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Make Memories

Pocahontas County Bucket List, Page 7

As American as Apple Pie

Clyde Jenkins ~ The Apple Man, Page 14

Barn Quilt Trail

Thread Your Way, Page 21

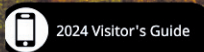
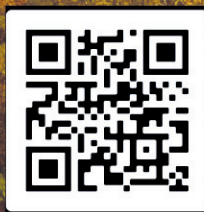
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**GREEN BANK
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Fall into entertainment at the Opera House

**Kindred Valley
September 28**

With great excitement and a touch of nostalgia, the Pocahontas County Opera House announces the grand opening of its 25th season. To celebrate this milestone, Kindred Valley, an immensely talented indie folk band, will deliver a heartwarming performance. Join us Saturday September 28, at 7 p.m. for an evening that promises to be both memorable and magical.



Kindred Valley

Twenty-five years ago, the Pocahontas County Opera House began its journey, enriching the community with diverse cultural experiences and memorable performances. This special season is a testament to our commitment to bring world-class entertainment to the heart of Pocahontas County. We invite you to be a part of this historic season's kickoff, savoring the echoes of the past and the promise of a vibrant future.

Kindred Valley began its journey in 2020 when three friends with a shared passion for music

met at Marshall University. Originally known as Back Row Baptists, Blake Lacy, Noah Freeman and Brett McCoy started writing and recording music in Huntington. The band's line-up expanded in 2021 with the addition of husband-and-wife duo Rachael and Jadon Hayes and Kaden Salmons. This new ensemble catalyzed a creative surge, resulting in the band's evolution and rebranding to Kindred Valley.

Guests are encouraged to arrive early for the group's performance as

the venue operates on a first-come, first-served seating policy.

**ALASH
Saturday, October 12**

The Pocahontas County Opera House is delighted to announce the eagerly anticipated return of ALASH, masters of Tuvan throat singing, as part of

the ongoing 25th-season celebration. The ensemble, a perennial favorite among Opera House audiences, promises a performance not to be missed.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 12, at 7 p.m. when ALASH will take the stage. Known for

See *OPERA*, page 5



ALASH

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Cover: This big red barn near Arbovale was formerly owned by author Stephen Coonts. It is the location of one of 19 barn quilt squares in the "Patterns of the Past" quilt square trail in Pocahontas County. S. Stewart photo

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their extraordinary mastery of Tuvan throat singing (xöömei), ALASH blends traditional Tuvan music with contemporary influences, crafting an ancient and modern sound. Their music is distinguished by intricate harmonies and the fusion of Western instruments while faithfully preserving the deep-rooted traditions of throat singing. Praised by *The Washington Post* as “utterly stunning,” ALASH has garnered international acclaim.



The Onlies

compelling performance by The Onlies Friday, October 25, at 7 p.m.

The Onlies, a group of talented young musicians from Seattle, Washington, and Lexington, Virginia, bring a dynamic fusion of fiddles, guitars and banjos to the stage. The band, consisting of Sami Braman, Riley Calcagno, Vivian Leva, and Leo Shannon, has earned widespread acclaim for its lively interpretations of

traditional American old-time music. Audience members will recall that Riley Calcagno and Vivian Leva graced the Opera House stage a few years ago, and we are thrilled to welcome them back with their ensemble. Their latest self-titled album reflects their dedication to both preserving and innovating the genre with vibrant drive, intricate arrangements, and resonant melodies.

Join us in celebrating the vibrant heritage and promising future of old-time music at the Pocahontas County Opera House.

**Piedmont Bluz
Saturday, November 9**

The Pocahontas County Opera House is delighted to welcome a special performance by the esteemed Piedmont Bluz Acoustic Duo. Valerie and Benedict



Benedict Turner of Piedmont Bluz



Craig Karges

Turner, renowned ambassadors of Country Blues music and roots percussion, will grace the stage Saturday, November 9, at 7 p.m., offering an enriching experience that transcends music.

The Piedmont Bluz Acoustic Duo, celebrated for their captivating blend of Piedmont-style finger-picking and roots percussion, weaves an educational narrative into their performance. A concert with Piedmont Bluz is a journey back to the 1920s

and 1930s, the heydays of acoustic Country Blues music, as Valerie and Benedict share fascinating stories and historical anecdotes about early blues artists who shaped the genre.

**Craig Karges
Saturday, November 23**

Next up on stage at the Opera House will be a performance by the renowned “extraordinist”

See *OPERA*, page 6

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Craig Karges on Saturday, November 23, at 7 p.m.

Craig Karges combines the art of magic with the science of psychology to create an experience that defies logic and leaves audiences spellbound. With more than 5,000 appearances spanning 27 countries and all 50 states, Karges's "Experience the Extraordinary" show features mind-bending feats where tables float, minds are read, and metal bends. His talents have earned him more than 40 national television spots, including appearances on *The Tonight Show*, *CNN*, and *Fox News Channel*. *Performance Magazine* has hailed his act as "the next era in mystery entertainment," and the National Association for Campus Activities has repeatedly honored him as Entertainer of the Year.

Black Mountain Bluegrass Boys December 14

The Black Mountain Bluegrass Boys, West Virginia's longest-running bluegrass band, will return to the Opera House Saturday, December 14, at 7 p.m. Led by Mill Point local Richard Hefner for more than half a century, the band is renowned for its traditional bluegrass sound, tight vocal harmonies and deep roots in the local music scene.

Joining Hefner is Mill



Black Mountain Bluegrass Boys

Point neighbor Joanna Burt-Kinderman on bass, bringing her local influence and musical expertise. Also performing is Dave Bing, renowned for his skillful fiddle playing and significant contributions to West Virginia's musical heritage. Rounding out the ensemble is Danny Arthur on guitar, adding his personal touch to the group's rich and dynamic sound.

Fans eager to learn more about the band can explore the *Opera House Story Sessions*, which include engaging videos and podcasts that delve into Hefner's early days and showcase some of his favorite songs. Hefner's *Story Session* also includes tales of playing music with the father of bluegrass, Bill Monroe. Additionally, a separate *Story Session* focused on Bing offers insights into his pivotal role

in the state's music scene, including his time with local musical legends, the Hammons Family.

Tickets, \$10, for these performances are available in advance at pocahontasoperahouse.org and at the 4th Avenue Gallery in Marlinton; or may be purchased at the

door the evening of the event.

