



SALS JOURNAL

a publication of the Southern Appalachian Labor School

Volume 29 Issue 2

www.sals.info

Winter/2006

Filmmaker Speaks on Buffalo Creek Disaster

On June 27th two documentaries on the Buffalo Creek Disaster were screened and discussed at SALS Community Center. Appalshop Filmmaker Mimi Pickering presented her awarding-winning films, *THE BUFFALO CREEK FLOOD: AN ACT OF MAN* and *BUFFALO CREEK REVISITED*. After the screening there was a lively community discussion with student volunteers and local residents on the Buffalo Creek flood 33 years later. SALS Chair, Helen Powell, recalled riding up into Buffalo Creek immediately after the flood with Governor Arch Moore. She recalled being appalled that the initial response of the head of state government was one of damage control for the coal industry above concern for the victims.

The Buffalo Creek Flood: An Act Of Man, poignantly portrays the impact that the February 1972 collapse of a coal-waste dam had on the West Virginia communities it devastated. A wall of sludge, debris and water tore through the valley below, leaving in its wake 125 dead and 4,000 homeless. The Pittston Company, owners of the dam, maintained that the disaster was "an act of God." The film contends that the disaster was not an isolated incident: rather it was an example of an industry-wide attitude that places a greater value on profits and production than the health and safety of coal miners, their families, and their communities.

This film was recently named by the Librarian of Congress to the National Film Registry. They described it as a "powerful documentary" that "represents the finest in regional filmmaking, providing important understanding of the environmental and cultural history of the Appalachian region." **For more see - www.buffalocreekflood.org**



*Filmmaker Mimi Pickering leads a community discussion after showing *The Buffalo Creek Flood**

Record Year for Volunteers and AmeriCorps

Artie Mullins, AmeriCorps Director/ Volunteer Coordinator

This was a record year for volunteers at SALS. During the summer months, Fayette County was invaded by hoards of tool toting teens eager to make a change. Christian Endeavor, Group Work Camps, Challenge Camps, and Global Volunteers were among the organizations spearheaded this summer's invasion. Fayette County is most fortunate to host these altruistic guests. Our community not only reaps the benefits of the volunteer labor, but the economy receives a boost when factoring in the amount of spending a couple of thousand youth must do and the amount of materials purchased to serve over 150 families.

The volunteers who passed through the Beards Fork facility included local college students from WVU

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Alaska's Wealth Rebate - Good for WV?

John P. David, Ph.D. WV Tech

The legislature has completed its work in tinkering with taxes in West Virginia. If the purpose was a band-aid to provide a fiscally conservative package that included a little of something for everyone, the changes were successful. If the purpose was to help eliminate poverty in West Virginia, the changes will not make a major difference.

According to Dr. Gar Alperovitz, Professor of Political Economy at the University of Maryland, the most critical issue facing the survival of our nation is wealth ownership, meaning that the rich are becoming richer and the poor are becoming poorer. Dr. Alperovitz, speaking at the Martin Luther King, III Poverty in America Summit, stated the U.S. has become the most unequal society among industrialized nations, with the top 1% of the population now owning 98% of the nation's wealth. Those in poverty have risen to 37 million, including 13 million children. Under-employment has sky-rocketed and those without any or without adequate health insurance have also dramatically increased. In addition, according to a recent article in the Washington Post, "the USDA said that 12% of Americans – 35 million people – could not put food on the table at least part of last year, eleven million of them reported going hungry at times, and the number of hungriest Americans has risen over the past five years". Those relegated to surviving on minimum wage can only earn \$10,600 if they work full-time, which is only 79% of the amount the federal government calculates as the poverty level for a family of two. While the average paycheck for a working American has dipped in recent years, the Wall Street Journal notes that the average CEO pay was 369 times as much as the average worker in 2005, compared to 131 times in 1993 and 36 times in 1976.

Here at home, the number of those in poverty in West Virginia has risen while coal production has soared. National coal production in 1980 was 830 million tons while in 2005 production was 1130 million tons. Previously unionized firms like Horizon/Cannelton and Gateway are flocking to bankruptcy court to shed union contracts and cut labor costs. Peabody, 80% union in 1980, now has 85% of its coal come from "union-free operations" while rewarding, according to the Washing-

ton Post, its departing chief executive with \$46 million last year.

