



S.A.L.S. JOURNAL

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Grant Assists Miners & Widows

The Southern Appalachian Labor School has received a grant of \$2,150 from the Crandall, Pyles, Haviland & Turner Foundation, Inc., to assist coal miners and widows with federal black lung claims. According to an informal survey of lawyers who have represented black lung claimants in the past, nearly 75% of the 1,200 miners and widows who file claims in West Virginia each year are not represented by an attorney.

Most lawyers are no longer willing to represent claimants because the federal black lung program has become so complex. Claims can take many years to litigate, and the attorneys who represent claimants only get paid if the claim is ultimately successful. Employers, on the other hand, are typically represented by attorneys who specialize in this area of law and are able to spend much more than miners and widows on the development of medical evidence.

According to the survey, there are no lawyers in either Raleigh or Fayette County and only about fifteen lawyers in the entire state who are still willing to accept a very limited number of federal black lung cases. In recognition of this inequity, the Crandall, Pyles, Haviland & Turner Foundation has provided SALS with money to begin training lay advocates who will assist miners and widows with federal black lung claims.

SALS chairperson, Helen Powell, was trained as a lay advocate back in the 1970s "...when the program was considerably less complex." According to Ms. Powell, "Lay advocates will not be able to fully represent people, but they will be trained to evaluate

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Attend SALS Solidarity Festival June 7th

Once again, SALS announces its thirteenth Annual Worker's Solidarity Cultural Festival marking its 26th year of community service. The Festival, delayed until June this year, promises to be as entertaining as our traditional May celebration.

We'll begin Saturday afternoon June 7, 2003 on the grounds of SALS Beards Fork Community Center with an inspiring array of local musicians. They will offer up a mix of gospel, folk, bluegrass, country and contemporary music.

Some of the outstanding musicians will include:

Billy Payne

Shayar & Kroushol Force

(WV's Premiere Reggae Band)

Gary Reynolds

Randy Gilkey

Dan Doyle.

Our community volunteers will once again provide hotdogs and other refreshments at modest cost, so bring out the entire family and spend the day picnicking and listening to great music. For more information contact us at (304) 779-2280.

the merits of a claim, to help develop medical evidence, and to refer cases to an attorney whenever possible. It is a shame that so many of these disabled miners and widows still can not get a lawyer to accept their case, but we are proud to join with Crandall, Pyles, haviland,& Turner in an effort to provide them with some assistance."

Brave New World of Black Box Voting, or Your vote only counts if it really gets counted

By Gary Zuckett

"I have no question that somebody who's smart enough with a computer could probably rig it to mistabulate. Whether that has happened yet I don't know. It's going to be virtually undetectable if it's done correctly..." Randal H. Erben, Special Counsel on ballot integrity for President Reagan, quoted at www.blackboxvoting.com

Our next election will look a lot different for many voters here in WV and across the nation. Ever since the "hanging chad" debacle in Florida's last presidential election many states have taken it upon themselves to "upgrade" their voting machines to the new wave of computerized balloting. One glaring problem with this brave new world of paperless computer voting is that it is impossible to conduct an independent recount. How do you recount an electron?

The federal "Help America Vote Act" (HAVA) passed after the devastating 2000 elections mandates the states to "improve" their voting systems and allocates nearly \$4 Billion to do this. Unfortunately, many states and counties are succumbing to the sales pitches of the private for profit corporations who are hawking the "paperless" computer voting machines.

I pray West Virginia learns from the experience of other states that are experiencing severe problems with their virtual voting machines.

Florida again leads the pact. According to an article written by Thom Hartmann at www.commondreams.org called "Now your vote is Property of a Private Corporation," "... in the November 2002 election, when some Florida voters pressed the touch-screen "button" for Bush's Democratic opponent, votes were instead recorded for Bush. "Misaligned" touch-screen voting machines were blamed for the computer-driven vote-theft, and when a losing candidate in Palm Beach sued to inspect the software of Florida's computerized voting machines, a local judge denied the petition, citing the privacy rights of the corporation that wrote the programs."

