

Land Protection *news*

WESTERN VIRGINIA LAND TRUST

SUMMER 2003

Catawba Conservation Tour

Carvins Cove Watershed Task Force Gets on the Bus

WVLT's Carvins Cove Watershed Task Force held its July meeting on the road – touring conservation practices in the Catawba Valley of Roanoke County and southern Botetourt County.

The bus tour, sponsored by the Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District, highlighted practices that protect water quality and other natural resources. Elected officials, farmers and other interested citizens from throughout the District's territory of Franklin, Henry and Roanoke Counties got an up-close look at how doing what's right for the environment and participating in voluntary government cost-share programs can really improve a farming operation.



The Garman family farm proves that environmental stewardship and good farming go hand in hand.

One of many highlights for the 50 conservation tourists was the stop at Frankie and Louise Garman's Roanoke County beef farm. The Garmans provided a hayride with stops throughout the farm to show the fencing and new watering fountains that they installed with cost-sharing programs through the Soil and Water Conservation District. By fencing

(continued on page 7)

Landsaving in Progress

Landowners across Southwest Virginia continue to show record interest in conservation easements.

Many exciting new easements are nearly complete, but haven't been legally recorded as of press time. We will profile the properties in *Land Protection News* after the easements are legally recorded and the landowners agree to the publicity. But here is an overview of the agreements brokered by WVLT that should be complete before the end of the year.

COUNTY	# OF EASEMENTS	TOTAL ACREAGE
Bedford	2	376
Botetourt	1	10 (riparian easement)
Floyd	1	2 (riparian easement)
Franklin	10	1,543
Montgomery	1	120
Patrick	1	208
Roanoke	2	173
		2,432

Watershed Task Force Grows

Started by WVLT last spring, The Carvins Cove Watershed Task Force continues to grow. Current membership includes representatives from the following organizations, interests, agencies and local governments.

Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District
Botetourt Community Partners
Botetourt County
Catawba Civic League
Impact at the Cabell Brand Center
Mountain Castles Soil and Water Conservation District
Natural Resource and Conservation Service
Private Landowners
Roanoke City
Roanoke County
Roanoke Valley Greenways
Upper Roanoke River Roundtable
Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

Director's Report: Will Southwest Virginia Look Like New Jersey?

Americans began moving off self-sufficient farms and homesteads in the nineteenth century, took paying jobs in the cities early in the 20th century and then moved into the suburbs after WWII. In the first half of the twentieth century the US economy changed from a base in agriculture to manufacturing and in the past fifty years on to consumerism as we have exported more and more manufacturing to foreign lands where labor is cheap and pollution controls lax or non-existent.

The story of the American way for most of the twentieth century was, to a great extent, **any growth was good growth** and newer, bigger, faster and more was always a good thing. Now our roads are full of huge SUVs, and our farms are turning into cookie cutter, cul-de-sac subdivisions. **Is the future beyond our control or can choices made by homebuyers and developers today positively affect the quality of life our descendants and we enjoy or is Southwest Virginia going to look like New Jersey in fifty years?**

While WVLT's day-to-day work involves preserving open space through the use of conservation easements and other voluntary private landowner alternatives, today I want to talk to you about the other side of the sprawl equation. Namely that **the choices made by today's developers and builders will largely determine the quality of life our descendants enjoy.** Why? Because homebuyers don't design and build developments and subdivisions. They just select a home or building site from what is offered and available when they want to buy or build. Homebuyers want a nice place to live, good schools, roads, fire and safety protection and a reasonable commute and in the end they take what they can get. Some prefer the country life and more open spaces, but others value the proximity to work and compact people-friendly neighborhoods of near/in town living, where their kids can toss a ball between backyards, and maybe even walk or ride a bike to school.

So if developers design the places we have to choose from, **what are they offering us as homebuyers now, and what alternatives to cookie cutter cul-de-sacs and cleared/graded lots might they offer homebuyers to make our lives better** and maybe even help their lots and homes sell faster?