In fact, the matter is more than poverty. It is the problem of growing impoverishment, as more and more West Virginians are becoming poorer. This is in spite of the fact that West Virginia, in regard to its natural resources like coal and gas, is an extraordinarily wealthy state. Decades ago after the coalfields were unionized, decent wages and benefits paid to the many in those industries were the way that people reaped a return of the state's abundant wealth. Today, with low employment and record production, this wealth pay-back relationship has been severed. Those who own the resources have become extremely wealthy while an increasing number of West Virginians have a substantially smaller slice of the economic pie. More so, they continue to pay indirectly a high price for resource extraction, as they grapple with flooding, poor roads, lack of exercise facilities, and dilapidated former company houses.

If the legislature was serious about dealing with growing impoverishment in West Virginia, it would give consideration to permit residents in having a share of the state's abundant wealth in natural resources. An example of such a plan operates in Alaska, which is rich in oil. This state has a special assessment of each barrel of oil which goes into the Alaska Permanent Fund. This fund is a savings trust designed to support state services and income dividends to residents. Each year, Alaska residents receive a huge rebate of many thousands of dollars from the proceeds of the oil production.

Such a "Give Some Back" plan should be worthy of study in West Virginia. No state that is so rich should permit so many people to become increasingly impoverished. Clearly and somehow, residents de-

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The SALS *Journal* is published by
The Southern
Appalachian Labor School,
a regional grassroots organization
dedicated to social & environmental
justice and workers rights.
We welcome articles and
submissions by our readers.
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WWW.SALS.INFO
SALS reserves the right to edit
or decline submissions.
United Assoc. of Labor Education
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Dear SALS Supporter:

This year is the 30th Anniversary of SALS. For 30 years, SALS has been at the forefront to provide education, research, and linkages for disenfranchised people in order to promote understanding, empowerment, and change. It is our belief that people have within themselves the power to take control over their own lives if presented with the opportunity.

We live in challenging times. Good jobs at livable wages with decent benefits are disappearing. The safety net programs are being shredded. Our human rights to shelter, health care, and economic dignity are consistently violated. To counter all of this, SALS is sowing seeds that can grow into a broad-based movement for social and economic justice.

Over the past years, our focus has been on self-help, empowerment, and popular participatory education to form grassroots leadership. We are attempting to diversity and have developed new programs that deal with youth offenders, lead contamination, craft entrepreneurship, and different home financing strategies. The bottom line, however, is that we need help more than ever from you.

Help can come to us in different packages. We need everything, including land, buildings, vehicles, building supplies, supplies for the Community Center, and cash.

Anything contributes something to reducing our cost of doing what we are doing. If you donate a value of at least \$500 and pay taxes in West Virginia, you can take advantage of the state tax credits allocated to SALS. Donors receive both a state tax credit and a possible federal charitable contribution, thereby helping both us and you at the same time.

Hopefully, you realize that what we are doing is meaningful, important, empowering, and deserving of your generous support. We rely on you and appreciate your help. Be well, do good things, and keep in touch!

Best Wishes,
John David, Executive Director

PS You can print the form at the end of this newsletter for your contribution.
SALS Journal

Director's Report

John P. David

SALS faces a new challenge as the YouthBuild program, which has been housed at HUD since inception, has been transferred to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). DOL has different requirements, primarily in the area of job attainment in growing employment sectors, which makes it more difficult in depressed areas such as ours.

SALS has received several grants recently. One was Rural Housing and Economic Development. Another was the Great America Bake-Off through PARADE, a weekly newspaper supplement. A third was from USDA for home rehabilitations. Another has to do with housing counseling and the last was from West Virginia's Promise to assure student success with healthy foods. A renewal grant included the food program for the after-school program and the second year of the transportation grant for an expanded summer food program.

Since SALS is now a HUD certified housing counseling agency, it was necessary to train our staff. Four people went to Washington, D.C. for training conducted by the Neighborhood Works Training Institute. Those who became certified were Jessica Williams, Brenda Winter, Artie Mullins, and Nia Jackson.