Last years elections were a surprise for many candidates, especially in Georgia where the Common

Dreams article states, "... a popular war-hero (incumbent) Max Cleland, who lost three limbs in Vietnam, was defeated by a poll-trailing draft dodger who campaigned by questioning Cleland's patriotism." It turns out the corporation that operated the computer voting machines had parked sensitive software files on an unsecured web site and in addition installed an unmonitored last minute "patch" into voting computers all over the state to fix "compatibility problems" right before the election.

In Nebraska, Republican Chuck Hagel won in a landslide over his 2002 Democratic opponent for US Senate. However, he forgot to tell the Senate ethics investigators he was the former head (and a current stockholder) of the private voting machine company that tabulated the vote.

There is an easy fix to virtual voting that could make it accountable to the voter and truly recountable by the candidates. Simply add a printer to each voting machine. The voter then gets a printout of the vote recorded in the computers memory to check for accuracy and hands this paper trail to the poll worker who locks it up in a ballot box. In case of a recount, the paper ballots are recounted for an accurate tabulation of the winner – no more hocus pocus of recounting electrons.

David L. Dill, Professor of Computer Science at Stanford University has proposed this solution to the issue of virtual voting at <http://verify.stanford.edu/evote.html>, according to Dill, "Computerized voting equipment is inherently subject to programming error, equipment malfunction, and malicious tampering. It is therefore crucial that voting equipment provide a voter-verifiable audit trail, by which we mean a permanent record of each vote that can be

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Director's Report

by John David

The Thirteenth Annual Worker's Solidarity Cultural Festival will be June 7th at the SALS Community and Conference Center in Beards Fork. This event, later than in previous years, features an existing line-up of area cultural workers. Everyone should plan to come and enjoy the celebration.

The SALS Dormitory Annex in the former Beards Fork Church of God has been partially remodeled and has already been used. Separate sleeping areas for men and women have been constructed, along with built-in bunk beds. Showers are in the process of being installed.

A record number of volunteers are involved with construction assistance. By November, the number will approach 1500 people. This includes Group Workcamps (2 groups), Christian Endeavor (4 groups), Global Volunteers (8 groups), Tufts, Brandeis, Maine, Wayne State, Manhattan College, First Christian Church (Indiana), Madison (Indiana), Presbyterian Church, St. James Lutheran/Westminister Presbyterian (Michigan), Bethlehem Lutheran (Minnesota), St. James Episcopal (Maryland), and Tabernacle Christian (Indiana).

SALS has received continuation grants from the Commission of Religion in Appalachia and the Appalachian Community Fund. These grants support SALS initiatives in health, economic justice, environmental, and electoral reform work.

The SALS/LifeBridge Coalfield Housing AmeriCorps Project is back on track for its third year, which has been cut to six months due to difficulties primarily at the national level. The final year, which has just started, will go only until December.

The meeting of the International Advisory Board for Global Volunteers, which involves SALS and was scheduled to meet in China in May, was shifted to the organization's headquarters in Minnesota due to the SARS epidemic. The China symposium will still be eventually held.

The first hand-carved solid odum wood door from Ghana has been installed in the latest New Page home. SALS received a dozen doors from Yaw Boama, a Ghanaian businessman who was formally my student in Ghana during Peace Corps days. Mr.



State HUD Director, George Rodriguez congratulates new home owner Lisa Sodder and family at dedication.

Boama followed me back to the U.S., graduated from WVU-Tech, and now has his daughter at WVU-Tech as well.

Kathryn South has taken youth to legislative events dealing with housing, Black Lung, Workplace Safety, and similar issues. Brenda Winter has arranged another youth contingent to attend Camp Horseshoe in Tucker County as part of our AmeriCorps Learn and Serve grant with the Fayette Plateau Vocational Technical Center.

The HUD Rural Housing and Economic Development grant has enabled us to add former AmeriCorps members. Timmy Hall and Tommy McClung have crew-leader assignments and Debra Spurlock has housing applicant processing responsibility.