While constrained by local zoning rules and VDOT regulations to a significant degree, all developers can and some are presently building better communities for people to live in while still making money. A developer can make more money if he understands landowners want the benefits of woods, open spaces and a beautiful place to live but don't necessarily need or want to own five or more acres. Buyers will pay more per acre for their lot when it's where they want to live. Golf course developers found this out a generation ago. **Golf course lots sell for many times more per acre because they are on a golf course and yet nationally almost 40% of golf course property owners don't play golf.** Forested buffers and community accessible green spaces can provide for the same sort of benefit to the homeowners without the developer

having to invest millions into building a golf course or grading hard-to-build-on sites. And the homeowners benefit from the common green spaces for family enjoyment, without having to maintain and police the extra land – community residents, young and old, can walk or ride bikes safely within the neighborhood on cinder or paved trails without having to risk the road. Lots can and each should be designed to be a great place to build a house, within a more natural setting with trails and other amenities sited so the residents can all enjoy and share in the benefits of living in a beautiful community.

Developments can even be near important community resources like the Blue Ridge Parkway or Appalachian Trail without seriously degrading the experience for the millions who enjoy the Parkway or AT in Virginia. Choosing anything else is not sustainable; for the end result will be the loss of the quality of life and special resources we all enjoy and which make our communities special.

People don't want to live in a world where everything is the same and degraded by man's hand. But not all is lost and the local building and development community is becoming informed by peer groups such as the Roanoke Valley Home Builders Association which will host a series of presentations by respected speakers like the upcoming October 15th talk by Bill McDonough, Dean of the UVA School of Architecture.

New Jersey is called "the Garden State" because 75 years ago it was largely rural and covered by the productive farmland that fed New York City. **Do we want our grandchildren to live in a Virginia that looks like New Jersey does today or do we want to preserve the beautiful forested mountains and rural lands of Southwest Virginia?**

So ask your friendly neighborhood developer to offer us more sustainable communities to live in and suggest they call WVLT to find out more about how to make money by building the communities that we can all be proud of now and in the future.

Roger



Look for WVLT at the Following Events

The Mill Mountain Zoo Conservation Fall Festival will feature exhibits, speakers and activities at the zoo starting at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 6. Call (540) 343-3241 for details.

The 4th Annual Energy Expo at the Roanoke Civic Center will be held Friday, September 12 from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, September 13 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Exhibits will highlight hybrid cars, wind power, water conservation and other ways to save energy, money and natural resources. Admission is free.

The Roanoke Regional Housing Network will sponsor "The Next Industrial Revolution, a Conversation with William McDonough" on Wednesday, October 15 at 10:00 a.m. at the Shaftman Performance Hall in Roanoke. Call (540) 529-3893 for details.

The 2003 Virginia Environmental Assembly will meet October 24 through 26 at Roanoke's Center in the Square to explore the theme, "Preserving What is Best about Virginia – Urban and Rural." Call (540) 362-3538 for more information.

Stewardship

David A. Hurt, Project Manager



I Can Still Do That With a Conservation Easement?

Flexibility with Conservation

For many landowners, the only passion greater than loving their land is the resistance to having anybody tell them how to manage it. Though love of land and place is the most common motivation for conservation easements, the fear of outside control dissuades many landowners from even considering the option. Do conservation easements really give land trusts authority over land management decisions? Only to the extent that the landowner agrees to in the easement.

Conservation easements respect a middle ground – recognition that people have a place on the land, that every place worth saving doesn't require public ownership or access, and that methods of managing land for farming, timber, recreation and other uses change as time and technology progress. Conservation easements deal with the big picture and make sure that the land will be around for future generations, but the day-to-day land management is still up to the owner.

Conservation easements don't state what can or must take place on the land. They specify only what cannot take place. In other words, if an easement doesn't say that something is a no-no, then the easement can't restrict that activity.

A good conservation easement doesn't burden a landowner – it frees him or her from the worry of what will happen when they're gone without meddling in day-to-day affairs. Land trusts that hold easements will inspect the property every year or so to look at the "big picture" issues covered in the document such as subdivisions, billboards and development. If all is well, they go home and leave the land in the stewardship of its owner.

The Western Virginia Land Trust strives to preserve our natural and cultural heritage – and that includes the people's place on the land. A love of place and resistance to change often go hand-in hand. But without changing the way we look at land management and without more landowners willing to explore conservation easements, the land we love will continue to vanish – despite the heartbreak and resistance of those who love it most.



Read Mountain Alliance

607 Ray Street • Roanoke, VA 24019
540-977-4540

Second Read Mountain Hike-A-Thon Set For Sept. 21

The Read Mountain Alliance, a partner of the Western Virginia Land Trust, plans a second annual Hike-a-thon on Sunday afternoon, Sept. 21, at 2 p.m. Hikers—families, scouts, men, women and children—are urged to meet at Bonsack Elementary School, reached from Crumpacker Drive, off U.S. 220A (Cloverdale Road).