SALS was renewed for West Virginia tax credit, which has been a popular program to reward those who contribute cash, land, supplies, or vehicles to us. Mike Young and Gordon Billheimer have already stepped to the plate to kick off the new campaign. We have received many donations during the past months and we would like to thank everyone for helping us continue our mission.

Donations also take place in the contribution of time. Many college groups as well as individuals with Global Volunteers have returned to contribute time and energy and it is always inspirational to welcome folks back to their home away from home.

Several of us have attended meetings and sessions in various places. Brenda Winter was in Sante Fe for a rural YouthBuild retreat, and Kathryn South, Artie Mullins, and I were in Boston for a YouthBuild Ameri-Corps session. Most staff members have been to an array of meetings in Morgantown, Flatwoods, Beckley, and Charleston on a variety of issues, as we struggle to stay afloat during times when funds have become more



SALS Flooring crew preping to lay carpet scarce.

SALS has started its third and final year under the 21st Century Community Learning Center "Accent Education" after-school programs. Work will begin soon on submission of a new proposal. Tony Canada has replaced Benitez Jackson at the New River Health Association as the collaborative coordinator.

In regard to New River, two new initiatives are underway. One is a county-wide collaborative substance prevention grant. For SALS, this would provide us with a targeted approach for our at-risk youth as well as a program for the after school youth. The second is a wellness program that would contract with enrolled community participants on personalized weekly goals and objectives tied to the satellite clinic at the Community Center.

A particular thanks is due to Dr. Betty Lou Waters, a Professor of English at WVU-Tech. Each year, Dr. Waters purchases a huge quantity of children's books and donates them to area schools and SALS. A special thanks is also due to the many volunteers who came to work with us during 2006. At last count, over 1700 people came. Finally, a very special thanks is due to Jack and Donna Platter, who noted in the obituary for Jack's father (Carl Henry "Buck" Platter, Sr.) that donations should be made to SALS in lieu of flowers.

SALS lost a key Board Member in the untimely death of Floyd McKnight. Samantha Allen, a former Board Member and member of the West Virginia Rainbow Coalition, also died. Finally, Board Member Rick Wadsworth lost his son in a diving accident while visiting the Carribean.

Continued next page



Computer Lab training for SALS workers

Several supporters have inquired about making a bequest provision in their will to help continue the critical work of SALS. If this pertains to your situation, we suggest using the following language when you draft your will:

“I give to the Southern Appalachian Labor School Foundation, Inc., a West Virginia non-profit corporation with its principal offices at P. O. Box 127, Kincaid, WV 25119, (all or ____%) of my residuary estate or (the sum of \$ _____) to be used for its general purposes”.

On behalf of everyone with SALS, we thank you for your consideration and support. This is the 30th Anniversary for SALS and without the help of many, we would not have survived.

The project funded by EPA is moving forward. The project seeks to inform 100 families in homes that we have rehabilitated about the hazards of lead and mercury contamination. Fifty families will actually have tests conducted on their premises.

SALS was one of two sites in Appalachia selected for a visit by the “Recognizing the Dream” campaign chaired by Martin Luther King III. The six person team, including King and a camera crew, visited UMWA miners with the Cannelton local, WVU-Tech President Charles Bayless, a WVU-Tech sociology class taught by SALS Board Member Jan Rezek, Fayette County community leaders in Fayetteville, and a packed room of area residents at the SALS Community Center in Beards Fork. Approximately twenty sites nationally were targeted for visits and Vickie Smith flew to Atlanta for an October meeting with representatives from all of the groups. A summit, with SALS included, was held in November in Washington, D.C. and the kick-off for the revitalized “Poor People’s Campaign” will occur on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in January, 2007.

SALS Journal

Volunteers, continued from page one

Tech, Global Volunteer Groups from all over North America, and faith based groups. Our loyal friends from St James Parish visited again in July and as always, brought a lot of energy into the community. Notre Dame and Rutgers were among the college groups that were with us in the spring and early summer. The Volunteers always contribute an incredible amount of work and a load of moral support to our young workers.