Congratulations to Artie Mullins, who is now a certified housing counselor.

Several people have left the staff, permanently or temporarily. Nicole Hurley Skaggs is no longer a VISTA. George (Mad Dog) Hendrickson and John Wroten are off on Workers' Compensation.

The new SALS collaboration with New River Health Association and Fayette County Schools is underway. The 21st Century Community Learning Center "Accent Education" Project will offer school enrichment and after school programs in Mt. Hope, Oak Hill, and Beards Fork. The massive project will involve four new VISTAs, who are presently being recruited. A new AmeriCorps project was also tied to the program but was not approved. The New River Health Association has also applied for a grant that would institute health services for the Loup

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YouthBuild News

by Kathryn South, Program Director

In February, Trinity McCallister, Youthbuild Member, and I visited Charleston for Housing Day at the Legislature. A picture display was set up in the rotunda with information and pictures of the sites and what work had been done in the past six months or so. Trinity answered questions that passers-by asked about the project and explained how the program worked. Trinity and Kathryn also had a picture taken with Governor Wise, since we were the only Youthbuild program represented for the state and Ms. McCallister was the only Youthbuild member at the event.

Trinity also attended a Community Works board meeting after the event at the Capitol and had dinner with the board members, which made for a full day for the mother of two who has earned her GED and is working toward learning more skills in all fields of work not just construction. We would like Trinity and all youth who complete the GED test to think about college and furthering their educational goals. Thank you Trinity for representing SALS so well at this important event.

Congratulations to the four Youthbuild Members who passed the GED test this past month: Jesse Young, Steven Stanley, Stacy Richmond, and Roger Wilson, Jr. All these young people did a bang-up job of getting ready for the test and following through with passing this all important hurdle on the road to success. I know that Ms. Snead and Ms. Flint are very pleased with the accomplishments of the youth in the program, and this should be an incentive to the other youth that this test is not as scary as they all thought. So great work guys & gals!!!!

I would also like to welcome to the Youthbuild program a few new people who are doing a great job on the work sites and working on their GED at VoTech. Charles J. Truman, from Brownsville, has been here two months now and is working out fine. CJ, as most people call him, lives with his grandparents and shows some real leadership skills by helping in his church.

Matt Mendiola is also a new face on the scene, Matt was brought into the program by his friend Jim

Tincher, who does some work with SALS. Matt works with Ron Yellets's crew in Oak Hill on the Rogers Street house and is a really nice young person. Scott Neal and Jesse Young are cousins who live in the Ansted area. Both are good workers and really nice young people who want to learn real skills to help them in getting a good job. Loretta Elder, who lives in Mt. Hope and has been in the program for a short time, has a small child and knows how important obtaining a good education is in getting a decent job. These are just a few of the new young people who are working with the program and we hope to tell everyone more in the next issue about what is going on with our youth.

Karlie Price from the WV Dept. of Education's Learn and Serve training program visited the site this past month. She spent two hours doing some team building exercises with the Youthbuild members. The youth split into teams and worked together doing some art work and constructing a bridge. One team came out the winner and received a prize. Each person got \$5.00 for being part of the winning team. Karlie was so impressed with the youth that she wants to visit them on site and work along side each crew to get to know them a little better. Thank you, Karlie, and come back soon.

Jeff Floyd has been visiting the sites three to four days a week to do some one-on-one with the youth on issues that may be causing the young people some concerns. The visits started out a little slow, but now both he and the youth expect the visit and a lot of group discussions are the result. This is just a small bit of what is going on with the Youthbuild members. We're encouraging the young people to get more involved in writing articles for this newsletter and telling their own stories of how and why they came to the program.

YouthBuild and AmeriCorps Members Speak Out

Editor's note: Below are several short articles from members of both the YouthBuild and AmeriCorps programs in their own words...

