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Volunteerism Thrives at SALS

by Artie Mullins, Volunteer Coordinator

This year has been a great year for volunteers here at SALS. The summer months were full of energy and the building of new relationships. Wave after wave of volunteers passed through our community. Each new group of volunteers brought something unique to our endeavor to build a better community. We appreciated their spirit of volunteerism and marveled at their commitment to our project. We met people from all over the world and of all ages. Vickie Smith worked tirelessly with Christian Endeavor to complete an amazing amount of work and Debbie Spurlock and Vickie Mullins did great work with Group Work Camps.

Volunteers from Global Volunteers began arriving in July and culminated with our last group in October. We are always excited when Global Volunteers arrive because they bring such diversity and liveliness along with themselves. As their team leader, my days were long and often times challenging but few things have I found so fulfilling. Global Volunteers has been a SALS partner for nearly a decade and the partnership strengthens more each year. This year we hosted five groups of Global Volunteers and hope to increase the number next year. The wisdom and camaraderie they bring to our young adults is invaluable. Joe Mario returned in August and once again facilitated the second annual Global Volunteer-SALS white water rafting trip. It was a fantastic day of rewarding our crews for their hard work combined with a farewell celebration for our volunteers. Sadly, Joe Mario will not be returning next year but has set up a free day of rafting for us in 2005. (It will not be the same without Joe and Chris!)

This summer we welcomed new faith based organizations and rekindled our relationship with some of our other church partners. Our longtime Presbyterian friends



Volunteers get instruction on how to use a power saw

from Madison, Indiana not only bring out a large group in June each year but dispatched smaller groups throughout the year. We are always happy to see Rev. Mark Porter and friends whenever they arrive. They have become SALS family in the truest sense. Our friends from First Christian Church of New Castle, Indiana also returned. Tammy Eversole and the other members of First Christian Church accomplished an incredible amount of work. Without them we would not have our gazebo and several senior citizens would find life difficult without the generous nature of this gang. We also welcomed back St. James Parish, MD and St. Andrew Lutheran from Chicago, Ill. Our new faith-based partners traveled from North Carolina, Ohio, and Tennessee.

Inside you will find how the energy, enthusiasm, and dedication of our many volunteers have improved the living conditions for hundreds of families in our region. At the same time these visitors/workers take back something much less physical but just as (if not more) valuable.

Ten Questions

by Phil Tajitsu Nash

What concerns me most about the election is that it is being treated like a normal event, like everything is groovy and now we can get on with the rest of our lives. Have we all entered some kind of bizarro universe?

Commentators are talking about red states, blue states, morality voters, and other issues, when the main topic we should be discussing is how badly the campaign process functioned and how hard we should be working to bring our 18 th Century democracy into the 21 st Century.

For example, consider these ten questions:

1. What would you say if your bank manager told you that you really didn't need a receipt for your bank transactions and that you should trust him to make sure that your accounts were in order? By delaying the purchase of optical scanner voting machines with auditable paper trails, the Congressional Republicans have left thousands of Americans with no way to conduct a recount in their districts. Reports of machine malfunctions and seriously inaccurate vote tabulations are coming to light, and should be pursued vigorously, but the bigger non-partisan issue is this: why are we allowing corporate voting machine companies to privately own the tools of democracy? Why are companies such as Diebold, owned by mega-fundraisers for the GOP, allowed to keep the codes and procedures for vote tabulations secret even from those jurisdictions that purchase their machines? And why can't they provide a paper trail when they do so for millions of bank transactions every year?

(www.blackboxvoting.org and www.democraticunderground.com)

2. Why do we allow any group of voters to be intimidated into not voting? Where is the non-partisan outrage now that the partisan fury has subsided? Can we get rid of archaic state laws used to challenge voters, and pass a Constitutional right to Vote – something not presently embodied in our nation's founding document?

(www.ourvote.com)

3. Why do we allow states to be categorized as Blue or Red when up to 49% of the voters in some of those states are not followers of the victorious party? Isn't it time we had some form of proportional representation in this country so that we can be like most of the other industrialized democracies of the world?

(www.fairvote.org)

4. Related to the previous question, why do we have only two viable parties in this country? We had a choice for president between two major party candidates who supported war and who did not support universal single-payer healthcare insurance. There are pro-gun anti-tax

Democrats and pro-abortion gay Republicans out there, but the lack of third parties allows us to be only two-dimensional people. With instant runoff voting, reduced barriers to entry for third parties, and public financing of elections, we each can feel completely supportive of candidates and parties, instead of always feeling like we are voting for the lesser of two evils. (www.nvri.org)

5. Why do we accept as a given that candidates must raise millions and take months off from their jobs to run for office? Is that why we have so few school teachers, nurses, and other process-oriented professionals in our legislatures and state houses? Is this good for the quality of public discourse, or the representativeness of our elected officials? (www.publicintegrity.org)

6. Related to the previous question is this one: why are television and radio stations allowed to make mega-profits on campaigns? We the People own the airwaves and they rent them from us. We should demand that each candidate for office gets a certain amount of free air time, and each campaign should have at least one publicly-sponsored debate that is aired in its entirety for local viewers.(www.commoncause.org)

7. Why are over 95% of our Members of Congress re-elected every two years, most with no real opposition? And why were so many incumbents at every level allowed to go through the electoral cycle with no debates or other head-to-head events with their challengers? (www.opendebates.org)

8. Why do we cling to the 18 th Century relic called the Electoral College instead of moving toward direct elections – like most other democracies in the world? Is it fair that only the concerns of the third of us living in the so-called “swing states” were considered important, instead of all our concerns? (www.reclaimdemocracy.org)

9. Why are simplistic notions like “morality voters” allowed to go unchallenged? Every person has a personal set of morals, even if some of them are considered immoral to others. Is killing a fetus worse than killing Iraqi civilians in what some con-

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Director's Report

by John David

The period has been extremely busy as everyone scrambled to work with a record number of volunteers. Since January, approximately 1700 volunteers joined us with SALS Housing. Already, record numbers have signed up for next year, beginning in January 2005 with Tufts University. Others who are coming include Florida International, University of Wisconsin, University of Pennsylvania, Group WorkCamps, Christian Endeavor, and Global Volunteers. Many will stay in our remodeled Annex, the former Beards Fork Church of God.

