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SALS Cosponsors Health Care Rights Conference

from Universal Health Care Action Network's web page - www.uhcan.org

U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) opened UHCAN's 11th national conference with a hopeful and energetic call to grassroots activists to make sure that Congress and state legislatures around the country "hear your voices loudly and clearly" so as to drown out the "naysayers and keepers of the status quo" who say health care for all cannot happen. She said political leaders must be required to answer one of two questions:

- If you are *not* for health care for all, then *who* would you leave behind?
- If you *are* for health care for all, then *how* would you get there?

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Wellstone speaking at 1993 UHCAN Conference

"There are three crucial ingredients to democratic renewal and progressive change in America: good public policy, grassroots organizing and electoral politics."

Policy provides direction and an agenda for action; grassroots organizing builds a constituency to fight for change; and electoral politics is the main way, in the absence of sweeping social movements, that we contest for power and hold decision-makers accountable for progressive public policy."

Paul Wellstone, February 18, 2001
from "Winning Politics," *The Nation*

A Busy Year for YouthBuild

by Kathryn South

This has been a very busy year for all of the YouthBuild Members. Between working on rehabbing homes and building homes from the ground up and trying to get a few fun activities to round out the season, the youth have been getting lots of jobs accomplished.

We have had several volunteer groups serving along side our Youth doing some one-on-one mentoring and just getting to know our young people. Some of these relationships have fostered an invitation for three youth to go to Madison, Indiana to assist with a Habitat for Humanity house that Reverend Mark Porter was kind enough to set up for our youth to experience another building site and to get to know some good folks in Indiana. Thanks to C.J. Truman, Jason Cameron, and Roy Goodson for volunteering to do this important project.

Youth, board and staff were also were treated to a great rafting trip sponsored by Global Volunteers and, Joe Mario in particular, who arranged the details for the trip. About 30 people participated. A picnic back at our community center followed the rafting trip. A good time was had by all who either went down the river or just helped out with the picnic.

SALS YouthBuild program is in the midst of a recruitment drive. With the graduation of several youth and others leaving for various reasons, we are down in numbers for crews at the building sites. Mr. Harmon, with Fayette County Schools, has been a great help in the past in assisting with the recruiting of new people into the program. SALS is one of 200

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West Virginia's Parks vs. Bermuda Tax Havens

By Gary Zuckett

In this first depression of the new millennium, brought upon us by various wars & tax refunds to the wealthy combined with a corporate crime wave, our Mountain State's budget is now posting mountains of red ink.

Several WV lawmakers are proposing to save money by "privatizing" state functions including our state parks! Now privatizing (read - renting out state functions for business to make a profit) may work for mail delivery or warehousing in order to cut state costs (if it doesn't also cut performance), but renting out our state parks to be run by the highest bidder makes no sense at all.

Parks are for recreation, not to make money. They are a service by the state for its citizens. Many states charge a user fee to enter parks. Ours are still free to all. According to the WV-DNR (Division of Natural Resources) – who operates them, they consistently rate 1st or 2nd best in the nation among the states that don't charge fees.

Our parks bring in over a million visitors a year from outside WV and account for \$100 million of our state's economy. But the real issue is – if our parks are auctioned off to the highest bidder, will the average West Virginian still be able to afford them?

There is a much better solution to our state's red ink. It the same solution needed to balance the budgets of the other forty-nine too. Make business pay its fair share of taxes. Plug the loopholes, bulldoze the tax shelters, and swamp the offshore tax havens.

In the mid-nineties, a state Senator had his intern toil for one whole legislative session adding up all the tax incentives, credits, exemptions, and such our state was giving away each year. The overworked intern ran out of session before he ran out of tax giveaways to add up. Even so he came up with a dollar amount equal to our state budget at the time. In other words, our state's "tax expenditures" (money WV gives away before it ever receives it) equaled the amount it actually collected and spent. With new tax breaks enacted year after year for big Coal, Banking, Timber, Power Generators, ad nauseum, I'm sure the situation now is even worse.

Of course its not just state legislator's largess that dwindles our tax revenue, Congress is just as bad if not worse. According to the Multi State Tax Commission, a nonpartisan coalition of 45 state taxing authorities, WV is #1 in the country in losses from offshore and domestic tax shelters. They figure that in 2001 WV lost 58% of its corporate income taxes, or 65 million dollars. That amount alone would cover over half the projected deficit in next year's state budget.

Can this really be happening? I decided to look into the WV Blue Book, a bi-annual state publication that lists everything you might ever want to know about WV government. Comparing Corporate Net Income, Business & Occupation, and Business Franchise taxes against Personal Income and Sales taxes, I quickly compiled some astounding data.

Starting out in the 1975-76 fiscal year, business and individuals were paying about the same totals for the above-mentioned taxes – \$287 million for business to \$263 million for citizens. A quarter century later the situation had changed dramatically. Business totals were up to \$391 million, but individual citizens were paying a whopping \$1.87 Billion – nearly five times business' contribution to the state! Remember too, this was also a 25 year a period of record business earnings and declining population in WV – less people were paying increasingly more taxes than businesses.