As with Group Work Camps and Christian Endeavor, Global Volunteers has become an important partner who has become an established part of our organization and community. Global Volunteers has been able to brand themselves and have created a sort of identity in the community. Our young folks always are aware when our volunteers are with Global Volunteers. The youth have come to expect a level of interaction with these volunteers because the Global Volunteers policy of honoring local people and seeking out one-on-one relationships with community members.

The SALS AmeriCorps members partnered with Group Work Camps to facilitate the servicing of 140 plus homes. The families received a variety of improvements such as interior and exterior painting, decks, wheelchair ramps and other repairs. The members also were responsible for completing all tasks that could not be finished by the volunteers. Because of rain, a number of homes were not completed in the first week there is plenty of painting to be completed.

In October one of our recently recruited AmeriCorps members, Brian Hamilton, was selected to attend an AmeriCorps conference in Washington D.C. Brian did an excellent job of representing SALS and returned home with loads of ideas to begin this year of AmeriCorps service. The entire country was represented at the event where topics of community service and citizenship were the focus. Brian says he didn’t realize how meaningful his role as member was and was quiet surprised when everyone sang happy birthday to him at the first evening of his arrival.

Lights on After School at the Capitol

by Jessica Williams

The Beards Fork After School Program went to the Capitol for Lights on After School on October, 12th. All area After School programs showed up for this event, they all received bright orange T-shirts, and flashing red

light bulbs to remind people that just because school is out for the day it doesn't mean that a child's day is over, we need to leave the lights on for our children. First Lady Gayle Manchin read a book to the kids, a puppet show was performed and the children also got their faces painted. Kanawha County 911 services were available for mock 911 calls to teach the children how to make a 911 call and be sure they do it right. Dinner was provided at Shoney's. The children had a great time.

Summer Food/Transportation Program Extended

By Vickie Mullins, VISTA Supervisor

The Summer Food Program ran an extra six weeks this year. This expanded program allowed children to eat nutritious meals during the entire summer. Breakfast and lunch everyday were fed to the children, who came from Oak Hill on one end, Boomer on the other end, and all points in between. They arrived at around 8:30 a.m. and watched movies until 9. Then breakfast began and children ate everything in sight. They loved to eat!

The kids also were taught different crafts, played games, and taken on several field trips. The field trips were on Fridays. The parents liked the idea that their children could come to a safe place and that they were provided with two hot meals. This program allowed the kids to have fun and have something to do during the summer. Kids tend to get bored. This causes trouble and leads to being punished.

We have to continue to provide programs that offer kids positive things to do and help keep them out of trouble. We must continue to feed during the summer months since many kids go without meals. They look forward to waking up to a nice hot breakfast. Nutritious meals affect the way children act, their behavior, and their mood. The program will start back again next year and we look forward to serving the kids who need hot meals and the ones who need a safe place to hang out!

Second Annual Halloween Carnival a Success

Southern Appalachian Labor School held its second annual Halloween carnival in Beards Fork on Saturday, October 28, 2006. Price for admission was 50 cents or

a can of pet food at the door. The food was donated to the Fayette County animal shelter.

There was a charge of \$1.00 for ten activity tickets. We had various games for the children to play at one or two tickets a game. We also had an old fashioned cake walk, twenty cakes were given away to 20 lucky children. All of the cakes were donated by community members and SALS employees.

The cost of the haunted house was \$1.00. It was very scary and there was a good turn out.

We also sold hot dogs, sodas, and nachos in addition to baked goods. People who decorated and worked the program were Vickie Mullins (VISTA supervisor), Jessica Williams, Lisa Manley and Iris Adkins all VISTAs at the SALS, Linda Dillard (Ameri-Corps member), Debbie Spurlock (Housing Specialist), and a host of volunteers who gave their time and effort to the project.

Construction Manager Report

Vickie Smith

Winter has arrived and brought a close to a very busy summer. We now have four new homes under construction. Two new homes, one in Page and one at Hilltop are finished. We have also completed three rehabs in the past two months. We are currently working on several other rehabs in Fayette county.