We have been fortunate to have new and renewed funding from USDA, Federal Home Loan Bank, Haviland/Pyles/Smith/Turner, Fayette County Commission, HUD, Benedum, and many special individuals. The WV Development Office renewed our tax credit program, which already has resulted in several replacement vehicles.

Kathryn South, Brenda Winter, and I went to Atlanta in October for a YouthBuild USA meeting that dealt with our new AmeriCorps YouthBuild National Direct Program and the new Department of Labor Criminal Justice program.

Vickie Smith, Gary Zuckett, and I attended the annual meeting of projects funded through the Commission on Religion in Appalachia. While there, we met with Joe Young from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, who will be providing us with tool funds and seed money for the Youth Garage in Kincaid,

Jackie Asbury attended a session with Group Workcamps in Colorado; Vickie Smith took a Learn and Serve youth delegation to a WV Department of Education conference at Blackwater Falls State Park; the VISTAs attended training sessions; Artie Mullins and I attended the 20th Anniversary of Global Volunteers in St. Paul; Kathryn South attended a Black Lung clinic conference in St. Louis.

The SALS Family lost the VISTA services of Cynthia Rollins, who joined the food service staff at WVU-Tech. Replacing her was Lisa Manley, who has worked as a volunteer and cook for many years at SALS.

The New River Health Association has received permission to open the New River/Beards Fork Clinic and Health Project. Dr. Dan Doyle, assisted by Marie Settle (CNA) and Brenda Winter, began offering services to SALS young adults and staff on November 5. Services will be offered monthly with a focus on preventive health care.

The Page-Kincaid PSD received several grants for a new wastewater system between Kincaid and Oak Hill.

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Rev. Jesse Jackson Jr & UMWA President Cecil Roberts address a crowd at New River Health Clinic as part of thier Reinvest in America tour this summer.

This will open up a new area of home construction.

The donated SALS tract at Hilltop between Oak Hill and Glen Jean has been surveyed and plans are in place for approximately nine homes. Two of the houses have been partially funded through a CHDO grant from the WV Housing Development Fund.

Jackie Asbury and Jennifer Hamm attended a Fannie Mae on-line Home Counselor Training Program and received certificates of completion.

Board Member Jan Rezek, along with Jackie Asbury, presented a paper, "Women Empowering Women in Rural Appalachian Organizations: A Discussion of Women's Roles in the Southern Appalachian Labor School in Fayette County, West Virginia" at the October 2004 Women of Appalachia conference at the Zanesville, Ohio campus of Ohio University.

YouthBuild member Jason Cameron is playing a major role with the National Council of YouthBuild Leaders and has been to events in Washington, D.C. and Boston. He has obtained a passport in the event he may travel as a representative overseas.

Thanks to a Flex-I-Grant from the West Virginia Development Office and a support grant from Fannie Mae, SALS has conducted several staff workshops, including Workers Compensation (Leon Bailey), Keys to Innervations (Phyllis Antonelli), and Cultural Sensitivity (Jan Rezek).

I am working with UMWA Local President (and

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YouthBuild Report

by Kathryn South, YouthBuild Director

In September, Jason Cameron, the Youth Council member from SALS, and I attended a three-day youth conference in Washington DC. Jason attended several meetings related to youth policy. They are discussing the possibility of him and several other youth from around the country traveling to South Africa with YouthBuild USA to establish new programs in that country.

I attended two days of training while at the conference, networked with old friends, and made new ones from YouthBuild programs all over the country. This was a wonderful opportunity for young people to use the leadership skills learned in the program and meet with government and state policy makers to speak about the issues that disenfranchised youth and adults face each day in the workplace.

In other YouthBuild news - SALS has enrolled several new folks from Oak Hill and Page area including Steven Lanham, Ben Dillon, Chris Wood, David Buck, Heather Plumley, and Chris Maynor. They joined and then attended the training offered by the Workers' Comp folks where staff and youth worked together to learn more about safety and proper strategies to make difficult tasks more efficient.

Six youth also attended a program at WVU-Tech in October where the featured speakers were Senators Robert Byrd, Jay Rockefeller, and Ted Kennedy as well as Cecil Roberts of the UMWA and several other state officials. The room was filled with laid-off coal mainers who worked at the Horizon owned mine at Cannelton. Artie Mullins, SALS Leadership Team member and Global Volunteer Coordinator who was in the audience was interviewed by a reporter from a local TV station.

Terry Black, YouthBuild Supervisor

We first started the Reese site with two crews. Timmy Hall's crew was Trinity McCallister, Becky Williams, and Chris Shaver. I am Terry Black a new supervisor for SALS. My crew and I finished the site. My crew of David Bibb, John Chapman and Kevin Klosski put on a new addition on the back. We laid block and then framed and finished a bathroom and bedroom. Finally, we remodeled the kitchen, living room, dining room and bedroom. We had Global Volunteers help inside and a crew from Christian Endeavor did the siding. After we finished the Reese site we went to the Minden site to help Ron's crew.

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A Busy Year for Construction

By Vickie Smith, Construction Manager

Southern Appalachian Labor School (SALS) has had a very busy year indeed. We have accomplished much this past year and have been very blessed with a lot of extra assistance from various organizations. One large group that worked on our housing projects was the Pennsylvania Christian Endeavor (PACE) organization. We worked with several hundred people within this group. Many thanks to Darryl, Sam, Annette and the site coordinators for a very productive and inspirational visit. Our organization worked with PACE three weeks and the accomplishments are too great to itemize. It was a wonderful three weeks and I really enjoyed all the extra help. Our youth and myself made a lot of friends and really miss the group. Our hope is that they wish to return in 2005.