On a rainy Sunday afternoon last fall, more than 100 hikers raised more than \$15,000 in the Alliance's first hike. The 2003 event is expected to exceed that amount. Corporate underwriters are being solicited to underwrite expenses.

Proceeds will be used to continue the Alliance's work of purchasing or securing easements to preserve the upper slopes and ridgelines of the mountain extending from northern Roanoke County to southern Botetourt County. The goal of the Alliance is to preserve the mountaintop in its natural state and create a system of public trails.

Last year the Durham family donated a conservation easement to WVLT to preserve their 89-acre tract on the Roanoke-facing southwest end of the mountain. Other landowners have cooperated with the Alliance, are working with WVLT and have generously granted permission for the hike to take place on their property. But only 89 acres of the nearly 700-acre mountain are permanently preserved and some of the properties may be sold in the near future.

All funds raised during the hike will be held by WVLT and used by the Alliance to purchase land, easements or options to further the goal of saving this endangered Roanoke Valley landmark.

All hikers must have sponsors and those raising \$25 or more will receive a special Hike-a-thon t-shirt. Tax-deductible pre-registration checks, with sponsors' names, should be made payable to the Western Virginia Land Trust, for the Alliance. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. The hike is not recommended for children under 8.

The hike of about 3 miles is of moderate difficulty, with a steep ascent in the first half-mile. The walk will last approximately 2 hours. After registration, hikers will be transported by bus to the starting point. The hike will end with refreshments at the school.

To register for the hike, call Ron Crawford at 977-4540. Hikers should bring a list of pledges and names of sponsors.



2002 - 2003 Membership Gifts

The following WVLT members generously supported our land conservation efforts during fiscal year 2002-2003.

Sustainers

\$1,000 and up

Lucy and Frank Ellett
 Sybil Fishburn
 Mr. and Mrs. Peter C. Holnback, II
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 Barbara and Bill Lemon
 The Charles P. and Marion G. Lunsford
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 George and Louise Kegley
 Mary L. Kegley
 Robert P. Kegley
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 Forest G. Landon
 Sarah Ludwig
 Morgan Chase Foundation
 (matching gift for L. Butler)
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 Kris and Bob Peckman
 The B. Wilson Porterfield Foundation
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 Elbert Waldron Charitable Trust
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 Gordon and Jean Willis
 Jim Woltz
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\$25 - \$49

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 David Carr
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 Jane Cooper
 Mary Copenhaver
 Jack K. Cox, Sr.

Grants

The following grants provided invaluable support to WVLT during fiscal year 2002/2003:

*Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation:
 \$113,250 for purchase of riparian easements

Beirne Carter Foundation:
 \$25,000 for conservation easement outreach

Urban and Community Forestry Division, VA Dept. of Forestry:
 \$ 8,000 to support community greenway efforts

Ohrstrom Foundation: \$1,500 in unrestricted funds

Foundation for the Roanoke Valley: \$ 500 in unrestricted funds

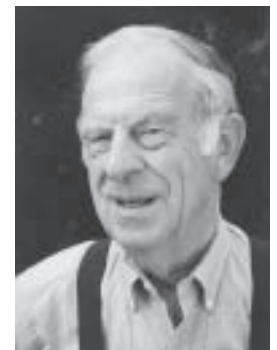
* multi-year grant

Gifts Honor Birthday

George Kegley's well-earned respect and goodwill have inspired generous gifts in his honor to the land trust.

George was a founding trustee of WVLT and is a tireless worker for conservation, historic preservation and many other causes

across the Roanoke Valley. In honor of his 75th birthday, the following friends and family contributed a total of **\$2,255** to WVLT.



Frank and Lucy Ellett
 Spencer Frantz
 Louise Kegley
 Mary Kegley
 Robert Kegley
 Forest Landon
 Sidney and Wanda Miller
 Beth Obenshain
 Jim Woltz

Landsaver:

Barbara Hatcher Saves All Of The Land She Can

Drive through hayfields, green pasture and rambling streams, turn onto the Sheep Creek Road to the first slopes of Sharptop Mountain and you will come upon Twin Oaks, one of the older farmhouses in Bedford County. If you are fortunate, you may sit on the porch for a pleasant conversation with Barbara Hatcher, Landsaver and an earnest missionary for the conservation easement program.