It has been a great experience to work with the SALS crew members. I learned how to do lots of new things that I didn't know how to do before. All they

ask is for you to work hard and get things done the right way the first time. But my favorite part of working for SALS is getting to see what we have helped build after it is finished. For whomever is thinking of getting into the program, you should consider a lot of things. You will have a good time learning new things and you'll get hands on experience to take with you. Skills like these will help you in the future.

by ADAM GROVES

I've been a member of the YouthBuild program now for about eight months, if not more. This is a good program because it helps you to improve yourself in many different ways. First you learn many different trades that you can use in your future. With trades you will always have something to fall back on if something happens to your present job.

You also get to go back to school and study to receive your GED. If you don't pass the test the first time you try, you can always take it again. For those that don't pass the first time, you then know what you have to work on in school.

The best part of SALS in my opinion, is helping the people. Being able to help someone in need is just the thing some need to make them work harder. When someone has very little and you have a part in helping them better their lives; by giving them a roof, porch, windows, siding, even as much as a whole new house, it just makes you feel good.

by S.R.

The YouthBuild program has taught me a lot of new skills. They have taught me how to do frame work, hang sheet rock, lay shingles, and hang siding. We get paid a stipend of around \$260.00 every two weeks if we don't miss any work or school. It's not much, but it does help with expenses. I have only been here for about a month, but I feel like I already owe SALS a lot.

by BRIAN KELLER

I have now been working as a YouthBuild member at SALS about four months roughly. It has been a great experience meeting new people and getting to learn valuable techniques in building houses and such. Most importantly is that I am studying in the classroom to get my GED. If I had it to do over again I would have never quit school, but YouthBuild is the best route to go if you did quit school.

by CHRIS TUCKER

My name is Steven Stanley. I just took my GED a few weeks ago, and am waiting on my results. I feel confident that I passed.

Recently we had a visitor at the Vo-tech school who talked to us about personal finances. He was very informative and answered all of our questions. The speaker was from an investment firm in Charleston. He gave us pamphlets on different types of investments, and the interest rates for each one. He gave us his business card before he left.

We have just finished laying the blocks for the new house that we are building in Ingram Branch. It won't be long now until all the walls are up and the roof is placed on-top them ever so gently. The initial framing is my favorite part of building a house.

Over all I think the SALS YouthBuild program is helping a lot of people, and that there should be more programs like SALS.

by S.S.

I like the experience of going to school and working at a job. It's new to me to do both, and get paid for doing it! I will enjoy this experience to the fullest, including working to get my GED. That's why I'm giving all I have to do this right. Getting work experience will help in this world so there's another reason to give it all I can.

by DAVID MOORE

From what I learned this program is for people who need some experience in work, but I haven't learned much because I haven't been here, but from the things I see and hear and it helps. I'm trying to be here a lot more myself and doing the best I can with the time I have left so this program helps out. And for some people it changes their lives. The pay is great and they help you when your luck is down. I wish this program all the best and hope it will be here a long time.

by JAMES BLAND

I didn't know too much of what YouthBuild was going to be like. SALS' YouthBuild came and built a porch on my grandmother's house. So, I talked to some of those guys and they told me how I could work and learn with YouthBuild. I really like working with SALS. I like to do the kind of work that they do. The people are friendly and don't cause me any known trouble. I think it is one of the best programs

Continued on next page

In Their Own Words, continued from previous page

in the state. They try to help you as much as they can. They can only help you so much. I really enjoy it.

by C.J. TRUMAN

I have completed my second year as an AmeriCorps member. It was a very busy year. Once again we had to go out in our communities to sign people up for Group Workcamps. A lot of work goes into preparing for this program. Applications have to be filled out, measurements taken and most important, exact directions to the house provided. Two gentlemen from Group came and went over all of our applications. Then everything was mailed to Colorado for processing.

We will soon be getting ready for setup week. This is the time before the volunteer crews arrive to do the repairs. The materials have to be counted, ladder checks made and directions checked. Then everything will be ready for work to begin. This is a great program for everyone involved.

After my exit date from the AmeriCorps program, I joined SALS as a site supervisor. I found this to be a big challenge working with the YouthBuild and WIA (Workforce Investment Act) youth. I have a crew of six, of which four are young women. I've appointed a team leader, Sarah Taylor, who fills in for me when I have to pick up supplies. Sarah also assists with keeping the time sheets.