Lawmakers are frantically cutting budgets for schools, parks, libraries and other state services in order to balance the books instead of making business pay its fair share by going after the millions that are being lost in tax shelters, loopholes, and other tax giveaways.

Leave our parks alone and go after the tax scams!

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by John David

Changing national priorities are clearly impacting the availability of funds for social programs and human needs. However, at least for now, SALS has been fortunate. Over the past period, we have received a renewed HUD Rural Housing and Economic Development grant, a new Appalachian Regional Housing and Economic Development grant, a Federal Home Loan Bank/United Bank grant, a re-newed AmeriCorps Learn and Serve/Fayette County School grant, and donated equipment from IBM.

The 21st Century collaborative with Fayette County Schools and the New River Family Health Association is off to a great start. The grant is paying for four new AmeriCorp VISTAs, who along with Charlene "Red" Newkirk have played a major role in doubling the enrollment in the after-school program at the SALS Community Center in Beards Fork.

Governor Bob Wise announced a Small Cities Block Grant to the Fayette County Commission that includes money for the SALS Dormitory. The facility will make it possible to host more volunteers during the prime construction season. Since January, we have worked with nearly 1500 volunteers in one way or the other.

The Fayette County Commission has continued its positive relationship with SALS by contributing generous funds to the Community Center, as well as to the Energy Express and Group Workcamps programs.

To date, our biggest disappointment has been with the Neighborhood Investment Act or tax credit program. The tax credits allocated to SALS dropped from over \$46,000 to just over \$5,500. The legislative Budget Digest allocation was also reduced in accordance with the overall cutbacks in state spending. Even at a reduced level, however, these resources are needed and deeply appreciated.

We have had some wonderful volunteer groups this summer. Global Volunteers sent several of the groups and continues to be one of our key partners. Joe Mario, who has been with his family on several Global teams, organized a whitewater rafting trip for SALS youth, staff, and Board members with Adventure-Mountaineer River Tours. Another established SALS *Journal*



Global Volunteers, SALS staff & YouthBuild/ AmeriCorps members pose for a photo prior to a raft trip on the lower New River donated by Adventures Mountain River Outfitters. (Steve Keenan/The Fayette Tribune)

partner are our faith-based friends in Madison, Indiana. Pastor Mark Porter arranged to host three of our Youthbuild members for a week's encounter in Madison working on a Habitat house.

Work has begun on playground areas. At the New Page site, the first playground equipment and benches have been installed thanks to the employees at 84 Lumber, Christian Endeavor, and Bill Waddell. At the SALS Community Center in Beards Fork, the playground shelter and outside stage are taking shape under the direction of Artie Mullins.

Dr. Chris Baker, formerly at WVU-Tech and now in Tennessee, has nominated SALS for the Helen Lewis Award sponsored by the Appalachian Studies Association. Guy Dooley at United Bank and UMWA President Cecil Roberts have written support letters.

SALS was honored when the Housing Advisory Board with the Federal Home Loan Bank/Pittsburgh decided to visit our sites. The group chartered a bus and arrived for a dedication sponsored by United Bank of the Lucy Turner house in Montgomery before continuing to the New Page project. Among those who toured the site was former Governor Cecil Underwood. Many thanks to John Bendel and Eric Dickerson with the Federal Home Loan Bank for arranging the visit.

SALS is hosting a AmeriCorps NCCC team from the Capital campus for about a five week period. SALS is also working with the Burlington

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SALS - An Organization Worth Volunteering

Vickie Mullins, AmeriCorps/VISTA

I have been an AmeriCorps/VISTA serving at the Southern Appalachian Labor School for five years. I started as a cook for the Energy Express program and the following month, I became a VISTA (Volunteer In Service To America). A VISTA is a person who commits for a year of service and agrees to go out in the community and help meet the needs, solve some of the problems, and try to make a difference.

A VISTA also works on getting volunteers to come in and help out with programs such as the After-School program, Energy Express and Youth-Build. As a VISTA, I learned that you have to be committed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. VISTA's AmeriCorps mission is to strengthen and supplement efforts to eliminate or alleviate poverty in the United States by encouraging and enabling persons from all walks of life and age groups to perform meaningful and constructive volunteer service in agencies, and institutions.

AmeriCorps/VISTA's are to generate resources, encourage volunteer service at the local level and to strengthen local agencies and organizations to carry out the purpose of the program. The AmeriCorps VISTA program rests on three basic assumptions: 1. The private citizen can on a volunteer basis, contribute to the solution of problems confronting low-income communities. 2. VISTA members are used most effectively when they live and work with the low-income people whom they are serving 3. VISTA member bring an added dimension to the public and nonprofit organizations working to solve problems of low-income communities.

I have worked several jobs in the area, but none of them was as fulfilling as AmeriCorps/VISTA. I feel that I have helped make a difference in my community by volunteering with the After-School program, by helping children with their homework assignments, handing out snacks and preparing a nutritional meal. I was also the volunteer coordinator with the Energy Express program for four years. This summer program was a challenge because it lasted for six-weeks, Monday through Friday. We

had to sign up forty kids. I had to have a variety of volunteers each day.