After she placed the Western Virginia Land Trust's first Bedford County easement on her 158-acre farm three years ago, Hatcher began spreading word about the lasting benefits of easements – she claims credit for three “and I’m working on more.” A friend who owns 375 acres is also interested but “can’t make up her mind because of her children.”

It isn’t easy, she said, because people don’t understand. What she tries to get across to her friends is that “I didn’t give my property away to anybody. This is not a gift. If you sell it, it’s there.”

Why did she decide to place an easement on her mountainside farm, held by her family for four generations? “I wanted it to stay the way it is. I did it to preserve the land. No one else in my family was interested.” Her lawyer “has worked out all of the details” of the estate she will leave. She became interested in saving the land when her brother asked what she planned to do with her farm. Then she heard a talk by Rupert Cutler, founding executive director of Western Virginia Land Trust. He came to visit and she was sold.

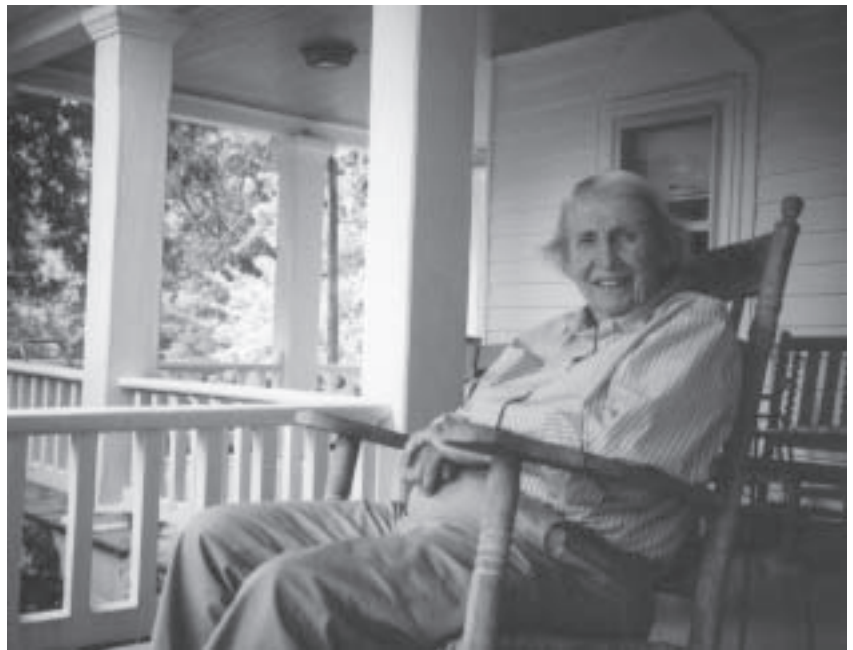
Why then does she try to persuade her

friends and acquaintances to look into easements as well? “We need to preserve all of this property. Too many people are moving in and chopping up the land in little tracts.” She does not want to see subdivisions on her mountainside.

Few people know the house is there and she would like to keep it that way. Friends from out of state say this is “the last

place.” Towering oaks and fat boxwood guard the front yard. Twin Oaks, nestled on a slope below the Peaks of Otter, is on the State Historic Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. Those nominations said the home was built in 1853 but Hatcher said her father believed it is much older. She said her great-grandfather donated land for New Prospect Church nearby in 1854.

The first Hatchers came from near Williamsburg, planning to grow tobacco but the soil did not produce so they turned to tomatoes. A tomato-canning factory once operated across the road from Twin Oaks. She has beef cattle and her family once owned sheep, giving a name to the creek rippling along below the house.



Barbara Hatcher – Landsaver.

Hatcher was born here, rode a school bus to Thaxton and Montvale, studied at Coker College in South Carolina and worked in Bristol for 46 years. She taught horseback riding at Sullins College for 27 years and operated a dog-boarding kennel for another 19 years. She made monthly trips back to Twin Oaks and came home to retire about six years ago. Living part-time in the county seat, she volunteers at the D-Day Memorial and drives for Bedford’s community health program. She enjoys visits from friends, who often occupy many of the 18 beds in the rambling frame home. A former Sullins student planned a mid-summer visit, along with her family.

What will scenic Twin Oaks be like in another 50 years? “I hope I have it locked up,” Hatcher said with a twinkle in her eye.

“I wanted it to stay the way it is.
I did it to preserve the land.”

