coal River Mountain!  
- Current strategy: ask the EPA to reject the valley fill permits and save Coal River Mountain! (see "How Can I Get Involved?")

### **From Rory McIlmoil, Coal River Wind Campaign coordinator, now with Downstream Strategies in Morgantown, WV:**

To all the friends I've made in the Coal River Valley over the past year, I want to say thank you for sharing your lives with me and for supporting and being such a huge part of the Coal River Wind campaign. It's been the greatest year of my life getting to know you all and I've been blessed to have the chance to live here, and leaving is the hardest thing I've ever done. The rest of the country doesn't seem to know what life is really all about. Thank you for showing me that.

The wind campaign itself has grown far beyond what we could have expected, but that's a testament to the hope and hard work that has gone into it. Southern West Virginia deserves better than what is happening to it right now, and if mountaintop removal continues, then even the possibility of developing wind power will be gone. More and more local residents are getting involved in the wind campaign now, and that's what we need to save Coal River Mountain and create new jobs in the area. Coal is a part of this area, its even a part of me now to some extent, but that's not all we are, and its up to us to show that.

I wish you all the best of luck, and keep up the energy. A better future for your children is not far off, but you gotta create it.

## Aurora Lights celebrates CD, website releases

The nonprofit Aurora Lights released its long-awaited compilation CD, *Still Moving Mountains: The Journey Home*, with its multimedia website, [JourneyUpCoalRiver.org](http://JourneyUpCoalRiver.org), at the Mountain Aid concert, June 20. This unique combination of music, visuals, and community involvement unleashes the passion and urgency empowering the movement against mountaintop removal at this critical moment.

Through 14 musical tracks and additional interviews, the new CD expands upon Aurora Lights' first benefit CD, *Moving Mountains*.

Like the first, *Still Moving Mountains* mourns the devastation of mountaintop removal and celebrates the courage of coalfield resistance while also emphasizing the surviving communities' beauty and hopes for the future.

All proceeds from the album will be used for grants and other educational and charitable purposes, consistent with Aurora Lights' mission to raise awareness of the impacts of mountaintop removal. The first CD raised more than \$6,000 for local grassroots work. The CD combines interviews with local impacted residents with a mixture of local and well-known artists such as Kathy Mattea and Andrew McKnight. Interviews from Mattea and Robert Kennedy, Jr., are also on the CD.

Musician and activist Jen Osha, a Ph.D. candidate in geography at West Virginia

University, is using her research to combine music, local interviews, and information on the CD with multimedia and additional resources on the accompanying website. The result is an organizing tool created by and for the local people.

"The first CD was birthed with the idea that music could help inspire people to stand together through the hard times." Jen Osha says. "I realized that *Still Moving Mountains* had to go further to provide

people with a way to move from inspiration to education to action. The website is that jumping off point."

"This just might be the most powerful soundtrack and organizing tool for the coalfield justice and climate change movements today." -- Jeff Biggers, author of *The United States of Appalachia*

The website maps the Coal River Valley through the eyes of the community. Website visitors can use the map to pinpoint the setting of a song or issue, and find photographs, videos, interviews, and stories to deepen their understanding of the issue, and even get involved. The website was developed with financial support from the WV Humanities Council and represents an inspirational grassroots effort from many volunteers, residents, and organizations.

"The multimedia website also serves as a classroom educational tool, providing lesson plans layered in six themes," says the website's designer and copy-editor, Charles Suggs. "Professors from both within West Virginia and out of state have already started developing unique curricula based upon the CD and website."

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**July 26-29:** Mini-lobby trip to DC for the Clean Water Protection and Appalachian Restoration Acts to ban valley fills! Sponsored by the Alliance for Appalachia. For more info, contact Lorelei Scarbro at (304) 854-2182.

**August (ongoing):** Senators and representatives IN DISTRICT -- call to schedule a meeting with your Congresspeople, and organize a group to visit together. Contact Lorelei Scarbro for help or advice in scheduling and planning a visit.

**August 23:** Aurora Lights Release Party for the second stop mountaintop removal benefit CD: *Still Moving Mountains: The Journey Home*. Charleston, WV Capital Building Stage. Talent for the event will include: Everett Lilly & the Lilly Mountaineers (International Bluegrass Musical Association Hall of Honor Winner) and The LoneTones (TN originals with Appalachian Roots) and more. More in-

formation to follow. We need volunteers! If you have questions, contact: Danielle Henry, Aurora Lights, Danif1000@aol.com, 716-432-9455.

**September 15-20:** Lobby Week for the Clean Water Protect and Appalachian Restoration Acts (HR 1310 and S 696), to ban valley fills! Sponsored by the Alliance for Appalachia. Contact Lorelei Scarbro for more info.

**September 25-27:** West Virginia Environmental Council's 20th annual Fall Convention at Holly Grey Park, Sutton, WV.

From the WV Environmental Council: The convention will feature discussions & workshops on WV Environmental Issues, planning for our 2010 Legislative Priorities, a great keynote speaker as well as great music, great people, and an evening birthday party for the WV Environmental Council. More information will be coming out about this throughout the summer. But we want to make sure that WV Environmental organizations and our grassroots activists get this on your calendars now.

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## AMPLIFY YOUR VOICE



Become a member or renew your membership today!

Coal River Mountain Watch (CRMW) is a grassroots organization working to preserve the communities in the mountains of southern West Virginia. Our mission is to stop the destruction of our communities and the environment caused by mountaintop removal mining, to improve the quality of life in our communities, and to help rebuild sustainable communities. CRMW works to empower local residents to work together to fight the effects of irresponsible mining techniques. While we honor the tradition of coal mining in this state, it is our position that mountaintop removal is destructive to our homes and to our mountain heritage, and must be halted. Our goals include advancing economic diversity and increasing public safety. CRMW welcomes members who support our mission and goals. CRMW does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, physical ability, or sexual orientation.

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Name

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Street Address

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City, State, Zip Code

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Email Address

Friend \_\_\_\$10 Defender \_\_\_\$25 Champion \_\_\_\$50 Warrior \_\_\_\$100 Other \$\_\_\_



P.O. Box 651, Whitesville, WV 25209

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Marc Labossiere  
Bonnie and Dennis Lopez  
Julian Martin  
Katherine Merck  
Andrew Nease  
Deborah Pettry  
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Ginny Robertson  
Alan B. Schwartz  
David and Deborah Walters  
Daniel Wright  
Eli Zigas

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