The Opera House is committed to providing an accessible and welcoming environment for all attendees. We offer special accommodations upon request to ensure an enjoyable experience for everyone. Seating is available

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on a first-come, first-served basis, so we encourage patrons to purchase tickets in advance to secure the best available seats.

These events are made possible by the generous support of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, the West Virginia Commission on the

Arts, Pocahontas County Dramas, Fairs, and Festivals, Mid-Atlantic Arts, and the Pocahontas County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The Opera House extends gratitude to the broader community for its unwavering support, which enables such enriching cultural events.



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Make memories with this Pocahontas County Bucket List

Suzanne Stewart
Staff Writer

Growing up in Pocahontas County is kind of like growing up in Disney World. There are so many fun and unique things to do and special places to visit that some locals may not know all these places exist.

Inspired by the West Virginia Tourism Bucket List sweepstakes – and my fond memories – I decided to make a bucket list of places I think everyone should visit at least once while in Pocahontas County.

Beartown State Park

Beartown is by far my favorite place. It's like stepping into another

world. If you're a Star Wars fan, it might remind you of the planet Endor. Or, if you're more of a Tolkien fan, you might think a hobbit or two will pop around a corner.

For me, it's a peaceful place that looks like it could be from any era in time. The large moss-covered boulders could be hiding a clutch of dinosaur eggs. The small crevices in the rocks could be fairy homes.

The entire place ignites the fantasy part of your brain and all you want to do is explore its secrets. And there's a lot to explore. The half-mile boardwalk winds through the 110-acre natural area.

Instead of cutting trees out of the way of the boardwalk, the boardwalk is cut to let trees and some of the large boulders stay in their natural place.

The park does not allow climbing on the rocks which makes one of most vivid memories a bit scandalous.

I remember going to Beartown with my parents, brother and aunt and uncle. As we were walking down the boardwalk, we noticed a soda

can was tucked into one of the rock crevices.

My uncle broke the rules for a good reason and climbed up the rocks to retrieve the can for disposal. I was a bit awestruck at how swiftly he traversed the rocks and was back by our sides in an instant.

Droop Mountain Battlefield State Park Tower

History buffs will love visiting Droop Mountain Battlefield. It holds a lot of important history for the state of West Virginia. It was the site of a Civil War battle and is the first state park, formed in 1928.

The sprawling park, which has a museum filled with Civil War artifacts, a Confederate cemetery, cannons, playground and lookout tower was transformed during the Great Depression by members of the Civilian Conservation Corps – CCCs.

The CCC boys built the structures at the park, including the lookout tower, which gives a fantastic 180 degree view of the town of Hillsboro.

Unlike Beartown, the tower is definitely some-



Photo by Suzanne Stewart

Beartown State Park is my absolute favorite place in Pocahontas County. Taking the boardwalk down and around the large ancient boulders lets my imagination run wild with thoughts of what it was like there thousands of years ago.

thing you want to climb. Through the decades, names, initials, hearts and other symbols have been carved into the spiral staircase railings, which,

in an odd way, adds to the allure of the old tower.

It's a place for special moments and incredible panoramic photos.

Last year, a West Virginia selfie swing was added to the park and is near the tower.

Cranberry Glades Botanical Area

Let's get the first two questions out of the way... No, there are no cranberries growing at Cranberry Glades Botanical Area and no, it should not be in West Virginia.

The first fact disappointed a younger me when we took a school field trip to the glades. I thought for sure there would be cranberry bogs. Nope.

See **BUCKET**, page 8

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The second fact still fascinates me.

This incredible bog should not be this far south. A bog is an acidic wetland that is more commonly found in the northern areas of the United States and in Canada.

I remember learning that the bog was created by a melting glacier thousands of years ago. Research shows that the 750 acre area has been here for 12,200 years.

Instead of finding cranberries there, you will find a boardwalk that is like a magic carpet through the lush peat-laden area that is host to plants such as like carnivorous and insect-eating plants that are not commonly found in West Virginia.

The glades are also known for the variety of orchids that grow there.

It's another one of those out-of-this-world locations that could be from a fantasy world and it's right here in Pocahontas County.

The Falls at Hills Creek

Okay, so this one is a bit of a different memory for me. I've been there once in my life and that was as an adult. I was working at *The Inter-Mountain*, and I brought a co-worker/friend over who wanted to do a few articles on the attractions in the area.

I can't remember all the places we went that day, but I'll never forget going to the falls.

There's a series of three falls and, at that time, there was a boardwalk and metal steps that led part of the way down, while the rest was gravel, dirt and river rock. The waterfalls cascade from 20 feet, 45 feet and 65 feet, making the last of the falls one of the highest in West Virginia.

The walk down to the



Photo by Suzanne Stewart

It's a long trek down to the Falls at Hills Creek but it is worth it once you see the incredibly beautiful 65 foot falls. I've only been there once, but I definitely plan to go again some day.

falls wasn't bad at all. It was stunning. Again, you are surrounded by a lush forest and the sounds of cascading water. I couldn't stop taking pictures it was so beautiful.

I remember leaning pretty far over the railing to get a few different angles and I thought for sure that would be when my clumsiness would work against me. But no. That didn't happen until we made the trek back to the car.

I slipped on some river rock and sprained my ankle. It took us some time, but we got out of there in one piece and I learned a very valuable lesson that day. Never wear flip flops on a hike to see waterfalls.

Pearl S. Buck Birthplace

This is another location that I didn't really experience until I was an adult. I do remember going on a field trip to the birthplace when I was younger, but the only thing that stands out to me is the story about how young Chinese women would bind their toes in order to make their feet look smaller.

As a young girl with big feet, I was horrified.

Then as an adult, after I moved back home, I became a member of the Pearl S. Buck Birthplace Foundation board and that is when I really discovered my love for the place.

To some people, the birthplace is only relevant to fans of Pearl S. Buck's

writing, but it is so much more than that to me. It's a living history of the perseverance of immigrants who moved to West Virginia to make a new life for themselves.

The Birthplace was built by the Stulting family. The bricks were made on site. The timber was harvested nearby. Every inch of the house is a testament to the craftsmanship and ability of the Stulting family.

Then, there's the fact that Pearl was born there. True, she spent most of her life in China with her

parents as a child and went back often as she could when she was an adult, but she had Pocahontas County roots.

She became a world renowned author of more than 100 books, hundreds of short stories and magazine articles during her career. She was the first American woman to win both the Pulitzer Prize – in 1932 for *The Good Earth*; and the Nobel Prize for Literature, in 1938.