New Trustees Appointed

Three conservationists – Gwen Mason and Broaddus Fitzpatrick of Roanoke and Dr. James Nuckolls of Galax – have been elected to the board of the Western Virginia Land Trust. They follow Lynn Davis, James M. Turner and George Kegley, all of Roanoke, who have rotated off the board after two three-year terms.

Mason, a Richmond native, said her parents instilled in her “a thirst for understanding the natural world and particularly the remarkable species of flora and fauna found here in Virginia. We need to do all that we can to honor our natural heritage.” She said she’s gratified to work with the Land Trust to that end.



Gwen Mason

She worked in Washington for 15 years, mainly for the Department of Interior where she served as assistant director for external affairs for the Bureau of Land Management and the Fish and Wildlife Service and on the staff of Secretary Bruce Babbitt. She received an award for meritorious service to the department in 2001. A graduate of Smith College, Mason holds a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Virginia. She and her husband, Bill Mason, came to Roanoke in his job move with N.B. Handy Co. They have two children.

As a Roanoke native “who has either hiked, kayaked or driven through most of western Virginia,” Fitzpatrick said he is “committed to our area and the quality of our land, air and water.” He said the work of the Land Trust “is vital if we are to preserve what makes Southwest Virginia unique.” A graduate of the University of Virginia and a law graduate of the University of Richmond, he is a lawyer with Coleman & Massey, ruling elder, chair of congregational care, adult Bible study leader and senior high adviser at Second Presbyterian Church and president of Craigs Creek Watershed Association.

Among Fitzpatrick’s many civic posts are chair elect and past president of Family Service in the Roanoke Valley, member of Ferrum College Estate Planning Council and secretary of Christian Mission Foundation. He has been chairman of the Southwest



Broaddus C. Fitzpatrick

Virginia board of the Leukemia Society, secretary of Habitat for Humanity in Roanoke Valley, advisory board chairman for nursing education of Community Hospital College of Health Sciences, and a past director of Roanoke Bar Association, Virginia Selective Service System, Virginia YMCA and Mill Mountain Zoo.

Nuckolls, a graduate of Davidson College and Duke University Medical School, was lieutenant commander of U.S. Public Health Service at the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, instructor at Emory

University School of Medicine and associate professor at Duke and he has been a clinical assistant professor of internal medicine at the

University of Virginia since 1995. He is on the staff of Twin County Regional Hospital in Galax, a director of Carilion Health System and medical director of Carilion Medical Group.



He is editor of the Quality Indicator publication. Nuckolls and his wife, Mary Lily, have three children.

Nuckolls lives in Galax and has a special interest in preserving the New River. He says, “I’m happy to be part of the land trust community and to be able to help provide ‘win-win’ solutions to help landowners while preserving Southwest Virginia’s scenic landscape.”

Conservation Tour *(continued from page 1)*

cattle out of streams, providing new watering systems and dividing pastures into smaller paddocks for rotational grazing, the Garmans have made farming much easier.

Frankie and Louise’s son, Steve Garman, stated that the new system has improved herd performance and simplified management so much that it’s made all the difference in his decision to continue the farming tradition. And the measures have noticeably improved the environment by stopping the erosion that had been widespread when livestock trampled the creek banks.

Other tour stops included the Henderson dairy farm in the Botetourt County section of Catawba Valley, the 950-acre state-owned farm around Catawba Hospital and the entrance to a Carvins Cove recharge tunnel that pipes Catawba Creek water 2.5 miles under Tinker Mountain to the City water reservoir.

The conservation options highlighted during the tour are among the many tools that the Task Force promotes in its mission to protect the Carvins Cove Watershed.

Show Your Support!

Show the world that you support land conservation in Southwest Virginia with a WVLT polo shirt or t-shirt.

T-shirts are a white 50/50 blend with a large WVLT logo on front. Available in large or extra-large - \$12 each.

Polo shirts are dark green 100% cotton with an embroidered WVLT logo. Available in medium, large and extra-large - \$25 each. All prices include shipping.

Supplies are limited, so send a check to get your shirt today.



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Conservation Celebration

WVLT's first annual Conservation Celebration was held atop Roanoke County's Chestnut Mountain at Valhalla Vineyards on June 1. Approximately 80 Land Trust members and friends gathered to socialize, sample wines and food and enjoy live music and spectacular views of the Roanoke Valley.

WESTERN VIRGINIA LAND TRUST MISSION STATEMENT

A publicly-supported charitable organization providing voluntary means to promote the preservation of western Virginia's natural & cultural heritage



722 First Street, SW, Suite L
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