We finally have water at our Hilltop site but have been unable to get the sewer situation on track from the White Oak PSD for our development. This may not happen this year since the weather will soon be an issue that we have to deal with. The current sewage line is exposed and will begin failing from the cold weather. Maybe things will start then. We can longer afford to maintain these inappropriately installed lines.

Several of our youth are making great strides in their NCCER certification. Congratulations to all of our youth for their go to it attitude!!!! GOOD JOB TO ALL OF YOU!! Our young people are taking control of their lives and changing the lives of others around them.

I would like to thank all of our vendors for their contributions this past year. These contributions enable the organization to help the many needy, deserving people in our county. It is a wonderful feeling to know that we have some local companies that have the same concern on the various issues that affect the people in this country. We look forward to their continued support in

the upcoming year.

Our organization would greatly benefit with more support from local contractors, church groups, and individual volunteers in our community. We receive a lot of volunteers but most are from out of state. It would be nice to see more local support in our own community. The SALS organization has been around for 30 years and we feel that we have a track record for making a positive change in our community. It would be beneficial to our youth if they had increased support from the local community behind them.

Brenda's News

Brenda Winter, Housing/Fiscal Manager

Since my last article, I have begun working in the HOME Program. My first adventure in housing was taking a client to close on his home, located in SALS Landing in Page. I have also attended Home Buyer's Education Training in Washington, D.C. for a whole week, in which at the end, one had to pass a test to be certified as a Housing Counselor. Thanks to my lucky stars, because I passed! Part of my new position is qualifying families for new homes, getting their files together to send to the West Virginia Housing Development Fund, and doing Home Buyer Education classes along with the other counselors.

This doesn't mean that my other duties have stopped. I still work with the youth, especially with the Craft Factory, in which the youth build wood crafts using recycled materials from the job site. The Craft Factory is funded by a grant from the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation. Crafts will be sold to volunteers and community members who are interested in "Appalachian Mountain Crafts" with a percentage of the profit going to the youth who worked on them.

I still participate in financial management such as writing checks to pay the bills for SALS. I also have been managing the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) Food, Rent, and Utility Program. This program was designed to assist families with needs in collaboration with the Fayette County Emergency Food Assistance Shelter in Fayetteville, West Virginia. We serve low income families who have been referred by other agencies in the areas of the Loop Creek Catchment Area from Kincaid to Deepwater. I hope to continue my job with helping families in Fayette County, because the need is so great. After all, we are here to serve.

SALS Journal



SALS crew works on new homes at Hilltop in Oakhill

Construction Reports

Terry Black, Site Supervisor

My crew members have been working on a house on Valley Street in Oak Hill. They have been hanging siding and soffit as well as painting and "mudding". We have also been working on the house on Virginia Avenue in Oak Hill, There we have done many different things including drywall, painting, and working with Ron's crew on the windows and doors. We also worked on an east end site in Oak Hill, in which we had to take off a room in addition to installing windows and doors, shower units, and putting up considerable drywall and insulation.

Ron Yellets, Site Supervisor

I have been assigned virtually a new crew since the last newsletter was published. The crew has worked at various sites at Vickie Smith's discretion. The past summer proved exhausting as the assignment was Hilltop and construction of three new homes. Several Work-Camps and Christian Endeavor volunteers took part in the construction of the homes and to keep the job site supplied proved a challenge.

Ron and crew have recently been working at the Virginia Street site in Oak Hill. Most of the crew members are new and inexperienced and, as a result, things do tend to move slowly. Nevertheless, excellent progress is being made. We've had to complete some of the work that volunteers left undone and it is finally beginning to take form. We will soon be ready for doors

and trim work on the inside. Ron's crew consists of Nick Bragg (Crew Leader), Steven Cannaday, James Boggess, David Buck, Caleb Sutphin, and James Johnston.

Jim Adkins, Site Supervisor

Currently we are working at the Hilltop site. House one is complete and has been inspected. House two is being wired and getting ready for drywall. House three is getting the roof finished and some framing work. House seven is getting underway with the foundation almost complete.

My crew also worked in Armstrong Creek at McMillion's site. We completed a 12 x 18 room addition, and installed new ceilings in all rooms. We added closets in the bedrooms.