In 1974, the Birthplace

became a museum and has served as a place to honor Pearl's life and work, as well as the lives of her family, for the past 50 years.

The Sydenstricker family cabin – her father's home – was moved onto the site and it is used for special programs and events.

Pearl herself always carried an affinity for the birthplace, which she called "My Mother's House." She wanted to see

See *BUCKET*, page 9

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the house restored and preserved as a museum. It was her goal to have the home belong to everyone and now, it does.

Seneca State Forest

One of two state forests in Pocahontas County, Seneca State Forest is the oldest and largest state forest in West Virginia.

The forest has been an almost daily sight in my life since I was 13 years old. I rode with my parents – both teachers – to Pocahontas County High

School every day and passed through the tunnel of trees of the forest to get there.

Now, I drive through it every day to go to work. That's just a small portion of Seneca though. Beyond all those trees are cabins, a lake and fire tower on one side of the road and on the other is a picnic area and playground.

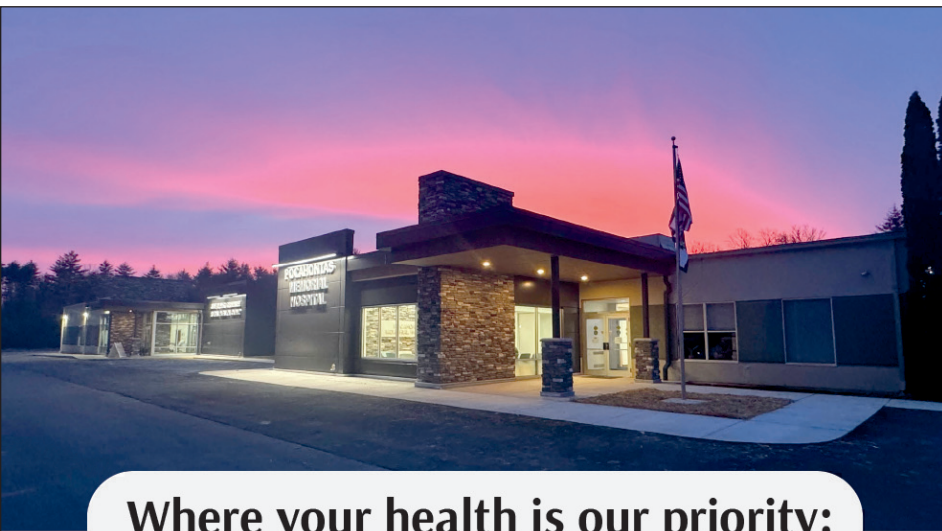
When I was in Earth Science in high school, the teacher just so happened to be my favorite. It was the best class ever. There were maybe six or seven of

us in the class and, back then, we could easily jump into her car and go exploring for the day's lesson.

One day in particular, there were only two of us in class and we rode over to the lake at Seneca State Forest to see what critters we could find. We hopped in a canoe and immediately found a spider.

I'm still surprised I didn't fall in the water after the way I reacted.

Although I didn't conquer a fear that day, I did conquer one year's later



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Photo by Suzanne Stewart

The Pearl S. Buck Birthplace in Hillsboro is a great place to not only learn about the world famous author and her books, but also about the way life was back in the 1800s in Pocahontas County.

when I made myself climb the Thorny Mountain Fire Tower. I was doing an article about how the tower was available to rent for weekend getaways, and I

had to get pictures. It took some time and I paused for a few deep breaths as I climbed the tower, but I made it and the view is spectacular. It's

much higher than the Droop Tower and I don't think anyone could ever convince me to spend the night up there, but I'm glad I got to experience the view.

Cass Scenic Railroad State Park

You can't visit Pocahontas County and not at least check out the town of Cass and the trains. But once you do, you're going to want to go for a train ride up the mountain or to Durbin.

This is another location for the history buffs. The town of Cass was founded in 1901 by the West Virginia Pulp & Paper Company to serve as a company town for employees.

The company was in the business of harvesting trees and, at the time, business was good. The men who worked in the woods were woodhicks and they risked their lives every day to harvest the hardwoods in the mountains.

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See **BUCKET**, page 10

Unlike most of the timber towns in Pocahontas County, Cass didn't become a ghost town after all the timber was cut.

A lot of families stuck around and called the place home. In 1963, the railroad became a state park and in 1977, the town was added as part of the park.

Now the former company homes are available for visitors to rent, the company store is still a store and has a restaurant inside as well.

While the trains are awesome and I have ridden them countless times – to Bald Knob, to Whitaker and even to Durbin – that's not my most memorable part of the park.

It's the museum. When I was younger, you always knew when the museum was open because a large stuffed black bear was propping open the door, welcoming visitors inside.

As if being greeted by a bear wasn't enough to make a kid nervous, then you looked up as you entered and saw a large, very large saw that was hanging from the ceiling. The large teeth gleaming in the light, as if they were ready to take a bite out of you.

The saw's flexibility was on display as well because it was in a U-shape above your head.

Lots more artifacts from the town's history are on display in the museum, including tools used by the woodhicks and items that were commonly owned by the families that lived there. It's a great look into the past of one of the largest industries that helped shape West Virginia.

Green Bank Observatory

Of course I have to in-



Photo by Suzanne Stewart

This view at the Pocahontas/Randolph County line on Cheat Mountain was always a welcome sight to me when I was driving home from college or Elkins when I lived there. This spot was the sign that I was home.

clude the observatory, it's in my backyard. Well, technically, it would be more like my front yard.

Growing up in Green Bank, the observatory was always just right there. Back then, there weren't as many community oriented activities there, but we still weren't strangers to the place.

In elementary and middle school, we walked the trails of the observatory, in the shadow of the telescope, and learned about the astronomy done there. We didn't know what the National Radio Quiet Zone was and it didn't matter.

I remember when the 300-foot telescope col-

lapsed. It was big news and everyone wanted to see it. My aunt and uncle from my Beartown story came in and we all walked down to see the telescope laying on top of its observation building.

It was wild to think that it was there one minute and the next, it collapsed in on itself.

In addition to using the trails, we also loved going to the recreation area at the observatory, especially in the summer.

I leaned two things at the swimming pool as a youngster. One, I was in fact, a mermaid; and two, I can do a handstand as long as I'm in water.

Those summers were

the best. My friends and I would swim for hours and then afterward, go check out putters and balls and play on the putt putt course over by the picnic pavilions and playground.