Thomas McClung, a fellow AmeriCorps member, also rejoined SALS as a site supervisor after his second year. His crew has the hard job of rehabbing a very old house. This will be a big job for Tommy and his crew.

Tommy and I have learned a lot from Dave Shaver. Dave has been a supervisor at SALS for some time now. He is currently building a house for the ground up at Igram Branch. This has been a challenging process, especially with all the bad weather we've had.

Even though Tommy, Dave, and I have different job sites, we help each other out. If one site is short on workers, we take some from a site that has extra. Whatever it takes to get a job done, we do it.

Fixing these homes for low-income families is very rewarding. We all hope to make as many people happy as possible.

by Timmy Hall

As an AmeriCorps/VISTA member at SALS, I run several programs. In the Senior program, I have something going for Seniors at least once a month. Some of these were a quilting bee, health forums and medical advisor speakers. Seniors who help keep this program going are Ms. Patsey King, Ms. Marie Settle, Ms. Red Newkirk, and Ms. Anna Spurlock. Their help is appreciated very much.

I also help with the School Day Plus. This after-school program consists of nutritional snacks, arts & crafts, homework, and reading.

Working with seniors and children for almost three years has been a great experience, knowing that I, too, can make a difference in somebody's life.

by Bonita Johnson

My name is Thomas and I'm a YouthBuild member at SALS which teaches me about carpentry. It is a good experience on building or rebuilding from the ground up. If you don't have your high school diploma or GED, you can go to school free of charge. YouthBuild helps you with completing your education. If you work with YouthBuild they pay you for school days but not as much as work days.

Right now we are working on a burned out house on Rogers Street off of Summerlee Avenue in Oak Hill, and we've remodeled most of the house. Our Supervisor is Ron Yellets, and the other crew members on the job site are Russell, Morgan, Adam, Brian, and a few others. This program is a good experience if you are interested in construction. I appreciate all of the knowledge from this. It gives me a better chance to succeed.

By Thomas Gilliam



News From Jackie's Desk

by Jackie Asbury, AmeriCorps Field Coordinator/
Housing Director

AmeriCorps is up and running again for our third year of the Coalfield Housing Project. Twelve members will be signed on to serve their community from June 1st to December 31st. Welcome back AmeriCorps Members.

Group Workcamps will be here again in July 14th -Aug. 1ST. Families in thirteen (13) communities will be served through repairs to their homes. These will include new exterior paint, porches, wheelchair ramps and other improvements. Thanks again, Group Workcamps, for all you do for our communities!

Global Volunteers will be visiting us again for several week-long visits this Summer and Fall. They come to donate their valuable time to SALS's many housing projects. We always look forward to meeting new folks and getting a lot of work done.

Several families received homes this year through the efforts of the Labor School. At least ten Families will receive homes through various programs that SALS operates.

I was released to return to work in April after my van accident over the Winter. Thank you for all the cards, gifts, and prayers sent to me while I was recovering from my accident. Until next time....

Construction Manager Report

By Vickie Smith

We have been really busy in the last several months. Currently we are working on six new homes and two rehabs. We also have 3-5 other rehabs being completed by subcontractors. Drains must be installed at the New Page housing project before black top paving goes down. We also have some landscaping to back track and complete on several projects as soon as the rain departs the area for more than two days. Stone needs to be spread on roadways where we have finished jobs during the winter months.

Lowe's in Summersville has donated five small windows to the organization. Fayco Lumber also sold us a lot of bathroom fixtures very reasonably priced.

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Several people have notified us that they would like to donate various items such as used manufactured homes, a box van etc. We are always glad to receive these items in order to help train our youth on various types of projects that in turn allow us to help folks in need.

We have had several local volunteers working with us for some time. Dewayne Snyder has been donating enormous hours to our project since the flood in July several years ago. He runs most of our equipment and helps Dave maintain it. We have also had a couple of volunteers on the Rogers Street rehab job. They have worked 6 and 7 days a week for a month or so and have contributed to the early completion of that job. Thanks to all for all your help it is greatly appreciated!