The program's funding was limited, so donations were needed. I helped raise over \$2,000 in donations. I've also volunteered with a program called Group Work Camps. This program allows families in Fayette County to receive donated repair work on their homes. I signed up several elderly folks in Beards Fork, Page and Robson that needed repairs done. I plan to continue volunteering with the communities through out the area and looking for resources that will provide long-term solutions to problems confronting low-income people. This is my goal and one day I will achieve it!

WIA/YES

by Brenda Winter

The Workforce Investment Act/ Youth Enrichment Services, WIA/YES has been a program offered by RESA I through SALS since July 2001. This program provides educational services, leadership development, and employment opportunities for young people between the ages of 16 and 21. Program participants are also offered counseling services and job placement assistance provided by Mr. Heath Forren, Youth Advisor with RESA I. Mr. Forren visits SALS on a weekly basis to council youth on issues such as career, educational and personal goals.

In the past few months we were able to put two youth to work. We hope to employ more soon. After graduating from Vo-Tech in May, they went on to successfully pass their Journeymen's test. They will receive their license within the next few months. This will enable them to find a good paying job.

We hope to continue providing opportunities to youth in our area through the various SALS programs.

Page Housing Expands

by George Hensley, Site Supervisor, New Page Housing

Since summer has come to an end, the hectic pace of tying up the loose ends has begun. Small jobs such as roof repair, windows and landscaping are all on the short list.

New Page Project, Phase 2 was again active this

summer as a new foundation was installed for yet another new home. This home is the second of Phase 2 and the 9th overall to be built at New Page.

During the late summer months, the YouthBuild crew at Page has built a large deck and two 10 x 12 storage buildings. The crew also finished a trailer rehab by installing kitchen & bathroom fixtures along with bi-fold closet doors, etc. We have also shared time on the Frazier rehab. Two crews temporarily joined together to install windows, siding, shower and drywall installation. At this time, the finish work on the ceiling and walls has begun.

Thanks to all faith based volunteers, Global Volunteers and AmeriCorps for the help on all of these projects. Also welcome to new YouthBuild members, Vickie Johnston, J.D. Estep and Wesley Jones.

Bringing Mattie Home

Tim Hall, SALS Housing Supervisor

I have been working at the Ingram Branch site for the past few months. The house, which belonged to Mattie Staunton, was in such bad shape that it all had to be re-done. My crew and I have been busy trying to complete this project so Mrs. Staunton can move back to West Virginia. She has spent the past several months with her daughters in Michigan. Mrs. Staunton is 93 years old and can't wait to move into her newly rebuilt home. The house has a nice large deck with steps all the way up the hill to the road. I'm sure Mrs. Staunton will enjoy sitting outside on her new deck. The house just needs some inside work and should be finished very soon. I really enjoy my job as a supervisor and I hope to continue to repair homes for the people who really need the help.

My Perspective

By Heath Forren, RESA/WIA Youth Advisor

The Southern Appalachian Labor School provides an invaluable service to the residents of Fayette County. Serving the areas from Oak Hill all the way down highway 61 to Montgomery, jobs and opportunities are created through innovation and the resourceful use of hard work.

I am an employee of the Regional Education

Services Agency Region 1, and more specifically work with the Youth Enrichment Services program. Being an advisor for the Out of School program, I have worked directly with Brenda Winter. Brenda is the Administrative Activities Coordinator for the Labor School, and my contact through the partnership of our two programs. She provides an important link to the kids, and her involvement has directly influenced our success.

The bulk of our time is spent following students that are involved with the YouthBuild Program. YouthBuild members are learning while working on the job site building houses for families that are in need.

Katherine South is another very important person working with this program. She always knows exactly what is going on, and is a priceless part of our collaboration between Youth Enrichment Services and YouthBuild.

However, the construction site is not the only place work is done. For every project that is in progress there is a group of people that is responsible for creating the funding that makes everything possible. Virtually every employee at the headquarters in Beards Fork has written a grant that resulted in the funding of a project. A large team of trainers and supervisors work long hours on the job and in some instances drive their workers to and from work. Working against deadlines and often fighting the weather they make sure the projects are successful.

A recent example of a success for the Southern Appalachian Labor School is the accomplishment of Charlie Wickline, Eric Miller, and Chris Shaver. These young men became State Certified Journeyman Electricians this summer, and are now in a position to start lucrative careers as electricians. Brenda and I are currently working to help them find employment.

Another activity that shows the balance the community receives from the program took place on August 15th. A rafting trip rewarded the Youth Build program, and our Youth Enrichment Services program participants. The group went down the New River, and was enjoyed by all. It was a very nice reward for everyone and specifically the Youth Build program. They work hard and deserve a reward and some recognition.

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Working Together Yields Results

by Jennifer Hamm, Housing Specialist-Housing Counselor

Working at Southern Appalachian Labor School is not always just hard work for eight hours and then go home. I am always pleased and find it very rewarding when low-income families qualify for a loan to buy a new home, see children pack and leave a low-income apartment complex, and unpack into their own room in a brand new home. The look in their eyes, the smile on their face, and the hugs I receive makes any day worth working.