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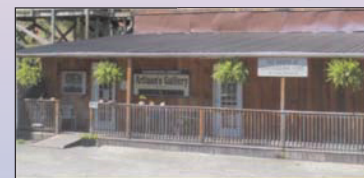
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I look offers a beautiful spot from which to see the rolling mountains, especially in the fall when all the leaves have changed to a kaleidoscope of colors.

The top of Cheat Mountain

So this one is a little different than all the others. It's not an attraction or state park. It's simply a little stretch of road at the top of the mountain.

It's where Pocahontas and Randolph counties meet. There's an overlook on one side and old building on the other. My mom remembers there being a restaurant in that building at one time, but I don't. I have driven and been driven on this part of the road thousands of times in my life. In fact, this is the road my parents took when they went to Elkins for my birth. It's also the road we took to come home.

This portion of the road is very special to me and not just because the over-

It's important to me because, when I was driving home from Morgantown when I was at West Virginia University and when I was driving home from Elkins when I lived there, this was the spot where I knew I was home.

It was the moment I entered Pocahontas County. The tension in my shoulders would disappear, and I could breathe a sigh of relief.

To most people, it's a section of road where they can stop for a quick break or take a selfie with the mountains in the background, but to me, it will always be the entrance to my county.

My place.
My home.

A Golden Anniversary of a Sterling idea

Ken Springer
Contributing Writer

Walking is conducive to thinking, and thinking often leads to great ideas. Likewise, walking, particularly in the forest, may engender an absence of thought, transporting us to a state of just being. Such a state can heighten awareness and serenity. But walking a long path may change one's life altogether.

West Virginia is known for its many splendid trails and trail systems. Here in Pocahontas County, there is no shortage of trails; we enjoy the many trails at Watoga, the surrounding state and na-

tional forests, and the Greenbrier River Trail. We are also blessed to have the longest trail in West Virginia, the Allegheny Trail, passing through our region. This footpath, with its awe-inspiring views and tranquil landscapes, is approximately 330 miles long, and offers a journey of unparalleled beauty. Some of our residents have hiked portions of the trail here in Pocahontas County, or perhaps as a "thru" hiker. Most of us are at least aware of the Allegheny Trail. But did you know the surprising story of how the trail was conceived?

The Allegheny Trail wasn't just a project conceived by a few bureaucrats sitting

around a conference table; it was a genuine grassroots effort, a testament to the community spirit that makes our region so special.

A bit later in the story, we will discuss in some detail the big extravaganza celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Allegheny Trail, but first, we'll examine its interesting history.

A discussion of the Allegheny Trail, and many West Virginia trails, for that matter, would be complete only by mentioning Doug Wood. Doug was an early member of today's West Virginia Scenic Trails Association.

Doug and many other volunteers provided the labor

and vision for a trail that would traverse our beautiful mountains and valleys from the Virginia border in the south to that of Pennsylvania in the north. As such, he remembers the early days of the trail in his essay, "A Path in the Woods."

Here's how Doug recalls the flash of inspiration for the Allegheny Trail and the nascent years of the West Virginia Scenic Trails Association (WVSTA) and its forerunner, the West Virginia Scenic Trails Conference.

"In 1958, members of Explorer Scout Post 4, sponsored by Kanawha Presbyterian Church in Charleston, West Virginia, were backpacking on the Appalachian Trail in the Great Smoky Mountains. The Post Advisor, Doug McGrew, was an inspiring leader of young men. One Explorer Scout, in particular, remembers the positive influence McGrew had on his charges.

"Nicolas B. Lozano, who was 15 years old at the time and now a retired insurance executive, refers to his former Post Advisor as the "Grandfather of the Allegheny Trail." According to Lozano, McGrew's leadership inspired his Scouts and



Brian Hirt, on the right, former president of WVSTA, has been diligently involved with the Allegheny Trail and the Hanging Rock Raptor Observatory for more than 30 years. Rodney Davis, left, has been voluntarily tracking raptor migration for more than 30 years and eagerly shares his considerable knowledge with hikers and birders.

led them into life-changing outdoor experiences, such as that backpacking trip in 1958."

Nick remembers thinking upon his return home to West Virginia after that trip, "Why should we West Virginia scouts have to travel to other states to experience the adventure of long-distance backpacking? We have the Allegheny Mountains with all of their natural splendor

and wildness to rival the Great Smoky Mountains. Why can't we have a trail like the Appalachian Trail running through the mountains of the Mountain State? Doug McGrew is the Grandfather of the Allegheny Trail because Nick Lozano is one of its founding fathers."

And, as they say, the rest is history.

See **GOLDEN**, page 12

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Now, decades after Lozano's brainchild and tens of thousands of hours of volunteer work, the WVSTA announces a momentous event to honor the 50th anniversary of the Allegheny Trail. This is a celebration you will want to attend.

The trail has four sections, offering some of the Appalachian Mountains' most breathtaking wild and rural scenery. If you hike the southern region of the trail, you will encounter the famous Hanging Rock Raptor Observatory atop Peters Mountain.

A trail is a good thing, but one with amenities, maps, and infrastructure is a great trail. The Allegheny Trail (ALT) currently offers its hikers the following, all built with volunteer labor: 29 trailheads signed and adequately developed, 21 unsigned and inadequately developed, six footbridges spanning 20 feet or more over streams, 12 shorter bridges, 10 backpacker overnight shelters, and 125 miles of the trail on public roads.

The West Virginia Scenic Trails Association (WVSTA) serves as a steward of the ALT and is a non-profit organization comprised entirely of volunteers. The increasing trend in volunteer hours, from 1,749 hours in 2020 - 2021 to 2,115 hours in 2021 - 2022 and a projected 4,000 hours in 2022 - 2023, is a testament to the growing support for the Allegheny Trail and the dedica-



The ever-popular Doug Wood is widely known for his storytelling and historical reenactments. Doug became a member of WVSTA in 1976 and is currently the organization's Publications Chairman.

tion of its volunteers.

I recently talked with Nicolle Flood-Sawczynszyn, WVSTA's knowledgeable and enthusiastic outreach coordinator, about **the prodigious anniversary event scheduled for Friday through Sunday, September 6, 7 and 8, on the grounds of the Green Bank Observatory.**

I asked Nicolle what attendees could expect at the celebration. She explained that the three-day schedule is packed with outdoor workshops, art, drama, live music, food and presentations related to the Allegheny Trail.