We have also been working with the Learn And Serve Program and the Fayette Plateau Vocational-Technical Center. The building Construction class has been helping us with the Rogers Street house in Oak Hill. We would like to thank Mr. Smith and his class for years of participation with our program.

Ms. Turner's House

by JR Williams

In the past three to four month's my crew and I have moved Ms. Turner out of her house, torn her old house down and have almost built her a brand new one in its place.

In the past couple of month's we have had the privilege of working with the AmeriCorps NCCC and various other church and college groups plus the Global Volunteers. The students really enjoy interacting with all the different people. They all have real exciting backgrounds. We also want to thank them too for all of their help and time.

Some of my crew members will be leaving SALS in the near future – I would like to say on behalf of SALS your contributions to the YouthBuild program were greatly appreciated and we wish you the best.

In the future we hope to finish Ms. Turner's house in Montgomery, and also recruit some new people. Any one needing an application can pick one up at the SALS Building in Beards Fork or at the Vo-Tech in Oak Hill. We desperately need new recruits. I would like to also like to wish all the mother's a happy belated Mother's Day.

Free Computers Distributed

by Vickie Mullins

Several families have recently received donated computers through SALS efforts. David Perry, Principal of Collins Middle School, donated the computers to SALS. Mr. Perry's school had received new computers and wanted to see the old ones put to good use. We were given twenty-two computers, and after receiving the computers we found out that everything had been erased. Global volunteers became aware that some of the computers had to be reprogrammed, and were able to setup six computers for our computer lab.

VISTA members felt that some of the remaining computers could assist children, seniors, and other persons in the community. The children who attend our after school program and seniors in the community were first given an opportunity to receive a donated computer. Charlene Newkirk the coordinator of School Day Plus gave us a list of children who did not have a computer in their home. On the list, there were ten children and they all received a computer. Parents were also informed of the cost to upgrade these computers. Overall, the effort was to expand educational services to those being served in the after school program.

Another AmeriCorps Member Stays On

by Debra Spurlock Housing Counselor

I have now completed my second year as an AmeriCorps member. It was a very fulfilling year. I enjoyed going out in my community and surrounding communities talking face to face with families in need of home repairs. These families will be helped once again by the Group WorkCamp Program. As you may already know, this program is a faith-based organization stationed in Loveland, Colorado. Youth come from all over the United States and Canada to help West Virginians with home repairs. This program is very rewarding for everyone involved.

After my exit date, which was March 17, 2003, I

started working on housing counseling. I am now one of four certified housing counselors here at SALS. In order to purchase a home through the West Virginia Housing Development Fund families must have at least eight hours of counseling. I have also completed twelve Rehab files and started at least twenty more. But one of my biggest accomplishments was completion of the Federal Home Loan Bank application. This had to be done on-line, which was very challenging.

I have also been involved in setting up a partnership with Multi-Cap in Fayette Co. They now have an office in the Kimberly Community Center. They offer various services including help with termination notices on utility bills, food distribution, and help with small handyman projects. One must qualify by income for all of the services.

I've really enjoyed helping people obtain help with their homes, and I hope to continue my work at SALS. Helping others is very rewarding, especially when they desperately need it and really appreciate it.

Energy Express

by AmeriCorps/VISTA Vickie Mullins

Energy Express is a summer program for kids sponsored by S.A.L.S., AmeriCorps, and WVU Extension Service. Energy Express focuses on nutrition, reading skills, and writing skills - these are of most importance. There is no cost for the summer program. The educational program is for students in K-5, we would also like to invite students in grades 6 to 12 to become volunteers and help with the program.

The summer program will help students to maintain skills in reading and writing while they are in between the school terms. AmeriCorps members will work with students in groups to help with reading and writing skills. When students are between school terms their skills sometimes fall behind so this summer program helps to keep the children's skills on a higher level. They also receive a free breakfast and lunch. The meals they will receive are based on the Food Guide Pyramid. USDA Summer Feeding Program provides the food, along with help from Southern Appalachian Labor School. Transportation is also provided by S.A.L.S.