I have many new crew members. They include Josh Persinger, Louis Figueroa, Melissa Figueroa, James Boggess, Justin Ellison, Robert Wriston. Additional existing members are Becky Stark and Cindy O'Hara.

One student, Melissa Figueroa, has completed all of her certification tests for a GED. All of the others have at least completed three sections of the test.

Ashes to Assets

George Hensley, Site Supervisor

Misfortune, accidents, and bad luck visit all of us sometime in our life. Unfortunately an accident befell Dennis Ballangee in 2003 and resulted in the partial destruction of his home by fire. After some time had passed the WV Housing Fund took possession of the property and SALS was able to reclaim the home that it had originally built.

The restoration of the property took place in June 2006 till October 2006. This was a difficult five months of work. The house sustained significant damage to the main living areas namely laundry room, hallway, living room and part of the kitchen.

All woodwork, doors, windows and trim had to be replaced. Roof sheeting and most of the wiring, including the 200 amp service panel, were damaged. Twenty eight sheets of drywall were used to restore the walls. Smoke damage resulted in the replacement of all of the attic insulation. All ceiling lights, fans, and smoke alarms were replaced. Carpet and vinyl were reinstalled in the entire house.

Even below the floor level there was damage, as the

plumbing was not winterized and subsequently burst or split apart.

Except for some small roof damage, the exterior escaped fire damage. The only bright spot in this fiery mess was the bathroom. This room was spared of fire damage simply because the door was closed.

The Loup Creek Volunteer Fire Department should be commended for its quick and professional response to this near tragedy. Five more minutes would have made a difference between rehab or rebuild.

The crew of YouthBuild and AmeriCorps workers, including William Manley, Sue Navicki, Chris Shaver, and Tabitha Wiant did a great job in cleaning up the mess.

SALS was also fortunate in receiving many volunteer from several different groups, such as Christian Endeavor, Group WorkCamps, Global Volunteers, and individuals.

Also a thanks to Artie Mullins, Bernie Blackberry, 84 Lumber, Lowe's and Crown windows for extra help and supplies.

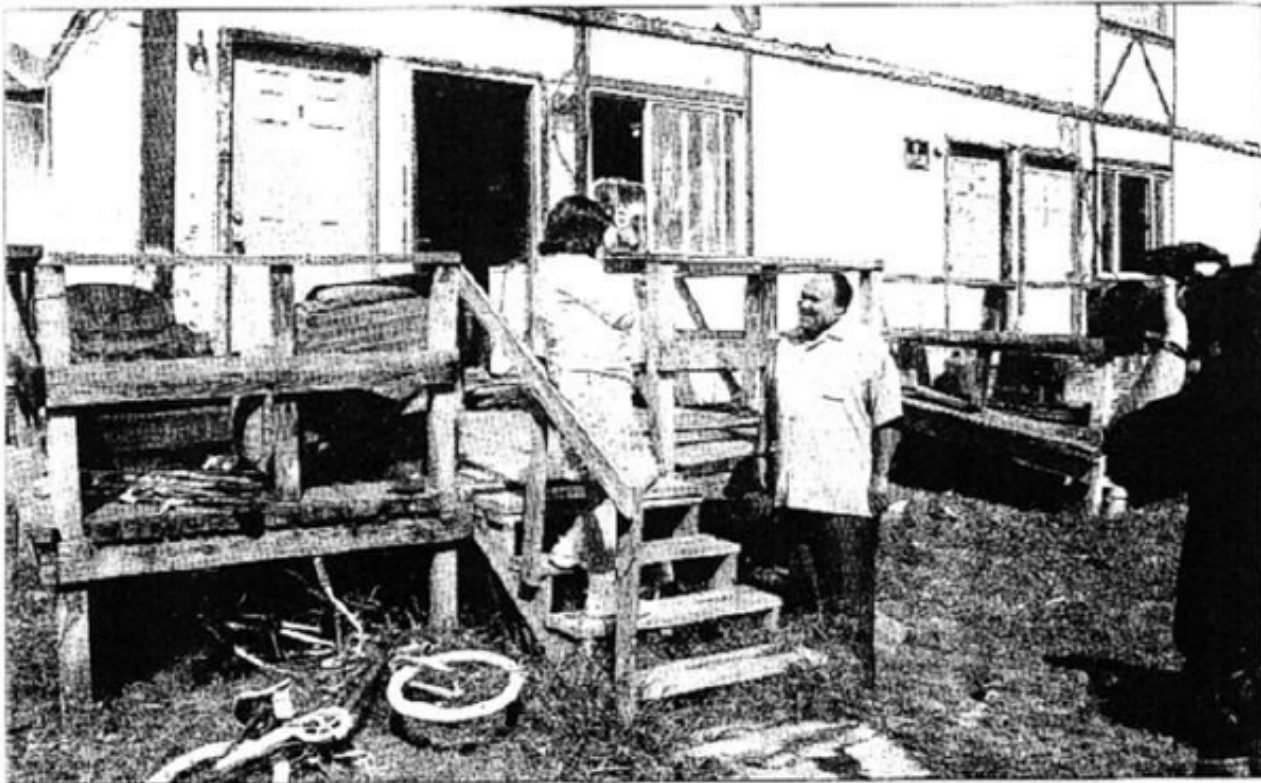
The house is now complete and looks great, ready once again to become a home.