Tom Myers from PACE came to teach a class on tile installation to a couple of our youth. We all enjoyed the class and feel privileged to have made a such a good friend. A special thank you to Tom.

We have cleared 2 ½ acres at Hill Top in the Oak Hill area. This will be our next large housing area and we are already installing two foundations there. We have subdivided the land into separate lots and are working with the White Oak Public Service District (PSD), planning and installing site hook-ups.

We had Worker's Compensation give our organization safety classes and a defensive driving course. We have written an organization handbook for our staff and trainees. We have also introduced a "return to work" policy, hoping this will make our next year a safer one.

We also have a very special volunteer operating our dozer at Hill Top and *he only has rolled it over 1 time.*





Ron Yellets, YouthBuild Trainer

The Minden house is close to finishing touches. The crew is pop-corning ceilings on the upper level of the home. Doors, trim, and kitchen cabinets are soon to be installed. Sidewalks and landing pads are being formed. It seems to be taking quite a while to complete the structure, but a relatively inexperienced crew that is learning the trade is completing it. Another factor is that it is the first two story home ever tackled by our YouthBuild force. Despite the fact that we have already passed a couple of deadlines, I feel that progress really is going as well as being expected. Terry Black has brought his crew to help complete the project.

I have made a major change by appointing Charles Johnson as my new crew leader. My old crew leader, Jason Cameron, had requested to be put on Terry's crew. Jason is tackling a lot of added responsibility with the National Council of YouthBuild Leaders and may have needed a break from the responsibility of being a crew leader. Charles accepted the new appointment and seems to be doing a fine job motivating his crew into action even though they are still very new to this type of work. They are trying very hard to master the skills and are presenting few, if any, discipline problems.

I'm really quite proud of all of them. So proud that I want you, the reader, to know just who they are. My crew consists of: Charles Johnson (New Head Honcho), Sarah Seaman, Oak Wilson, Sarah McGuire, Benny Boy Dillon, Adam Oatridge, and Damien Thompson.

Terry Black's crew consists of: David Bibb (Terry's Head Honcho), Jason Cameron (ex head honcho) and Kevin Klosski.

Tip your hats to this phenomena/conglomeration of talented and hard working YouthBuild kids. They are the ones making someone's dream come true.

Thomas McClung, YouthBuild Trainer

I have been very busy the past couple of months. My crew and I have been refurbishing a manufactured unit for a family with three small children. The family was able to obtain this unit through a Federal Home Loan Bank grant. A lot of hard work and a lot of time has went into making this an adequate place for this family to live. This will be the family's first home of its own. In the past family members have lived with relatives or paid rent on an apartment that they really couldn't afford. It's a great feeling knowing that I helped to give this family a place to call home. I hope to continue helping families in the future.

Thank heavens he did not get hurt! So a very special thank you to Sidney Yoho for the hours of help to our wonderful organization. This special person also happens to be my Dad!

We are also in need of volunteers to help build a dorm to house our volunteer groups when they visit our area. So please, any one that is interested call 304-442-3157, 304-465-9732 or 304-469-9721. We would be very appreciative of any and all help in our endeavor. The dorm will benefit our area and SALS a great deal, so please volunteer a day, an hour or whatever time you can spare. We can use individuals with building trade skills or just folks who would like to help their community.

Dave Shaver, Construction Assistant

The summer and fall have been very busy. Vickie and I worked hard to provide ample supplies to volunteers with Christian Endeavor and many other volunteer groups. Together, we were able to accomplish a great deal.

I have worked on our two dozers that needed repairs. We now have a "Cat" and a "Deere" and both are now in good working condition.

In order to save about 50 cents/gallon on diesel fuel, we have secured a contract for off-road fuel from Bandy's Sunoco. I have installed a 110-gallon tank with electric pump on my truck to haul fuel to the equipment.

My main aggravation has been the New Page Housing dumpster. The dumpster is for SALS construction only; yet many people use it for their personal trash. As a result, it is always overflowing. I have had to clean up the overflow several times and do not like it. People are supposed to have their own trash service and those caught using the SALS dumpster illegally will get fined.

Group WorkCamps, Another Successful Summer

Debra Spurlock, Housing Specialist

Warm weather has come and gone and so has another year of Group WorkCamps. This year our first camp, which was in June, was located in a different area. Over the past years Group has repaired homes in the Montgomery and surrounding areas. This year we were able to extend the program to Oak Hill and surrounding areas. A total of 449 kids and 21 staff members were stationed at Oak Hill High School. The week before WorkCamps week was a very busy one. Six ARC members and I visited 64 homes counting materials, re-checking directions, and talking to residents. When this was completed, camp week was ready to begin. It went very smoothly and was a great success. A month later the whole process was repeated in the Montgomery area. I think Group WorkCamps is a wonderful program. Not only does it help to brighten up the homes in the various communities but it also brings a little joy and friendship between the residents and the student volunteers.

Over the past few months I've been busy preparing files for people who needed assistance with homes repairs. A majority of these folks received help through a Federal Home Loan Bank Grant.

Four families were taken to the bank to sign various papers to obtain this grant. Since the first grant has been completed, I have begun preparing files for the new grant received. I have already taken a number of families to the bank to sign. This too is a great program.

I've also been working with some of the various programs offered through Multi-Cap. Once a month we travel to Charleston to pick up food. We then deliver the food to the Multi-Cap office located at Kimberly. After that we re-load enough food for 35 families to bring back to our center in Beards Fork for distribution. I also participated in a project to distribute school supplies to eligible children in our area. Multi-Cap also offers a handyman project for people who qualify. This program offers money for materials for home repairs. I have helped several applicants with the application process. Once they obtained the materials we chipped in the labor through our various programs, such as Make - A - Difference- Day.

Not a day goes by that I don't receive at least one phone call from someone needing his or her home repaired. There is a great need in this area for the types of Programs we offer here at SALS. I really enjoy helping these folks, especially the ones whom really need and appreciate it. I hope to continue to help people in the years to come.