Rogers Street and Boonesboro Projects

by Ron Yellets, YouthBuild Counselor/Trainer

A virtually totally new crew has begun work on the Everett home in Oak Hill, WV. The Everett's were victims of an unfortunate (electrical) fire in late December. The crew has completely torn off and replaced ½ of the roof and re-shingled it. To do this we had to completely reconstructed the upper attic level of the home. We installed new windows and insulation (with exception of the outer walls which were blown in by weatherization program), completely stripped and re-drywalled the living room, kitchen, laundry room, hallway, and attic. We replaced the front, back and master bedroom doors to make them more wheel chair compatible. Most of the drywall was finished by Steve Everett and his ex father-in-law, John Scarbrough. Steve and John have been actively involved in the reconstruction process since the beginning. Connie Everett is very excited about the changes made to her home and very appreciative of all the help she has received. It will hurt Ron's feelings to know that the 3 of them will have to be left behind when his crew goes on to a different project.

I am very satisfied with the new crew members, their hard work, their helping attitudes, and their willingness to work harder to get the family back into their home as quickly as possible. My hat must be tipped to the crew for making this happen for Connie and her family.

Crew members involved in the Everett conquest are: Morgan Hager-crew leader, Thomas Gilliam – assistant crew leader, Russell Tucker III, Brian Keller, Randy Farley, Adam Groves, Robert McGuire-crew leader interim, Chris Tucker, Jason Davis –Master Crew Leader.

My other project, the Crowder home in Deepwater, has been headed of by master crew leader Terry Black – a member of the YouthBuild graduate program. With exception of the framing and earlier phases of construction, Terry has been responsible for overseeing this home's completion. Terry and his crew have framed, roofed, partially sided, built a front porch, installed windows, completed electrical

and plumbing tasks, insulated, drywalled, and textured ceilings. The home is presently ready for finishing touches such as doors, trim, lights, kitchen cabinets, carpet, etc. I must again tip a hat to Terry Black and his crew. Terry's crew members are as follow: Peggy Davis, Jason Cameron, Jason Grant, Matt Mendiola, David Bibb, and CJ Truman.



Director's Report, continued from page three

Creek Catchment Area in the Community Center's medical room.

Energy Express is about to begin what promises to be another successful summer at the Community Center. The programs and activities are fantastic and the children are provided both breakfast and lunch each day. Parents who wish to enroll children should contact site coordinator Vickie Mullins at the Community Center.

SALS received one of five Martin Luther King, Jr. "Living the Dream" organizational awards from the WV Holiday Commission. Vice Chair Marcus Wilkes joined me in accepting the award, which is displayed at the Community Center.

For the fourth time and second consecutive year, SALS was one of five West Virginia entities recognized in April by USA Weekend for its "Make a Difference Day" activities last Fall. SALS was sponsored by the Charleston Daily Mail.

The Fayette County Commission has again provided essential financial support for the Community Center, Group Workcamps, and Energy Express. Similar support was also received from the Benedum Foundation. The Crandall, Pyles, Haviland, and Turner Foundation has provided financial support for SALS Housing and assisting Black Lung victims. Thanks are due to all who have donated time and energy to SALS.

The Weakening of the Fair Labor Standards Act Continues

by the National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice
www.nicwj.org

According to an article published by the Associated Press (AP) on January 31, 2003, the Bush administration is planning to overhaul the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act that defines blue-collar and white-collar workers and determines who must be paid an hourly rate of time-and-a-half for working beyond 40 hours a week.

In addition to defining categories of work, the law states that compensatory time instead of overtime pay is not an option for employers. Currently 80 million workers are covered by this regulation. Legislation by Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH), the incoming chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, would change the traditional 40-hour workweek to a biweekly, 80-hour schedule. Workers could be scheduled to work a maximum of 50 hours in one week within the 80 hours over two weeks.