I want everyone to know that West Virginia Housing Development Fund, HUD, and SALS work very hard together to make this happen. I would also like to thank Community Works for making it possible for me to be trained in Home Buyer Education so the families I work with may receive their Housing Counseling and be educated in home buying.

SALS is proud to announce seven new homeowners/families since the beginning of 2003. These proud families have completed at least eight hours of housing counseling and qualified with the West Virginia Housing Development Fund for a low-income interest HOME Program loan.

New Home Being Built in Minden

by Ron Yellets

Ron Yellets and his crew have finished the Crowder home on Boonesboro Rd. with exception of landfill and a small set of front steps. Landfill must be done when the soil is dry, so it has to be catch if catch can and dependent on weather which has been nothing but rain. Carolyn (Boonie) seems to be very pleased with her new home and she has grown very attached to having her own space (bedroom). It has been years since she has slept in a bed.

Ron's crew has moved to one of the SALS properties and will be erecting a new home on the Minden site. Most of the crew members are fresh and have never built a house from cinder block foundation up - so this will be a learning experience for them all.

SALS Journal

Turner House Completed

by J. R. Williams

For the past couple of months my crew and I worked to finish Ms. Turner's house in Montgomery and moved her in. We also picked up numerous loads of trash from various sites. We are anticipating starting a house in Page which will be another rehab. Currently, we are helping Ron Yellets finish the Minden job. We are shorthanded but I thank my crew members for all their help.

A Rewarding Experience

by CJ Truman

Labor Day was a day of travel for Roy Goodson, Jason Cameron and me. Reverend Mark Porter from Madison Presbyterian Church, came from Madison, Indiana to transport me and the other two YouthBuild members to Madison for a week of service.

The week was spent working with Habitat for Humanity. We helped with rehabilitating a house that had been built by Habitat but had been damaged. The work was very similar to the work we do daily, so we got a lot accomplished. It wasn't just work, we had lots of time to tour Madison and the area around the city. I stayed with the Park family who went far beyond making my stay comfortable. They provided me with more food and entertainment than I could have imagined. We got to go swimming, sailing, fishing, slot car racing, sight-seeing and lots of other activities.

As the week came to an end, I looked back with a sense of accomplishment and happiness because of the new friends I had made. I hope the work we did helps the family to get back into their home soon. I had a lot of fun and hope I will be able to do something like it again. A special thanks to goes to the Park and Fuller families for making our trip so rewarding.

In their Own Words

My name is Cynthia Rollins and I recently came on board as an AmeriCorps/Vista member. We attended a pre-service orientation in Atlanta, Georgia with several groups from different states. It was a very enlightening trip. We were able to get an idea about what types of projects we would be working on. Meeting with other members who shared some personal stories helped give us (new members) a sense of what it really means to people and a community to be helped through the VISTA program. It's a real sense of "Reaching Out To Others" and "Making A Difference."

To the people in the communities and all around the world. My name is Gustavia Lemont Crowder and this is my first year serving as an AmeriCorps member. I've been serving in AmeriCorps since June 4th 2003. I've really enjoyed going around serving the people in different communities. One good experience I had since serving for AmeriCorps is when the Group Workcamps came in from different locations; it gives me and the rest of the people around the nation a chance to be friends. Since I've started AmeriCorps I finished one house and several rehabs. I really enjoy the time and experience of serving with AmeriCorps.

My name is Bonita Johnson, and my two and a half years volunteering as an AmeriCorps VISTA has been a very interesting experience. I've volunteered with reading to children in the Energy Express, and I drove the van for 6 weeks to take them home.

I've also worked with Seniors once a month. We're working on a quilt, called The Prayer Quilt. This quilt means United We Stand for our troops that went to war in March. While working on this quilt, some troops have come home. Some have died and some are still fighting. Hopefully when this Quilt is finished all of our troops will be home.

We also go to the Multicap in Kimberly, where Seniors go every month for nutritional food. Working with Seniors has taught me a lot about what is going on in their world and just what they like to do.

I also work with the School Day Plus Program helping children with their homework.

Hello, My Name is Lisa King and I am a New AmeriCorps/VISTA member. So far I went on a PSO training in Atlanta. It was a really nice experience for me. For one thing I had never been on a airplane before. So that was something of a experience in itself. Once I was on the airplane, it wasn't so bad. When it took off and I could see out, I was really surprised at just how beautiful it was. To look up at the clouds from the ground is nothing compared to being up there and looking at the clouds.

Once we got to Georgia and the hotel it was really nice. The AmeriCorps Staff was ready to meet us as we got off the plane. They were really nice and helpful the whole time we were there. Also we had very delicious meals while we were there. It really lifted our self-esteem being there and listening to the others speak of their times as a VISTA.

Now that I am back and starting my own time as a VISTA, I can only hope that I make as much or more of a difference for my community.