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Volunteers install new roofing and prepare home for new siding. Many low-income home-owners benefit from donated labor and materials.

After School Programs at SALS

Jessica Williams, aAmeriCorps/VISTA

We have been pretty busy lately, and may I also say that I recently married J.R. Williams, a former employee of SALS who is now working in the coal-mining industry. I finished the 21st Century Accent Education After-School program for the 2003-2004 school year at Mt. Hope High School, with around 40-45 kids enrolled. It was a lot of fun. After finishing with that, we had a six-week summer program in Beards Fork known as Energy Express, during which I had the privilege of being Volunteer Coordinator.

Before the program started I attended a very intense three-day training seminar at West Virginia Wesleyan College along with site coordinator Jason Crouch and five mentors. The mentors had the challenging job of working one on one with kids ranging in age of 5 to 13. There were 42 kids enrolled in the summer program. My position of Volunteer Coordinator was challenging as well. I had the job of recruiting and training volunteers for the program. We had approximately 60 volunteers with over 500 hours served. It was a very rewarding experience for me and I had a great time while doing it.

After Energy Express, we had a computer class for youngsters in the 6th-12th grades. The program was called "Creativity and Computing", during which kids got hands on experience with working on computers. Students from WVU taught the kids about animation and cartoon design. The program lasted one week with ten kids attending each day.

We are now doing the after-school program at

Beards Fork for the 2004-2005 school year. VISTA's work with site coordinator, Charlene Newkirk, for the program. VISTA's distributed approximately 200 applications in area schools and sent out over 500 applications in the mail. We had 34 kids attend the first day of the program and the number has increased to 40 each day. The kids have a really great time. I am preparing to go to Mt. Hope again to help out with their after school program.

Another very rewarding experience was having a spaghetti dinner to raise money for Robert Davis, a twelve-year old boy in need of a heart transplant. We served spaghetti, salad, a roll, desert, and a drink. We also raffled off a jean quilt, which was hand sewed by the VISTA's along with the help of Ms. Helen M. Powell, Chair of the SALS Board. We also raffled various other merchandise donated by local businesses. The dinner was a success.

Lisa King, AmeriCorps/Vista

Hello, I'm Lisa King, and I am a **VISTA**, I have just started my second year here SALS. Since my last report for the newsletter, I've been really busy. We finished up with the school year and our 21st Century "Accent Education" program. We then had Energy Express for six weeks during the summer, where we had 40 kids from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Monday through Friday starting June 22, through July 30, 2004.

During this time, there were five mentors (each having their own classroom with approximately 6 to 8 kids) who came and worked with the children, helping to keep their reading levels up and also doing crafts and exercising with them. We also provided breakfast and lunch. The program was a real success. After Energy Express ended, we **VISTA**s had a little time to get ready for the next 21st Century "Accent Education" Program, which started on September 7th.

So once again we are working with kids, but this time it is after school from approximately 2:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Upon arriving we give them a snack and then they must work on their homework with the two teachers that come here to the center. If they (the kids) do not have any homework, then they must read for 15 minutes. After this, we have other activities such as computer lab, yoga, crafts, etc. At approximately 5:30 p.m. We give them dinner. Afterwards we provide a way for them to go home.

We also had a Benefit Dinner on September 11, 2004 to help raise money for a 12 year old little boy, who is in need of a heart transplant. So we **VISTA**s have been very very busy, but keeping busy makes time fly.

Lisa Manley, AmeriCorps/VISTA

I am the new VISTA at SALS, However I am not new to SALS, since I have been the cook for the summer foods program with Energy Express for the past three years.

I attended my Pre-Service Orientation (PSO) training in Atlanta in August. This was my first time flying. The flight down was a little bumpy and the flight back was delayed on the runway for two hours due to a hurricane. That was quite an experience. The training was informative and motivational. I was anxious to get started when I came back.

I am working with the after school program. There is an increase in the attendance this year so all of us are kept busy with the computer lab, homework help, and playground supervision.

I am looking forward to a rewarding year as a VISTA and hope that I can make a difference.

Benefit for Heart Transplant a Success

Vickie Mullins-ARC Member (SALS)

The Southern Appalachian Labor School held a benefit spaghetti dinner on September 11 for Robert Davis, a twelve-year old boy who is in need of a heart transplant. We also raffled off a quilt, a Kroger gift card, soup bowl set from Elk Furniture, and a grill from Family Dollar.

Other donated items included a juicer/mixer, a fiberglass tape measure from Smitty's Hardware, a Porcelain Bear from Rainbow Floral, candles from Just For You, and gift certificates from Rabbit Gift Shop and Christian Family Bookstore. A \$15.00 gift card from TOMS-Montgomery was used to buy rolls and several cases of soda. Five cases of soft drinks from Oak Hill Kroger and a twelve pack of coke was donated by ARC member Roger Kelly.

Our VISTA'S and Ms. Helen M. Powell, Chairperson of SALS, made the quilt that was raffled. Community members Pasty King, Nadine Jensen, Anna Spurlock and SALS employees donated baked goods, such as fudge, cakes, and pies. Foodland donated a cake. Wendy Lang, Alma Manley, Elizabeth Darby, Garry Chapel, and George Hensley Jr. made cash donations.

A big thanks is due to all the folks who participated including: Charlene Newkirk (After School Program Coordinator) Lisa Manley, Marie Settle, Jessica Williams, Lisa King, (VISTA), Vickie Mullins, Debbie Spurlock, (Housing Specialist) Brenda Winter (WIA/YES Coordinator) Kim Barrett, Tracy Patrick, Becky Snyder, and Ms. Helen M. Powell. Proceeds were deposited in the Robert Davis Heart Fund at United Bank in Montgomery, WV.