Aside from changing the hours that workers are asked to work each week, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other business interests have been lobbying the White House and Congress to, "release private employers and employees from the strict overtime rules that presently restrict their ability to experiment with non-traditional, flexible work arrangements." (January 8, 2003, "Employers seek change in comp-time rules," Chicago Tribune, Sec.6, pg.3)

Business groups are petitioning to have a law created that would allow employers to give time off to employees instead of overtime pay.

The danger in this proposal are many: one, workers can be in danger of being overworked, two, worker advocates fear that employees would be pressured to take time off instead of receiving overtime pay and three, compensatory time can be canceled at the last minute or company guidelines can restrict when leave can be taken.

What needs to be done now is to tell the President and Senator Judd Gregg that workers need protection from possible abuses by employers and

that upholding the Fair Labor Standards Act is one way to do that. If you have any questions or comments about this, please feel free to contact Tiffany L. Heath, Director of Public Policy, at Tiffany@nicwj.org or by phone: 773-728-8400, ext. 42.



Nobody Should Go Without Health Care

from *UnionVoice*, the action website of the AFL-CIO

All across America millions of people are speaking out about the crisis in health care. Last year, more than 41 million Americans had no health insurance (1.4 million more than the previous year)—and some 30 million more have gone without insurance for some period in the past two years.

Lack of affordable health care means that children and parents go without the critical care they need. Higher unemployment, increasing health care and prescription drug costs and employers who refuse to pay their fair share mean that being uninsured is not just a problem for the unemployed. In fact, eight out of 10 uninsured Americans are in working families. Adding to the problem, lack of access to regular care increases costs down the road.

No child, no parent, nobody should have to go without health care they need. Please take one minute to contact your representative. Tell them his/her neglect of this crisis is unacceptable. While we work toward comprehensive health care reform, aid to state governments is needed to stop the erosion of health coverage provided by states to the uninsured. Lack of action by Congress is worsening the problem as states are forced to make budget cuts that end up hurting the uninsured.

To take quick action go to www.unionvoice.org

Black Box Voting, continued from page one

checked for accuracy by the voter before the vote is submitted, and is difficult or impossible to alter after it has been checked. Many of the electronic voting machines being purchased do not satisfy this requirement. Voting machines should not be purchased or used unless they provide a voter-verifiable audit trail; when such machines are already in use, they should be replaced or modified to provide a voter-verifiable audit trail. Providing a voter-verifiable audit trail should be one of the essential requirements for certification of new voting systems.”

Professor Dill is soliciting endorsements and so far has at least one Secretary of State on board. Contact our WV Secretary of State, Joe Manchin at wvsos@wvsos.com or toll free at (866) SOS-VOTE and ask him to sign on to Dill’s resolution. In addition, HAVA requires Secretary manchin to put together a plan to implement the Federal law and the 30-day public comment period begins around May 26th. Send in comments to Mr. Manchin and ask that only approving voting systems that have a “voter verifiable” paper trail for recounts. Tell him we don’t want WV elections held hostage by private for-profit corporations. If we lose the integrity of our ballot box to virtual black box voting, we stand to lose our democracy.



Southern Appalachian Labor School - Who We Are

**SALS Community Center: 800-515-1349,
304-779-2772, or 779-2280**

AmeriCorps/WVU-Tech: 304-442-3042

Construction Coordinator: 304-469-9721

John David, Director - 304-442-3157

WEB: www.sals.info

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Tom Bass, Brenda Winter

* Indicates members of the SALS Leadership Team



Yes, in these difficult times I understand the importance of an organization like the Southern Appalachian Labor School. Enclosed is my contribution to keep your essential work on track and moving forward..

Contributions to SALS are Tax deductible: Mail to SALS POB 127, Kincaid, WV 25119

Enclosed is: ___\$250 ___\$100 ___\$50 ___\$25 Other\$_____

Visit us at www.sals.info for secure on-line donations & issue updates

Please send me a thankyou gift..

___\$50 +: SALS Handmade Coffee Mug or similar item

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