As I begin my first year as an AmeriCorps/VISTA member at SALS I am both excited and a little overwhelmed. My year so far has begun in a very positive manner, beginning with my first airplane flight to Atlanta Georgia for PSO training. Traveling with Cynthia Rollins and Lisa King, also first year VISTA's, was exciting and rewarding. We met volunteers from several different states. We learned about a variety of projects and programs in other areas of our country. Nearly everyone we talked with asked about the WV flood of 2001. Being able to share ideas and information with other AmeriCorps/VISTA members will hopefully be useful in some of our projects here at SALS.

I will be involved with the School-Day Plus Program under the coordination of Charlene "Red" Newkirk. This is a new initiative called The 21st Century Community Learning Center Accent Education project funded through The WV Department of Education.

Students at all grade levels will be attending the after-school program, which will include homework help, recreation, special events, snack and a full meal for supper. Assistance will be offered in basic skills, computer technology, fine arts and public speaking. There will be teachers present to coordinate lessons

Continued on next page

and work plans with the school system. Field trips to various places will round out the program

I guess I better get busy. We here at SALS are gearing up for a very exciting and rewarding year with the School-Day Plus program. - *Marie Settle*

Work Site Snippets

Curtis Dorman: "Since we have worked at Fraziers in Page, we have lowered the ceilings, drywalled, built an add-on, and built a porch."

Daniel David: "Today we built two closets. The siding is almost finished. People are sanding down-stairs to get ready for painting."

Jacob Lee: "SALS is very important to the people that work for them and the recipient of the perfected, quality job that gets done every time someone is in need of repair. We should encourage everyone that is in need of work skills to try SALS and see what you think. Not only do you get an education, but, you get a lot of skills! Thank you SALS."

Wesley Jones: "I started Tuesday. Helped put up siding, build a wall, sand the wall. I like it a lot."

JD Estep: "I started Thursday. I helped put up vinyl siding and sanded walls. So far, I like it pretty good."

Vickie Johnston: "I've only been with Youth-Build for two days. When I got accepted for the position, I was excited to know that I would be helping people that could otherwise not help themselves."

Tina Dorman, Amy Williams, and Melissa Tincher "We have been AmeriCorps members since June. During this time we believe our most rewarding experience was helping a senior citizen move into her new home. She was so proud of her home and it was gratifying to help her. Just to see her face light up when she talked to people about her new home, was special. It was really neat to see her sit in her deck and enjoy the afternoon sun. We believe that the most important part of our work is the feeling of warmth

we receive when we see the expressions on the faces of the families that we help."

Trinity McCallister: "Here lately in Ingram Branch Hollow, we have primed, popcorned, and painted a brand new house for an elderly lady and her sister. Hopefully, we will start the trim within the next month so the residents will be in the house by winter. After a long hard summer, I am proud and happy with the results."

Chris Shaver: "It's September 15th and we are finally finishing up in Ingram Branch. After a lot of hard work, only some final touches remain. Hopefully I will be moving on to bigger and better things. But, I do appreciate all the help that SALS has provided for me. I am now a licensed journeyman electrician and am looking for just the right job. I encourage anyone who wants to further their education to do it while they are young so that it is out of the way all together."

Roger Kelly: "In the past two months, my AmeriCorps co-worker and I have had the pleasure of laying carpet for a senior citizen, removing old shingles and putting new shingles on a senior's home, hauling off tons of trash, and killing two copperhead snakes. Gosh darn! It don't get any better than this AmeriCorps! Right Bay Bay?"

Rocky Martin, Sayer Romage, and Nick Logan: "We worked at George's site laying a foundation. It took a while because it rained everyday and we had to pump out the water so we could lay block. When we finally were able to lay block we learned how to set everything up and how to mix mortar. It took a little over a month to finish because of the weather but we learned a lot, and met a bunch of new people. I think AmeriCorps is a good program and there should be more like it."

Dave Shaver: Currently I am supplying all sites with material. This is cutting down job down time per site and saving in fuel cost. Tools are being maintained and kept track of which keeps all jobs functioning much better. Vehicle maintenance schedules are being performed and records are being set up for scheduled maintenance.

Perspective, continued from page five

I am new to working with the Southern Appalachian Labor School, but my time working here has been very enlightening. The benefit to the community is tremendous, and it is important that individuals there realize how important they are. Lives are touched everyday and people are given chances, often chances that they have not had before.

Summer's Over - But Work Continues

Debra Spurlock, Housing Specialist

The Summer of 2003 was very busy. The Group WorkCamp Program began its first week of work on July 14, 2003. But the work actually began for me the week before. That week is called setup week. Every site had to be visited, each resident talked to, directions rechecked, and materials counted.

After this was completed, the homeowner was given a large green sign with their site number on it. The sign had to be placed where the work-campers could find it. This let them know that they were at the right house.

During camp week the AmeriCorps members paired up with the troubleshooters from Group WorkCamp. Each day they visited designated sites to check for problems. Everyone met at the tool-shed each morning..

At the end of the first week I attended the Friday night program at which I accepted a plaque on behalf of the Southern Appalachian Labor School. We had two weeks of Group WorkCamps this year with a week in between, which was used for setup for week two.

Week two was finished on August 1, 2003. But the work didn't stop there. AmeriCorps members were responsible for finishing up the projects that didn't get completed and picking up the trash. I was in charge of organizing the jobs, assigning the crews, and obtaining the materials need to complete the projects. This was a very challenging time due to all the calls from home owners wanting their homes finished.