YES Program Going Strong

Brenda Winter, WIA/YES Contact

We now have eight youth in the YES - Youth Enrichment Services job-training program and will be accepting several more after they have gone through the eligibility process at the Summersville Job Service. Heath Forren, Youth Advisor from RESA I, visits twice a week and aids in job search and schooling needs. He recently assisted two youth in being accepted in the Industrial Electricity class at the Fayette Plateau Vocational Technical Center in Oak Hill. Good luck to Michael Romage and James Estep in their career challenge. During the days of July 28-30 Heath and I were in a workshop with 12 Fayette County officials who deal with youth. The Keys to Innervisions is a character education program, which targets the beliefs and behaviors leading to violence, drug abuse/dependency, criminal behavior and social failure. This training was funded through a WV Department of Education grant received by the Fayette County Alternative Program. Co-author of the program, Phyliss Antonelli, facilitated this great training. She presented in November a similar workshop for supervisors and staff at SALS who work with youth.

Marie Settle, AmeriCorps/VISTA

My second year as an AmeriCorps/VISTA member began the day my first year ended. I enjoyed my first year and when the opportunity arose to sign for another, I was pleased to do so.

VISTA, which means Volunteers in Service to America, covers a wide range of projects. A VISTA member is on duty 24/7 and must be willing to commit 100% to the host site (SALS).

One of the projects I was involved in was Energy Express, a summer reading and nutrition program for school kids in grades K- 5th. SALS was the only site in Fayette County to offer this program. The kids learned reading really can be fun! On Friday every child received a book to take home, and after a six-week period his/her home library increased a total of six new books. Our space was limited to 40 kids and there was a list of several students waiting to enroll. Next summer we hope see both familiar and new little faces at the door of the school as site coordinators, Jessica Williams and Jason Crouch, welcome each child to Energy Express.

The after-school program, "Accent Education" is another project the VISTA's are involved in and again this year we have a "full house". There are two teachers on site to assist students with homework. The computer lab is fully functional with eleven computers on-line via Charter SALS *Journal*

Pipeline. An adult supervises the computer lab to be sure the kids are doing the right kind of "Internet surfing". We at SALS are very proud of the computers and take every precaution to ensure they are up and running properly. We realize the computer is a very valuable tool in all our kid's future.

SALS has several projects which are in the planning stage and hopefully when the next issue of the SALS Journal is published there will be more accomplishments to "brag" about. Every one at SALS is very proud of each new accomplishment. The staff, YouthBuild members, WIA/YES, VISTA's, and ARC members, just to name a few, are all under the same umbrella, working hard to make a difference in our community.

News from Jackie's Desk

by Jackie Asbury, Housing

Another year has come and gone at SALS. It has been a good year as far as grants we recieved. We were funded by YouthBuild, HUD Rural Housing and Economic Development, Federal Home Loan Banks of Pittsburgh and Atlanta, USDA Rural Development Affordable Housing Program grants for Upper Kanawha Valley Enterprise Community (UKVEC) zone and Fayette County, the Department of Labor, AmeriCorps/YouthBuild grant, just to name a few.

I went to Denver, Colorado in November for training with Group Work Camps. We will be doing weatherizations again in the summer of 2005 on homes in Oak Hill and surrounding areas the week of July 3rd through July 9th and in Montgomery and surrounding areas the week of July 17th through July 23rd. We will begin doing write ups at the beginning of the new year. Call Debbie Spurlock if you know of anyone needing minor repairs on their homes.

Jan Rezek and I worked on a paper about women in leadership roles in Appalachia specifically about their work for non-profits like SALS. We presented the paper at Ohio University at Zainesville in October and we are registered to present it at the Appalachian Studies conference in the spring.

The Appalachian Regional Commission at-risk adult program grant will be coming to a close at the end of this year. I just did a final report that went to Washington, DC. I hope we will get funding to do another year. This year went well and we sure could use the help of the ARC team to do the work write ups for Group Work Camps.

SALS did a lot of rehabs on homes this year. I know at least 20 rehabs and about 150 weatherizations were done this year alone. Two homes were built from the ground up, in Minden (Oak Hill) and in Page.

We are looking ahead for another successful year

like the one we had this year. I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and may God Bless You and Yours this Holiday Season and throughout the year !!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Until next year, Love to all...

Moving on to ARC

by Bonita Johnson, A.R.C. member

Now that I have completed three years of Ameri-Corps VISTA* (Volunteers In Service To America) I have moved on to a job even better at A.R.C. I guess you're wondering what A.R.C. stands for. It is the Appalachian Regional Commission. This program does a little bit of everything including help with Group Work Camps - helping them with materials, showing them locations and helping with anything they need to know.

I also pick up YouthBuild members at their homes, take them to their job sites, and even work with them. Then I pick them back up and take them home after an 8 hour shift. I run errands such as going to the mail room and the printing office. I help with applications, making sure they will be sent to whomever calls for one. I enjoy working with John David and Ruth Lanham. They've really taken time out to show me things that and have become very inspirational to me. I'd like to say thank you.

Andy Shaffer, ARC member

I am the newest member of the ARC team. With the help of Roger Kelly I think I have been doing pretty well so far. Roger and I have been doing a lot of clean up after Group Work Camps. We have returned a lot of unused building materials. Because of the copperhead snakes we saw we had to be real careful gathering trash and emptying the dumpsters. I hope to be a valuable employee at SALS.

Roger Kelly, ARC Member

Over the summer I participated in the Group WorkCamp Program. I helped with the set-up week, camp week, and clean-up week. I also attended a number of the nightly programs at which they showed slides of the residents. Seeing the smiles on their faces made all of my hard work worth while. This whole program was very rewarding for me in many ways.

After the camp week was over and all of the people had returned to their homes, I still had a job to do. Fellow ARC members and myself were responsible for completing the unfinished projects. When all the trash was removed, it was back to the job site for me. I worked with many volunteers from all over who came to SALS to help out. It's really great getting to meet so many new people. I hope to continue my work at SALS as long as possible.

“Accent Education”

by Charlene “Red” Newkirk, site coordinator

Once again, in collaboration with the New River Health Association, Fayette County Schools and SALS, the 21st Century Learning Center “Accent Education” began on Sept. 7th at our community center in Beards Fork. This is an educational program funded through both the WV and US Departments of Education.