There is free on-site camping. However, it is tent-only, with no hammocks or RVs. Your cell phone will be dead weight in the quiet zone surrounding the Green Bank Observatory. I assure you that not having cell service will cause no harm for a sin-

gle weekend; you may even enjoy the break.

Whoever developed the schedule of activities for the ALT's celebration spared no effort in attracting all first-rate presenters. It may be hard to choose, considering the topics are all interesting and helpful. I counted no less than 18 workshops, tours, walks and other trail-related activities, including:

- Watercolor Painting Class – Heidi Nisbett
- First Aid and Best Practices for Hiking with Dogs – Nancy East
- Art inspired by a Thruwalk of the Allegheny Trail – Heidi Nisbett
- Trail-building Tools and Techniques – Jeff Byard
- Gear Shakedown – choosing quality gear and lightening your pack load – Justin Mullins
- Hanging Rock Raptor Migration – Brian Hirt and

Rodney Davis

- Allegheny Trail History – Doug Wood
- Eating Well in the Woods – Dianne Anestis
- Fort Warwick and Colonial Hiking – Bob Sheets
- Nature as a Revitalizer – Becca Lusk Childress
- Laurel Fork Falconer – Collin Waybright
- Tagging Butterflies - Pollinators – Amy Settle
- Fun Run presented by WV Mountain Trail Runners – Adam Casseday
- Mountain Biking – Charles Evans
- Skiing on the ALT – Chip Chase
- Mushroom Walk – Drew Palmer and Carla Beaudet
- Tick Education – Jane Birdsong
- Forest Therapy Walk – Jessica Bryzek

In addition to the above events, you can take a 45-minute tour of the Green Bank Observatory for a modest \$10.

Each day of the celebration, from 9 a.m. to noon, you can participate in the gear swap to help fund the WVSTA. Just bring any functional, clean, and good-condition hiking or back-

packing gear.

Proceeds will go directly to the WVSTA for ALT improvements, various trail events, trail equipment purchases, volunteer safety equipment and meals. Borrowing from NPR's "donate your old car" campaign, that fine old benching tool in the shed can help WVSTA maintain the Allegheny Trail.

Finally, back to Nicolle Flood-Sawczynszyn, whom I talked to at length about the celebration and the goals of the WVSTA's.

Nicolle's position as Outreach Coordinator is perfectly matched to her infectious enthusiasm and knowledge about the ALT, its storied past, and its bright future. I asked Nicolle about

activities planned for the immediate future of the Allegheny Trail.

She said that WVSTA will, of course, continue maintaining the trail. In addition, plans are underway to enhance the trail's infrastructure, move more of it from road surfaces, and improve the economies of local communities along or near the trail.

After our conversation, I am confident these goals will be met, and you can help maintain and improve West Virginia's longest trail by becoming a volunteer.

For more information about the celebration, visit: www.ticketsignup.io/TicketEvent/AlleghenyTrail50thCelebration




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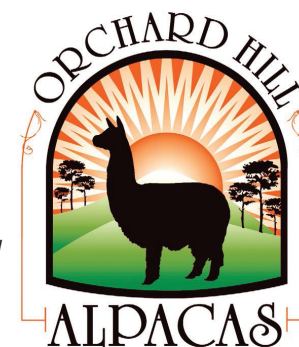
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As American as Apple Pie

Clyde Jenkins ~ the Apple Man

Laura Dean Bennett
Staff Writer

Clyde Jenkins has spent a lifetime seeking out American cultivars thought to be extinct, researching the origin of our American apples, grafting, growing and cultivating not only his orchard, but a renewed interest by the younger generation for our heritage apples.

Talking to Jenkins is like taking master course in Pomology 101.

At 70 years of age, one might think he would speak slowly, but honestly, I had a hard time keeping up.

We began with his family's legacy – the Page County homestead, established by his grandfather in the 1890s.

Jenkins and his wife live in the original log cabin built by his grandfather, and he is rightfully proud of his heritage.

"I live on the old mountain homestead that was built by my grandfather," Jenkins said.

"This farm was built on a rocky hillside. It took a lot of hard work. He reclaimed the land, built orchards and left a legacy for my family.

"He set apple orchards and many other fruit trees – cherry, pear, peach and plum – as was the custom back then.

"Apples were a mainstay of life in the old

days. They were a valuable source of food for people and for their animals.

"It was a great thing that the apples could be kept through the winter and that they also could be made into cider," he added.

His grandfather bequeathed the homestead, its orchards and his knowledge of fruit cultivation to his son, who, in turn, passed it on to his son.

"My grandfather died before I was born," Jenkins explained. "But my father had learned a lot from him, and he taught me all he knew about how to graft the apple trees and care for them.

But the apple trees my grandfather planted were old and they were dying. I didn't get to them in time to save those old heritage varieties," he said sadly.

"There's only one of them left now.

"I got more and more interested in apples and found out about places where I could get proper rootstock for grafting apples and grafted ever since. I've been grafting about 4,000 to 5,000 apple trees a year.

"There are now about 350 varieties of apple trees growing on my farm," Jenkins states proudly.

"There are some very rare varieties like Bellflower, Green Baldwin, Summer Arose and Paradise Sweetening.

Jenkins enjoys educating all who care to learn about the history of the apple – its many distinct varieties – their flavors and their uses.

By the 19th Century, there were thousands of apple varieties in America – what we call heritage apples.

As family farms began giving way to development, and the market for fruit and vegetables began being dominated by large corporations, the number of heritage apples dwindled.

Supermarkets were more interested in uniform size and shape than unique flavors, and the market for apples changed. By the middle of the 20th century there were only a few dozen commercial varieties of apples readily available to consumers.

The old regional varieties have become difficult to find. Most have disappeared altogether.

Besides being an expert orchardist, Jenkins is a dedicated student of apple history and a detective unraveling the secrets of our disappeared heritage apples.

He's spent his life learning and teaching others about the apples that will grow well in our region.

"Correct pollination is done by bees which carry pollen from each stamen in the blossom. In correct pollination the bees just don't get all the stamens pollinated.

"Interestingly, apple blossoms are one of the least favorite blossoms for bees," he told me.

"Think about it, you just don't see apple blossom honey.

"They prefer wild flowers," Jenkins added.

To keep their orchards fully pollinated and producing well, apple growers need to keep their orchards mowed when their trees are in bloom.

"Apple growers need good conditions for nearby bee hives or wild bees and they need to encourage the bees to concentrate on the apples, not wildflowers or other flowering trees, otherwise you risk not having a good crop," he insisted.