I also helped work on a proposal for the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh, which had to be

submitted electronically. We were approved for \$100,000.

I also work on the Rehab files. This is a daily chore. We receive calls daily from people needing their homes repaired. There will always be a need for home repairs in this area and I hope to help as many families as possible.

Fraizer's Home Renewed

by Tom McClung, SALS Housing Supervisor

I have been very busy repairing one of the older homes in the Page area. My crew and I have spent many hours rehabbing Mrs. Fraizer's home. We constructed a 20 x 10 foot addition to the home, which will be the new bathroom. We also installed new windows and new siding on the house. The wiring in the home was so bad it all had to be replaced. Lots of other repairs are being completed including a new roof. The home will soon be finished and Mrs. Frazier will have practically a new house.

Construction Manager Report

by Vickie Smith

We have been busy during the past months. We have finished two new homes in the Montgomery area and one new home in the Page development. We have finished two rehabs in the Oak Hill area too. In addition we had a sub contractor complete 4-5 small rehabs in various areas.

Currently we're working on rehabs and new construction in the Page and Oak Hill area. We should finish a new home in the Ingram Branch area before the end of the year.

We also installed a small play area in the Page development. In addition, Eighty-Four Lumber was gracious enough to donate all the lumber and play package for the new playground equipment and a gazebo at the SALS Community Center in Beards Fork. We truly appreciate this kind gesture and would like to thank them from the bottom of our hearts. This is what helps us make a difference.

Volunteers Plus Grants Help Families

by Jackie Asbury

SALS had a good Summer and was able to help 115 families through the Group Work Camp program. We also hosted many other volunteer groups as well.

Sals received a Rural Housing Economic Development grant through HUD for \$400,000. This is the second grant SALS has received through RHED and we hope to help many families with this grant.

We attended a conference in St. Paul, Minnesota with Global Volunteers and were introduced to many other hosts that Global Volunteers program serves.

We'll know sometime in December if an E Grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta is approved for \$204,000. We did receive \$100,000 from the Federal home Load Bank of Pittsburgh to help rehab 12 homes this year. The combination of volunteers and grant funds is helping us to provide area families with better housing.

School Day Plus

by Charlene "Red" Newkirk

Accent Education is an after school tutoring program funded through the 21st Century Community Learning Center. This project was designed to implement programs to help students at risk for academic failure and improve academic performance. With the collaboration between NRHA, SALS, Fayette County Board of Education, Rivers and Bridges RHEP, Mt Hope High School, and Collins Middle School Accent Education will emphasize four curriculum standards that will ultimately address four focus areas: academic, physical, social, and emotional health.

Energy Express - Another Successful Summer Program & National Recognition

by Vickie Mullins

The six-week energy Express summer reading and nutrition program designed to increase a child's reading skills through active learning came to an end on August 1st. During the first week of the program, a Wood-Cock Johnson test was given to approximately ten children. This test consists of three separate quizzes on reading abilities. The test was given again near the end of the program to see if Energy Express helps the children's reading skills. Two of the children improved two or more grade levels!

In addition to reading activities, children were served two nutritious family-style meals each day. A study was done on our program by WVU, and then our Energy Express Program was featured as a model program on the U.S. Department of Education's Satellite Town meeting on summer reading and the National Institute on "Out-of-School" time's "how to manual".

The children that attended Energy Express at SALS Beards Fork Community Center worked hard for the entire six weeks, enjoyed the fun activities, and become attached to their mentors. Children were visited by numerous guest and volunteers. For example, the Loup Creek Volunteer Fire Department, State Trooper-Morrison, Oak Hill Life Guards, New River Family Health Association, Senator Shirley Love, Delegate David Perry, and various community folks all shared with the kids.

Energy Express is intended to help children succeed in school and in life by helping them become successful readers. The child who cannot read is a child who cannot succeed at school and who misses out on many opportunities. These opportunities those of us who can read take for granted.

We could not have had a successful program without the support of a collaborative consisting of W.V.U. Extension Agents, Summer Food Service Program, Fayette County, Montgomery General Hospital, Valley Elementary-Faculty Staff, New River Health Center, and New River Family Health Association. In addition, we received donations and

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W V's Poverty Rate Still Among Nation's Highest

By Allison Barker Associated Press,
September 27, 2003 Charleston Gazette

West Virginia's household income was the lowest in the country last year, while the poverty rate continued to be among the highest, the Census Bureau reported Friday.

About 16.6 percent of West Virginia's 1.8 million residents were living in poverty in 2001-02, according to bureau estimates. That compares with a two-year average of 15.6 percent in 2000-01.

The median household income in West Virginia in 2002 was \$30,429, based on 727,353 households. That's an increase of \$677 over 2001.

"I don't think there is any question the state economy continues to struggle," said Mark Burton, director of research at Marshall University's Center for Business and Economic Research. "This is more evidence of that struggle."

Burton said West Virginia's older population influences its median household income because many senior residents live on fixed incomes. "Fixed income tends to not grow," Burton said.