Again this year, students at all grade levels attended four days of after-school programs which included homework help, wellness activities, recreation, special events, snack and supper. Assistance is offered in the following classes: basic skills, computers, fine arts, dance, yoga, and public speaking. The program begins when the busses arrive and the students report to the cafeteria for a snack. Activities continue until we serve a full hot meal for supper.

Students from Oak Hill Elementary, Collins Middle, Valley Elementary, Valley High, and Montgomery Middle schools attend the program. They live in the communities of Kimberly, Powellton, Mt. Carbon, Montgomery Heights, Smithers, Deepwater, Robson, Mulberry, North Page, Page, Kincaid, Ingram Branch, and Wriston.

We are excited that this year we have three vans to take students home after tutoring; thereby reducing transportation time. We also have increased our staff and will have teachers present to coordinate lesson work plans with the school system.

On October 14th we had an open house and “Lights on After School” program where the kids gave candles and information on cancer awareness and domestic violence. We gave out smoke detectors for safety awareness.

For Make a Difference Day, some kids went to Montgomery Extended Care, gave out stuffed animals to the residents, and spent a little time just talking with them.

Also on Halloween, the staff and I had a haunted house and party for the kids. In December the kids did a food drive and made food baskets to give to area families. Also fruit baskets were made for kids and their families.



Shirking Responsibilities, Bankruptcy Used To Take Workers' Lawful Benefits

By *JOHN DAVID*,

Published: 11/17/2004 in the The Charleston Gazette

BANKRUPTCIES and legal maneuvers to break pension and health-care promises made to employees have escalated. Within recent months, Weirton Steel, US Airways and Horizon Natural Resources have asked bankruptcy judges to cancel labor agreements, thereby eliminating obligations such as retiree health benefits and pensions.

The Horizon case, in which non-union Massey Energy used a bankruptcy buyout opportunity to cheaply obtain several union operations, including the Cannelton/Cyprus/Amax operation in Kanawha/Fayette counties, is one tactic.

Another tactic, as reported in *The Wall Street Journal*, is to sue retirees for reduced benefits. An example of the latter is the lawsuit against West Virginians who retired from Carl Icahn's American Car and Foundry (ACF Industries) in Putnam and Cabell counties.

This tactic involves revisited contract interpretation, such as claiming that "lifetime coverage" refers to the life of the contract, not lives of the retirees. A related language tactic is using a common contract escape clause that the company "reserves to right to change benefits" to mean that the company does not have to continue to cover certain categories, such as hospital/surgical care.

These situations put several unfortunate issues front and center. First, this country does not recognize comprehensive health care or a decent pension as a citizen right. In the absence of national policy, organizations led by the United Mine Workers and the then Amalgamated Clothing Workers paved the way for fringe benefits, including health care, to be included in negotiated labor agreements.

In practically every instance, including the 1946 Krug-Lewis Agreement (negotiated between Interior Secretary Julius Krug and UMWA President John L. Lewis) that set up the initial UMW Welfare and Retirement Fund, workers sacrificed wage increases for the promise of lifetime health-care and pension benefits. These promises were obligations and responsibilities agreed to by corporate America and top political leadership in the absence of national programs, such as those in Canada and Europe, that were legislatively obtained through the political process.

In many industrialized countries today, health care, paid vacation, and many other fringe benefits are codified,

as contrasted to here, where similar benefits are temporarily negotiated contractually for scattered groupings of employees.

Second, this country does not recognize that human resource obligations negotiated by companies are a legal debt equal to if in fact not superior to the debt owed to commercial vendors. Abraham Lincoln made the point clear when he said, "labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could not have existed had not labor first existed. Labor is superior to capital and deserves the much higher consideration."

Third, there is the issue of moral values. Corporations that over the years gain wage concessions and promised health/pension benefits for life, now have unscrupulous leaders. Benefits that promised economic security were agreed to by all parties. Workers, accepting the promise in good faith, paid for the promise over and over again. But when the promises had to be honored, the promise-makers danced and laughed. They milked assets and ran. They hid behind bankruptcy laws.

They preached in favor of moral values while they practiced deceit. They claimed to be in favor of family integrity while they practiced policies that disrupted and destroyed family stability. The decision to break commitments, promises and guarantees to workers and their families is morally despicable.

Fourth, there is the issue of democracy. All of us have been repeatedly lectured to by our political leaders about the need to fight for democracy and political freedom around the world. President Franklin Roosevelt talked about the essential human freedoms that we seek to address, including the "freedom from want" and the "freedom from fear." What an irony it is when non-union coal miners fear for their jobs and are afraid to speak out because they are "employees at will" and do not have workplace democracy. What an irony it is for UMW coal miners to have their economic freedoms and security shredded by dictatorial decisions that dominate the workplace.

The described contradictions cause deep division and consternation. We cannot boast of being free politically when we permit workers to be economically enslaved, disregarded, disrespected and relegated to the human scrap heap. Bankruptcy laws must become humane. Judges must be made accountable. Economic terrorism must be stopped. And fairness, good working relations, and honesty must return as the top priority to the value system of those who lead corporate America.

Dr. David, a professor at WVU-Tech, is a *Gazette* contributing columnist.

Solidarity Festival in Pictures:



Anne Feeny - Singer/Songwriter



Jude Binder - Dance & Masks



Shayer & Kroosahl Force - Reggae

Reinvest in America Tour Stops at New River Clinic

Scarbro is a quiet community off the beaten path in Fayette County. However, this June things livened up when the Rev. Jesse Jackson Jr. and Cecil Roberts, UMWA president, rolled into town on a big bus with “Reinvest in America” across each side. Jackson said the purpose of the tour was to “lift spirits.” “We’re engaged in the great struggle to reinvest in America and put America back to work,” he said.