"I used to have bee hives, but now I have feral bees doing the pollination and they do a good job."

What is the best way to fertilizer for apple trees? Jenkins says it's very simple – "Ashes."

Those who burn wood are producing the best apple tree fertilizer there is. And actually ash is good for all trees.

You can buy fertilizer for your trees, but why spend money on fancy fertilizers when you can use what you already have?

If you have a wood stove, a fireplace, a grill or a smoker that uses wood, shovel up the ashes and place them around the base of your apple tree.

"Not only are ashes the



Photos by Laura Dean Bennett

Clyde Jenkins, left, lives on his family's Page County homestead where he took the "seed" of apple knowledge from his father and grandfather and grew it to unlimited proportions. In addition to pomology, Jenkins knows a thing or two about white oak basketry. He makes hundreds of them a year, and some of them sell for hundreds of dollars each.

tures practiced grafting. Besides being the only way to reproduce an original cultivar, grafting is also used to repair injured fruit trees or for combining an established tree with different cultivars.

As a serious reader and collector of scholarly tomes about pomology, Jenkins has advice for those who want to do more in depth study on the cultivation of apples. He recommends reading the first book written

in 1817 about American apples, *A View of Cultivation of Fruit Trees, and the Management of Orchards and Cider* by William Coxe.

He also recommends reading *Old Southern Apples, A Comprehensive History of Varieties for Collectors, Growers and Fruit Enthusiasts*, published in 1995 by Creighton Leigh Calhoun.

In addition to being an apple expert, Jenkins is also a renowned white

oak basket maker. It's an old traditional skill which will die out if more folks don't take it up.

It takes many years to understand the intricacies of getting the delicate strips of wood from white oak trees for basket making.

Jenkins makes hundreds of baskets a year, and some sell for hundreds to thousands of dollars.

See MAN, page 16



Huntersville Traditions Days

October 4 - 5

Spend a weekend back in time and enjoy demonstrations of traditional cultural skills of bygone days!



October 4:
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Huntersville Museum
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Quilt Show
Old-fashioned Bean Pot Meal
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MAN from pg 15

His baskets are on display in Washington, D.C. at the Renwick Art Gallery near the White House.

And, as if that's not enough to keep a man busy, he's also an experienced historic preservationist. He has a trained team of young apprentices who assist him in rebuilding log cabins and antebellum homes, repairing ancient stone chimneys and walls and restoring furniture.

Jenkins and his apple trees and baskets regularly make appearances at historic festivals throughout the two Virginia and surrounding states.

"I go to festivals all year, every year – I don't know how many," he said. "These festivals bring in so many people who want to learn about the old ways. They want to learn how to identify apples and



Photo by Laura Dean Bennett

Apple picking is one of the great activities of the fall season. Grab your best basket and fill it to the brim. It makes a nice addition to your kitchen as you work to turn them into pies, sauce or any number of delicious treats.

how to propagate them."

He is a renowned Virginia Folk Life Master Artist – and a participant in the Virginia Folk Life Festival for more than 20 years.

Jenkins has made appearances at the National Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C. and in recent years he's been coming to Pocahontas County, as a favorite demonstrator at

Huntersville Traditions Days.

"We are so proud to have Mr. Jenkins coming to Huntersville Traditions Days," said Tim Wade, president of Huntersville

Historical Traditions. "He really is a valuable addition to our group of demonstrators who show our guests how things were done here on the frontier in the 18th and 19th centuries."

Sometimes attired in authentic 18th century clothing and usually with the beginning of a white oak basket in his lap, Jenkins patiently answers questions about apples – from their myriad varieties and their origins to their cultivation.

Jenkins identifies apples for people by cutting in half the apples they bring to him and taking a quick look at the unique seed pattern within. And he hasn't been stumped yet.

Somehow Jenkins also finds the time to teach a weekly basket making class every summer, from June through the end of October, at the Big Mead-

ows Lodge on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

"I'm 70 years old and can't do everything I used to do, but I still get out and go every day. I'm always working on something," Jenkins said.

"I'd like to think my grandfather would be proud of me and what I've tried to do, keeping the old ways and teaching others how to do it, too."

"I give God glory every day that I keep going out and working on these things."

Clyde Jenkins and many of his heirloom apple saplings and baskets will be in Huntersville at the Historical Traditions Days festival October 5.

Jenkins invites anyone wishing to have their apples identified or who want to learn about apple cultivation to speak to him there.

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Apples in West Virginia

Laura Dean Bennett
Staff Writer

Appalachia has long been known as ideal apple country.

Many call the Golden Delicious the queen of Appalachian apples. It certainly will always hold a vaulted place in West Virginia history.

First discovered in Clay County in 1912, the Golden Delicious was eventually marketed by Stark Brother's Nursery and quickly earned nationwide, and ultimately, worldwide fame.

It was designated as the state fruit in 1995. And is not just a favorite in West Virginia, but it still considered one of America's favorite apples.

But there are many other apples which do very well here in West Virginia.

Just be sure to look for those that are hardy and

able to withstand our unpredictable weather.

Because of our humid summers, it's also important to choose disease-resistant varieties whenever possible. Apple scab is a common problem in West Virginia. Plant resistant varieties like Honeycrisp will give this fungus a run for its money.

Here are a few that regional apple experts agree do well in the Mountain State.

Honeycrisp: This variety is known for its crisp texture and sweet-tart flavor. It's also highly disease-resistant, making it a good choice for West Virginia's humid climate.

Jonagold: A cross between the Jonathan and the Golden Delicious, this variety has a sweet-tart flavor and firm texture making it ideal for baking.

Gala: With its thin skin and sweet flavor, Galas are

perfect for snacking and salads.

Granny Smith: Granny Smiths are great for baking and cooking due to their tart flavor and firm texture.

Rome Beauty: This variety's firm texture and sweet-tart flavor makes it perfect for baking.

How to Grow and Care for Your Apple Trees

Growing apples requires well-drained soil and plenty of sunlight- at least six hours of direct sunlight per day.

The best time to plant is in the spring or fall. In West Virginia, that would be from mid-March to mid-April and from mid-September to mid-October,



ber, which allows the tree to establish itself before hot summer weather or the harsh cold of winter.