Nationally, median household income declined 1.1 percent between 2001 and 2002 to \$42,409, after accounting for inflation.

The national poverty rate last year was 12.1 percent, up from 11.7 percent a year earlier. The bureau said the Midwest was the only region to record an increase, with a rate of 10.3 percent. Still, the South, including West Virginia, had the highest regional poverty rate at 13.8 percent.

George Hammond, director of the West Virginia Economic Outlook Project at West Virginia University's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, said the state has lost 6,600 jobs over the last 2 1/2 years. "Steel, glass, fabricated metals, chemicals — manufacturing as a whole has been hammered," Hammond said. "And the energy boomlet has dissipated. In the short run, West Virginia needs the national economy to rebound."

Delay in Reforms Fueling Doubts on Voting Machines

Published 10/29/03 by the Newark Star-Ledger

Last year's Help America Vote Act outlined election reforms meant to spare the nation from a repeat of the Florida fiasco of 2000.

But many of those reforms have been on hold since February, awaiting the appointment of a key commission. Senate insiders now say it is unlikely the panel will be in place before early next year.

The delays all but dash any hopes of resolving doubts about the security of electronic voting machines before next year's presidential election, according to computer experts.

Some experts are concerned because states are scrambling for federal money to buy electronic machines that may only conform to 1990 standards. They fear these touch-screen systems may be flawed, and prone to hacking or other chicanery.

"We know clearly those old standards are inadequate," said David Dill, a Stanford University computer scientist who heads VerifiedVoting.org.

Dill's organization wants all electronic voting machines modified to include a paper printout, so voters can verify that their ballots are recorded accurately.

California's secretary of state announced recently that all touch-screen systems used in that state must have such paper trails, starting in 2006.

States are replacing old voting machines with funds from the \$3.9 billion Help America Vote Act, which also called for appointment of an Election Assistance Commission by last February.

The commission is supposed to provide for the testing, certification and decertification of voting systems. It is authorized to name a technical panel to review voluntary standards, and to study security risks of electronic machines.

"The Election Assistance Commission established by HAVA ... could address the controversy directly," asserted a report this month by the Congressional Research Service. Touch-screen machines pose "substantially greater" security risks than other voting systems, the report said.

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BUREAUCRACY BLOATS US HEALTH COSTS.

*Dispatches from the Progressive Populist
www.populist.com*

Health care bureaucracy accounts for about a third of total US health care spending, dwarfing the amount spent on paperwork in Canada's national health program. Researchers say cutting out the bureaucracy with a national health program in the US could come up with enough savings to cover more than the 41 million uninsured in this country. A study published Aug. 21 in the New England Journal of Medicine, found that US health bureaucracy cost \$294.3 billion in 1999, or \$1,059 per capita. That was more than three times the \$307 per capita in paperwork costs under Canada's national health insurance system. Cutting US health bureaucracy costs to the Canadian level would have saved \$209 billion in 1999.

Another report co-authored with Dr. Sidney Wolfe, director of Public Citizen's Health Research Group, found that health bureaucracy now consumes at least \$399.4 billion annually and that national health insurance could save about \$286 billion in administrative costs. This is equivalent to \$6,940 for each of the 41.2 million people uninsured in 2001 (the most recent figure available for the uninsured). In addition to providing health coverage for the uninsured, these savings could provide drug coverage for the nation's seniors.

Researchers found wide variation among states in the potential administrative savings available per uninsured resident. Texas, with 4.96 million uninsured (nearly one in four Texans), could free \$3,925 per uninsured resident if a national health plan were implemented. Massachusetts, which has very high per capita health administrative spending and a relatively low rate of uninsured, could make available \$16,453 per uninsured person.

"Hundreds of billions are squandered each year on health care bureaucracy, more than enough to cover all of the uninsured, pay for full drug coverage for seniors, and upgrade coverage for the tens of millions who are under-insured," said Dr. Steffie Woolhandler, co-founder of Physicians for a National

Health Program and lead author of the studies. "Americans spend almost twice as much per capita on health care as Canadians, who have universal coverage and live two years longer. The administrative savings of national health insurance make universal coverage affordable." See the Health Research Group at www.citizen.org/hrg/ or Physicians for a National Health Program at www.pnhp.org.

Labor Radio on Web

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Energy Experess, continued from page 11

other assistance from many local business, churches, dioceses, civic organizations, banks, and private citizens. A special thanks is due to the out of state contributors and all of those organizations that contributed a monetary donation to this program.

We would also like to thank everyone who participated in the program - all our SALS Staff (Kathryn South, Brenda Winter, Vickie Smith, and Debra Spurlock), Van drivers (Bonita Johnson, April Waddell, Brenda Wither, Lynn Austin) VISTA Volunteer, Vickie Mullins, MIHOW worker (Charlene Newkirk) The Cook, (Lisa Manley), Janitor (Linda Dillard) an AmeriCorps member (Arthur Mullins) the Mentors (Devon Fox, Kelly Morrison, Amber Bishop, Megan Murphy, and Amanda Vance), and all the people who volunteered throughout the program. A special thanks to the Site Coordinator, Jason Crouch who chooses to come back each year! This year we are part of The 21st Century Community Learning Center "Accent Education" Program, a Collaborative consisting of SALS, Fayette County Schools with the New River Family Health Association.