Scarbro is also the home of the New River Family Health Clinic where folks can receive health care and pay a sliding fee depending on their income. “This is quite an honor,” commented Director Dave Sotack about the Tour. “This clinic was begun in 1978 under the auspices of the United Mine Workers. It means a lot to these people for Cecil Roberts to be here in the community. And having Jesse Jackson here is a double whammy.”

Before addressing the crowd Jackson and Roberts toured the clinic and spoke with employees and patients. Roberts told them they’re doing “the Lord’s work.” During his speech he later called the clinic “part of our family” and also recognized SALS YouthBuild workers.

The New River Clinic just began a monthly program providing health services at SALS for program workers and staff with hopes of expanding in the future.

SALS Journal



Rev. Jackson speaks as citizens register to vote

Letters from Volunteers

Bonita,

I wanted to thank you very much for visiting our work site. I really enjoyed listening to your background, It was very encouraging to our workgroup to hear about our resident, since we will not be able to meet him. You truly represented God today and I really appreciate being able to meet you

Amanda - Crew 10

Debbie,

We appreciated all the work that you did to make this workcamp run smoothly. As well as the caring and concern of the people you work with to make this camp a success.

God Bless, Pat Linden Director

Bonita,

We've been so busy this week that I didn't have time to get you a card, but I wanted to say how truly blessed I have been by you this week. To list off all your strengths would take me many sheets of this paper, but you are primarily a giving, energetic, beacon of light. I love your smile, your laugh, and your beautiful voice, You helped me so much this week! It's purely a blessing to have spent time with you. I just can't say enough how much I appreciate you and enjoy your spirit. May God richly bless you in all you do. If you get a chance drop me a line sometime. I'll send you some pictures.

Bets wishes until we meet again, Jen, photographer



SALS Journal

Book Review:

Parecon: Life After Capitalism

From the English Jacket:

How can we replace the economics of exploitation and greed with an economics of equitable cooperation and solidarity? How can we put people in charge of their own economic life, rather than being controlled by corporations and markets? How can we foster economic well-being that benefits the whole society, rather than engorgement of the few?

In this highly praised book, attracting worldwide attention and support, Michael Albert provides an answer: Participatory Economics, called parecon for short, is a new economy beyond capitalism. Parecon celebrates solidarity, equity, diversity, and people democratically controlling their own lives. To attain these values, it utilizes original institutions for production, consumption, and allocation, described throughout the book. .

Howard Zinn Comments: "I can't count the number of times when serious critics of our social system would say to me: 'Why can't we come up with a vision of what a good society would be like?' This is what Mike Albert boldly does in Parecon: Life After Capitalism, and the result is an imaginative, carefully reasoned description, persistently provocative, of how we might live free from economic injustice."

Noam Chomsky Comments: "There is enormous dissatisfaction, worldwide, with prevailing socioeconomic conditions and the choices imposed by the reigning institutions. Calls for change range from patchwork reform to more far-reaching changes. Michael Albert's work on participatory economics outlines in substantial detail a program of radical reconstruction, presenting a vision that draws from a rich tradition of thought and practice of the libertarian left and popular movements, but adding novel critical analysis and specific ideas and modes of implementation for constructive alternatives. It merits close attention, debate, and action."

For additional reviews and ordering info go to -
www.zmag.org/ParEcon/pelac.htm

Why Most Of Us Pay More Taxes Than Our Share

ZNet Commentary, By Ben Bagdikian

If you have never heard of Vanuatu, or the economies of Andorra and Labuan, then you're one of us millions of ordinary citizens of the United States who, each year, pay a higher percentage of federal income tax revenues than is our true share.

The three places above are tax shelters for corporations and the very rich whose accountants do their homework the tax code of the United States and have the money to hire the shelter experts on the best hiding places in the world and the tax code loopholes for corporations and the truly rich in.

There has been jiggling of obscure tax code language accomplished by lobbyists and the unrestrained greed of the free market ideologues over the years, especially since the deregulation hysteria that started 30 years ago and has continued as a religious mission right up to the time that Enron turned belly-up. We're all stuck with the cost of cleaning up the mess left by billionaires and compliant politicians.

The Enron scandal made the Cayman Islands front page news. But the Caymans are only one of the many places that make it possible for some of the less reputable corporations of the country to cut, eliminate or even get tax refunds in years when they make large profits.

It was the Caymans that Enron used in a reverse of the usual tactic. They ping-ponged subsidiary accounts among their subsidiaries, padding the expenses with each stroke until they had built up a "cost of operation" that let them sell electricity to, for example, California, for billions above the real cost and do it with the helpless gesture, "What can we do? Our costs have gone up."

Offshore tax sheltering is the more common corporate attraction. Recently it has been front page news that a company usually described as "venerable"

[Dictionary: "worthy of reverence by virtue of dignity, character...or age."], Stanley Works, maker of the universally known yellow-and-black measuring tapes, and other common tools. It has announced that it is ending 150 years in New Britain, Connecticut in order to move to Bermuda where there is no income tax. That will save the company and its top executives billions of dollars while still selling their goods to the American householders, carpenters and other people who work for a living and pay taxes to their own government.

A complex of companies offer corporations special services in finding the best offshore tax havens and doing

all the paper work. In some cases, all it takes is less than \$1,000 to open a maildrop, postoffice address, and small incorporation fee.

Other companies do more. One will offer tax forms that let you do it all on line. The firm will get you incorporation papers, provide some boilerplate by-laws, a letter specifying the officers and directors of the offshore paper front, an offshore banking address, a "virtual" (strictly Internet) e-mail address, fax, answering machine, signature stamp, and the other paraphernalia of a business and operation on an island you have never seen. The deluxe service, if you're interested, costs \$4,000.

For Stanley Works, for example, according to the Multex Financial Investing Reports, the tax-free Bermuda move presumably will apply to the compensation of the following Stanley officers: John Trani, chairman and CEO, receives \$2.9 million compensation a year, and the annual revenue of his company in 2001 of \$2.6 billion, on which the many common corporate deductions, left Stanley Works with income before taxes of \$237 million, on which the company paid \$78 million corporate income tax.