See *APPLES*, page 19

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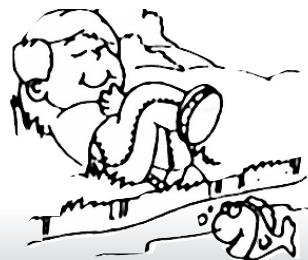
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Make sure the soil is fertile and has a pH level between 6.0 and 7.0. You can test your soil's pH level using a soil testing kit available at most garden centers or by sending a sample to your local agriculture extension office.

Dig a hole at least 12" deep – deeper if necessary to completely enclose the root ball and seat all roots at least 6" below ground. Loosen the soil in and around the hole with a garden fork or tiller to

aerate it and a row water and nutrients to penetrate into the roots.

After planting, add organic matter (compost or aged manure) to enrich the soil. Spread a layer that is about 2-3 inches thick around the planted tree and mix it into the topsoil.

After amending your soil with organic matter, it's important to test its pH level again before planting your apple trees. If necessary, adjust the pH level by adding lime or sulfur according to your

test results.

When the tree is established, feed it at least annually (during any season) with wood ashes spread around the drip line of the tree. No other fertilizer will be necessary.

To protect your apple trees and their spring blossoms from frost damage, consider planting them on a south-facing slope or close to a building which can provide shelter.

Annual pruning is essential for keeping your apple trees healthy and

productive. The best time to prune apple trees is during late winter, when the trees are dormant and long before any buds start to show.

Pruning during this time will allow you to see the tree's structure more clearly and avoid damaging any new growth. Remove any dead or diseased branches and suckers that may be draining energy from the tree.

Contact your West Virginia Extension agent for more details about growing healthy and happy apple trees.

Storing Your

Harvest

As our ancestors knew, harvested apples stored properly will last a long time, sometimes through an entire winter.

The ideal storage temperature for apples is between 30-40 degrees F., with a relative humidity of 90-95 percent.

One way to achieve this ideal storage environment is by storing your apples in a root cellar or cool basement where temperatures remain relatively constant throughout the year. You can also use a refrigerator to store your apples, where they will re-

main fresh for quite some time, sometimes for months.

When storing apples, it's best to keep them separated from each other to prevent the spread of disease. Ventilation is key.

Some people have good results by simply storing them in woven wooden baskets. But to be on the safe side, you may want to wrap each one in newspaper or place them in individual plastic bags with a few holes punched in them for ventilation.



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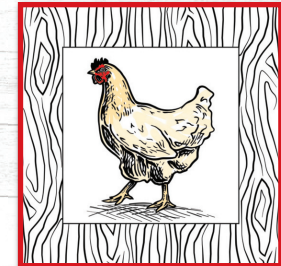
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Take a drive around the quilt square trail

Suzanne Stewart
Staff Writer

Quilting has been part of our Appalachian Heritage for centuries – passed down from generation to generation.

Whether it's hand-sewn or the newer machine quilting, the fabric and patterns are more than

just something pretty to look at. They tell a story.

In 2013, Pocahontas County honored the history of quilt patterns during the Sesquicentennial of West Virginia with the “Patterns From the Past” barn quilt square trail.

The trail began with 13 blocks, which were installed on barns and large buildings throughout the county, and it now in-

cludes 19 of the colorful blocks.

Local quilters and artists collaborated to create the large squares, most with a nod to the Civil War or West Virginia patterns.

During the Civil War, the Underground Railroad was established to provide secret routes and safe houses to help escaped slaves find freedom. Along those routes and outside the safe houses, quilts were used to communicate with the slaves to let them know they were on the right route or near a safe house.

Many of those quilt squares are included in the barn quilt square trail.

Starting in Durbin, there are three squares on Main Street. The first is

on Station 2 Restaurant and is the Rail Fence pattern, which depicts the many rail fences that were a common sight at plantations and safe homes.

The next pattern, Annie's Choice, on the side of the former Whistle Stop store, is a double pinwheel and adds a nice teal and brown pattern to the trail.

Between the Durbin Art and Visitor's Center and the Rail Trail store is the Shoo Fly block, which is freestanding. During the Civil War, this pattern was used by members of the Underground Railroad to show that they were friendly and could help guide slaves in the right direction.

This pattern also re-



Photo by Suzanne Stewart
The Annie's Choice quilt block is in Durbin, on the side of the former Whistle Stop store.

flected farm life and the square represents a hole in the home through which a fly could enter.

Next stop on the trail is at the former Travelers Repose in Bartow. The Bow Tie pattern, which looks like the gentleman's accessory of the same name, was a symbol to escaped slaves to change their clothing and find attire that depicted them as higher status individuals in hopes they would not be captured.

Continuing on Route 92, before Arbovale, a large red barn, formerly owned by the author Stephen Coonts, is the site of the next square, Carpenter's Wheel. The pattern, a star in the center



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Photo by Suzanne Stewart

In between Frost and Minnehaha Springs on Rt. 92 is the Sunset Star block.

QUILT from pg 21

with stars surrounding it, was a signal to pack items that were needed for travel by wagon. It was also a symbol of packing for a long journey.

Just before you get into Arbovale, on the right is the next square mounted on an old spring house. The Log Cabin pattern is one of the most popular quilt patterns. It is a series of strips that create a square pattern. It symbolizes home, warmth, love and security to the pioneers who were traveling west.

It was also used on the Underground Railroad to signify a safe house.

The next stop is in Green Bank at the Green Bank Arts Center. This quilt square is the Churn Dash pattern and is a bold yellow, green and blue pattern.

The churn dash is another farm related pattern depicting butter churning. The triangle and rectangle perimeter is the butter churn and the central square is the stick or "dash" used to churn the butter.

From Green Bank, travel to Dunmore and stay straight on Rt. 92 toward Frost. In between Frost and Minnehaha Springs is the next square, the Sunset Star. Not much is said about this pattern other than it is one of many variations depicting stars.

At the intersection of Rts. 39 and 92 at Minnehaha Springs is the Turkey Tracks square. While it may seem this square is self explanatory, it actually has nothing to do with turkeys. The tale goes that this square is

also known as Wandering Foot and has a superstition tied to it.

Colonial boys were not to sleep under a Wandering Foot quilt because if they did, they would become afflicted with the urge to run away from home.

Turning left onto Rt. 39, east of Minnehaha Springs is the Dresden Plate square. The colorful pattern is inspired by the 1920s and 1930s Dresden, Germany, porcelain plates that were decorated with elaborate designs of flow-

See **QUILT**, page 23



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ers, fruits and foliage.

The pattern almost resembles a flower, with petals all meeting at the center. The colorful "petals" symbolize diversity with the many colors coming together to create a dynamic pattern.