Columnist Endorses Medicare-Like Universal Coverage

Plan would ensure universal coverage for the same cost as current system

Loretta McLaughlin, *The Boston Globe* (Nov. 24)

Writing that “every update on health insurance is dismal,” Loretta McLaughlin, former editorial page editor at the *Boston Globe* and now a senior fellow at the Harvard AIDS Institutes, advocates putting all Americans into “a Medicare-like plan.”

Eliminating the current variety of plans and the “exhaustive scrutiny required to process individual medical claims” would save enough money to provide all Americans with comprehensive coverage “without spending any more than we now spend” on health care, she contends, agreeing with a recent proposal from the Physicians Working Group for National Health Insurance, which was endorsed by more than 10,000 physicians.

A key component, according to McLaughlin, is recognizing that “recaptur[ing] billions of dollars now spent unwisely for administrative activities that don’t so much as deliver an aspirin” would provide more extensive coverage to every citizen at no higher cost. She insists that the success of Medicare—a single plan with a single payer and administrative costs of only 3 percent a year— shows it can be done.

Director’s Report, continued from page three

Center for having troubled youth at the facility earn vocational credits toward their high school diploma while learning on our job sites.

Bill Eddy, who came with Global Volunteers, has established a revolving loan fund for families who need to clean up small debts in their credit reports in order to qualify for our houses.

Kathryn South and Jackie Asbury joined me in St. Paul, MN, for a meeting of the Global Volunteers International Advisory Board.

Bib Via has donated use of the Kincaid Service Station for a garage project that will have youth work after-hours on donated vehicles. Bob continues to support SALS by also donating use of the storage building next to the Kincaid Post Office.

We have a wonderful anonymous friend in Baltimore who has generously donated money for various purposes over many years. He is a former Kincaid resident who is one of our main sustainers.
SALS Journal

Voting machines, continued from page 11

Rep. Rush Holt (D-12th Dist.), blamed Republicans for foot-dragging.

“With Americans really very concerned with the integrity of our voting process, you would think this would be a priority,” said Holt, whose bill to require paper printouts garnered its first GOP co-sponsors last week.

If elected officials don’t follow through on HAVA, “we will be stuck with old standards with flaws that are now well known,” Douglas Jones, a computer scientist at the University of Iowa, said via e-mail. Editor’s Note: see www.verifiedvoting.org for more info on this critical issue.

Universal Health Care, continued from page one

Baldwin declared that in memory of the late Senator Paul Wellstone “we will continue the fight.” She cited the bill he proposed in 2000, the “Health Security for All Americans Act,” as one way to provide federal incentives, waivers and support for states to experiment with different ways of providing health care for all. She aims to bring together a bipartisan group of congressional leaders to write a bill based on this **federal-state partnership** approach, to be introduced next year. This will allow states to try single payer plans, which she strongly supports. Unavoidably, some states will try reforms, such as tax credits, that many longtime universal health care advocates will not like. She advocated that states need to pilot different approaches to solving the problem if the nation is to move toward universal health care. Baldwin believes that people of good will, both Republicans and Democrats, can agree to work together on this “decentralization of the debate.” She feels it can work because the opposition forces blocking reform in Congress do not have “the same deep grip” on state legislatures.

Baldwin urged advocates to make universal health care as “rightful” as public education, as “irrefutable” as civil rights, as “imperative” as the right to vote, as “essential” as clean air and as “American as apple pie.”

SALS was a conference sponsor again this year and Gary Zuckett moderated a workshop on different approaches states were taking on organizing for Universal Health Care

Southern Appalachian Labor School - Who We Are

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

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 Terri Harlin Project Coordinator
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 Lisa King AmeriCorps/VISTA
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 Lisa Keffer Teacher

G.E.D. Instructors/Fayette Co. Schools

Joy Snead & Mary Lynn Flint

Share Program

Bob Friley

Bookkeeping Team

Valarie Cowley, Ruth Lanham

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\$_____

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SALS engages in soliticitation for the purpose of acquiring funds to support the Southern Appalachian Labor School. WV residents may obtain a summary of the registration and financial documents for the Sec. of State, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Letter of Thanks

I am writing this letter of thanks to SALS Employee Terry Black, and YouthBuild Member David Bibb for moving my personal belongings from Scarbro to Oak Hill, WV. This helped me in an emergency because someone was stealing and vandalizing everything I had.

Thank you,
Pamela Settle

YouthBuild, continued from page one

sites in the United States (and only three in WV) that has a YouthBuild program.

In other news, congratulations to Stacy Richmond who entered WV University Institute of Technology in Montgomery, WV. Stacy has had lots of help from Jan Young, advisor and professor, and others, to make her experience with Higher Education a less frightening ordeal.

Amy Williams and Melissa Tincher are Ameri-Corps members who worked on JR Williams' crew in Montgomery building a house for Ms. Turner. Good Work Everyone!!!!

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