According to Taxpayers for Common Sense, because of this and other special tax breaks and loopholes, "many of the biggest corporations in the U.S. pay few or no taxes on their profits."

A study by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy of the 250 largest corporations in the country found that the corporations paid an average of 20.1 percent on their 1996-1998 profits. That is close to half the "required" 35 percent corporate rate demanded by the U.S. tax code.

These largest companies should have owed \$257 billion, but in fact paid \$159 billion. Some of the most profitable companies in the period got tax refunds of \$3.2 billion. The biggest winner in tax breaks was General Electric. Cisco Systems, second.

Most profitable had \$2.7 billion in net earnings and paid no taxes. Texaco reported \$3.4 billion in profits and received \$304 million in rebates. Oil companies in general are major dodgers of normal income taxes.

Stock options, the favorite paper in the go-go dot-come spree, are the fastest growing winners in tax breaks. According to the Institute they do this by taking the difference between what an employee, including executives, pay for the issued options and what the options are worth. Most options are given as additions to or in lieu of pay but most for companies still in profitable business are in fact worth far more than the cost to the recipient.

Similar changes over the years have radically altered the ratio of what corporations pay into the total federal income tax pool compared to ordinary taxpayers. It has been a steady process of fleecing ordinary working people. Before World War II, the federal income tax

Taxes, continued from previous page

receipts were 50-50, corporate-versus-individuals. It is now 20 corporate and 80 individuals.

Ben H. Bagdikian is a Berkeley writer, and author of The Media Monopoly. Editor's note: This commentary was originally published by www.ZNet.org on June 07, 2002 - the situation on fair taxation has only gotten worse since then.

Ten Questions, continued from page two

sider an unnecessary and unjust war? (www.fair.org)

10. Speaking of morality, where is the moral outrage directed against the leaders of churches that advocated the election or defeat of candidates from their pulpits? These religious leaders threaten the tax-exempt status of all of our houses of worship, and threaten their congregations with massive fines resulting from violations of federal or state election laws. (www.pfaw.org)

Given these and other questions, democracy-loving Americans of every political persuasion should be demanding that Congress and our state legislatures get to work immediately to make fundamental changes in the way we vote. The future of democracy in this country could well depend on the actions we take over the next few months.

Originally Published on Monday, November 8, 2004 by CommonDreams.org

Moving Ahead in the New Year

by Jennifer Hamm, Housing Specialist

SALS is moving ahead for the new year. A lot of goals have been reached and a lot of new ones have been set. There have been low income families served with loans from the West Virginia Housing Development Fund. On or two at a time have been released from the fund. SALS has had families files and information ready and available for the fund to readily serve as many as possible. I have been training in new ways to serve families as a housing counselor and efficient ways of keeping information confidential and complete. If you are low-income and feel stuck, call 442-3156 and ask for Jennifer Hamm. SALS and I will do everything possible to help you and your family into affordable housing.

SALS Journal

Director's report, continued from page three

SALS Board Member) Bolts Willis on educational support services for miners impacted by the Horizon bankruptcy.

The summer and after-school youth programs have been going well, thanks to the 21st Century "Community Learning Center" collaborative with New River Health Association and Fayette County Schools. Charlene (Red) Newkirk, SALS VISTAs, Vickie Mullins, and others have done an excellent job.

SALS staff pitched in and did several excellent projects for "Make A Difference Day".

Jennifer Hamm, Debbie Spurlock, and Artie Mullins attended the HOME training program sponsored by the WV Housing Development Fund. Artie also attended a computer labor workshop sponsored by Mission West Virginia

We are sorry to report that SALS Board Member Bob Friley's mother passed away. We are also sorry to report that SALS Treasurer Sister Clara's house was ransacked and that someone may have attempted to torch her church next door. Board member Tom Bass's mother-in-Law also passed away. She was the mother of Libby Bass, who prints the SALS newsletter.

Vickie Mullins is the new VISTA coordinator. She replaces Brenda Winter, who is now directing the AmeriCorps and youth offender programs. Welcome to Jimmy Adkins, who has joined the site supervisor staff.

Faith Based Groups Help with Housing

by Vickie Mullins

During the summer, I had the pleasure of working with a church group from the First Christian Church in New Castle, Indiana. We met on a Sunday evening and there were about 20 people in the group with men, women, boys, and girls. I along with other ARC members was assigned to a group. I had to take them out to different houses that needed work finished leftover from the Group Work Camps and Rehab teams.

The families were so happy to see the volunteers and grateful that their houses would finally get finished. The repairs consisted of : painting, repairing a wheel chair ramp, replacing a window in a elderly lady's home, building a Gazebo, (at SALS community building), installing some fascia on a porch, and building a wheel chair ramp for Betty Joe Ray.

The week went by so fast, and then it was time to say our good bye's! The families were pleased with the work, and knew God had sent the volunteers to be part of their lives for a short period of time!

Southern Appalachian Labor School - Who We Are

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

Housing/WVU-Tech: 304-442-3042 or 442-3156

Construction Coordinator: 304-469-9721

John David, Director - 304-442-3157

WEB: www.sals.info

George Hensley, Jr YouthBuild Trainers/
Supervisors
Jimmy Adkins

Tom McClung

Terry Black

Bonita Johnson AmeriCorps/VISTA

Linda Dillard Custodian

Marie Settle Case Worker

Heather Forren Youth Advisor/RESA

21st Century 'Accent Education'

After School Program:

Charlene Newkirk Site Coordinator

Terri Harlan Project Coordinator

Benitez Jackson Project Director

Lisa Manley AmeriCorps/VISTA

Maria Settle AmeriCorps/VISTA

Lisa King AmeriCorps/VISTA

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Dave Shaver YouthBuild Trainer/
Construction Assistant

* Indicates members of the SALS Leadership Team

New River/Beards Fork Health Clinic

Health Project

Marie Settle, CNA

Dr. Dan Doyle, M.D.

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



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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SALS engages in solitication 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.