South of Minnehaha Springs on Rt. 92 in Rimel, is the next pattern, Corn and Beans. This pattern is also a celebration of farming and agriculture, representing the staple crops of corn and beans.

From here, turn around and return to Rt. 39 and continue into Huntersville. Turn onto Luster Shrader Road and there will be the North Star square. This pattern, as the name implies, was a symbol to follow the north star onto the escape route to Canada.

Leave Huntersville and

continue into Marlinton. On Fourth Avenue, on the side of McGlaughlin House is the Birds in Flight square. This pattern looks like four birds flying in unison.

Continue through Marlinton and take a left toward Hillsboro.

On the way to Hillsboro, in the small town of Cooktown is the Bear's Paw square. It is so named because it looks like four giant bear paws pointing in different directions. This pattern was used to show escaped slaves where to find food and water during their trek.

On into Hillsboro, at the Pearl S. Buck Birthplace is the West Virginia Star pattern, which is on the front of the Sydenstricker Cabin. This pattern was originally published in *Hearth and Home* magazine in 1915, when the magazine editors asked for a block to repre-

sent each state.

Next, return to Marlinton and head to Edray. Between Walgreens and Glades Building Supply, is the next square, the Monkey Wrench. This pattern looks similar to the Churn Dash. This particular square is unique because it depicts Pocahontas County High School in its maroon and gold colors and at the center is the school's mascot, the Warrior.

Continue on Rt. 219 in Edray and turn right on the Edray-Back Mountain Road for about a half mile. On a barn to the left is a second Churn Dash square, this time in bold blue and red.

Return to Rt. 219 and continue to Slaty Fork. At Sharp's Country Store, there is a barn with the Flying Geese square. This pattern symbolized freedom and was used to guide escaped slaves to



Photo by Suzanne Stewart

On a straight stretch of Rt. 92 in Minnehaha Springs, the Dresden Plate quilt square brightly stands out against the aged barn on which it is mounted.

follow the direction of the geese to Canada. The triangle "geese" were also used to point to the direction of water, food and shelter.

The final square is also in Slaty Fork, on Rt. 219. It is called the Drunkard's Path. This square has a couple meanings. During the Civil War, it was used by the Underground Railroad to warn escaped slaves to not make a direct

path and instead zig-zag and double back in order to evade capture.

This pattern was also used during the Temperance Movement. Since women were not yet allowed to vote, they used the pattern the express their opinion concerning the use of alcohol. The movement used blue and white for the pattern with white standing for purity and blue for water, the

purest beverage.

The barn quilt trail is definitely not a straight trail and may be hard to do in one day, but it is a great way to experience Pocahontas County and the history of quilt patterns.

The Pocahontas County Convention and Visitors Bureau has pamphlets with a list of the blocks and their locations.



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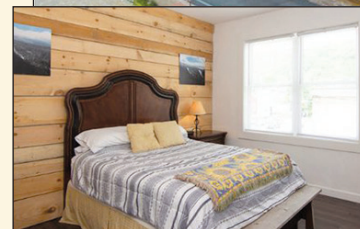
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A wonder of nature at Honeycomb Rocks

From the Archives
Geoff Hamill

According to geologists, the Appalachian Mountains were once the centerpiece of the ancient supercontinent Pangaea, towering as high or higher than the Himalayas. Eons have rounded off the old mountains and replaced glaciers with trees, forming a range as beautiful as any in the world.

The forces that lifted, folded and weathered the Appalachians sometimes resulted in unusual geologic processes and one of the strangest known to geologists is on exhibit right here in Pocahontas County.

The Honeycomb Rocks are located just off the Highland Scenic Highway. Understanding the educational value of the geologic oddities, the Forest Service has built a trail for people to see the rocks and signs to teach visitors how the rocks were formed.

The gravel walking path covers a short distance,



The entrance to the Honeycombs Rocks interpretive trail on the Highland Scenic Highway, five miles west of the US Route 219 intersection.

just one-quarter mile round trip, and is very well-maintained. It is accessible for wheelchairs and motorized scooters for the handicapped. The trail, lined with wildflowers in places, winds through a beautiful portion of the Monongahela National Forest. A bench at the turnaround point allows for a rest in the

most beautiful surroundings.

Visitors will find 10 stations along the trail, each with an example of the strange-looking boulders and interpretive signs that describe, in great detail, the geologic processes that formed the rocks. A

hike on the trail is relaxing and fun, but also an excellent educational experience.

The grid or honeycomb pattern on the rocks after tectonic forces created intersecting fractures in sandstone rock. Over mil-

See **ROCKS**, page 25

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Photos by Geoff Hamill

Four scenic overlooks, at left, equipped with pavilions, picnic tables, grills and trash receptacles are located along the Highland Scenic Highway. The overlooks are a perfect place for a family picnic, with spectacular views of the Allegheny Highlands. After a picnic, nearby attractions include Honeycomb Rocks, Cranberry Nature Center and the Cranberry Glades botanical area.

Above, The grid pattern in the boulders was formed when water deposited harder rock in intersecting rock fractures. According to the Forest Service, Honeycomb Rocks are a world class example of a rare quartz boxwork hematite deposit.

ROCKS from pg 24

Over the course of millions of years, the fractures were filled in with a stronger, more durable hematite-bonded sandstone. The softer sandstone eroded, revealing an incredible grid pattern on the exterior of the rocks.

The result is a true wonder of nature. According to the Forest Service, "Honeycomb Rocks are a world class example of a quartz boxwork hematite." Especially curious are wind and water erosion patterns in the softer

sandstone which, framed by the harder stone, could be mistaken for prehistoric rock carvings. The Honeycomb Rocks really need to be seen to be believed.

An excellent plan for an afternoon family outing would be a drive on the Highland Scenic Highway, a picnic at one of the overlooks and a visit to Honeycomb Rocks. The picnic areas are clean and equipped with a covered pavilion, picnic tables, barbecue grills, bear-

See **ROCKS**, page 26

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Honeycomb Rocks is located on the Highland Scenic Highway (WV Route 150), approximately five miles east of the intersection with US Route 219. Other nearby

attractions include the Cranberry Nature Center, the Cranberry Glades botanical area and the Falls of Hill Creek scenic area.

For more information, call the Marlinton Ranger District at 304-799-4334.

Photo by Geoff Hamill
A gravel trail is well maintained and handicapped accessible. A round trip to all of the educational stations is just one-quarter mile.



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