AmeriCorps & Vistas Speak Out

Linda Dillard, AmeriCorps Member

Hello! My name is Linda Dillard. I am an AmeriCorps* member. I am finishing up my second year in the AmeriCorps* program. This has been a fun and rewarding experience. I helped with Group Workcamps during the summer. I enjoyed signing people up who qualified for repairs. I also had a chance to meet new people not only from our area but also from other states as well.

When I was not working on Group Workcamps, I made arrangements to maintain the community center. I also assisted Debbie Spurlock in the office by mailing out rehab application to families to receive low income housing. I have also been working with the VISTAs on coordinating the repairs of the SALS annex where some of our volunteers stay when they are here. One of the things I enjoyed most and found rewarding was helping with the After School program. Since my term ends in December, I will miss the work that I have been doing as an AmeriCorps* member but I will continue to volunteer whenever I am needed.



Greater photos by LAWRENCE PARCEL

Martin Luther King III speaks with a Hilltop resident Tuesday. Fayette County is one of 15 places King chose for his nationwide tour against poverty.

MLK III visits Fayette County on anti-poverty tour

By Tara Tuckwiler
tara@wvgazette.com

PAGE — Eighty-three-year-old Evelyn Hooper welcomed Martin Luther King III into her Fayette County home Tuesday afternoon. She has no indoor toilet, no running water, no stove to cook on — exactly the kind of circumstances King was interested in learning from.

Fayette County is one of 15 places King chose for a nationwide tour against poverty — “picking up where [my father] left off,” he said. Nearly 40 years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. began his “Poor People’s Campaign,” hoping to focus the nation’s attention on the poverty that afflicted all races. He intended it to be the most massive civil disobedience campaign in history, but was assassinated shortly after it began.

In January, after the death of his mother Coretta, King’s son launched his own nationwide campaign against poverty.

“In this country, with our tremendous amount of wealth, we have the intellectual capacity and the technological resources to address poverty,” King said during his walking



King learned about rural economic problems — like the broken-down car that means single mother Rachel Coles can’t get from her affordable home to her job helping people with mental challenges.

and driving tour of Fayette County. “But we don’t. We put it on the back burner. We all know it exists, but we don’t do anything about it.

“When you look at a country with this sort of wealth, with nearly 40 million people living in poverty, you know something’s wrong.”

King walked with Hooper through her modest home, which is getting a bathroom, kitchen, laundry room and more thanks to the Southern Appalachian Labor School, a nearby community organization that channels federal and state funds into neighbors-helping-neighbors programs for at-

risk youth and youthful offenders, free year-round meals for children and more. SALS coordinated King’s visit to the area.

There is a waiting list of about 400 people for home repairs like Hooper’s.

“Sometimes it takes us up to seven years to get a person served,” Arnie Mullins of SALS told King.

“I had patience,” Hooper added.

‘Listening and learning’

King and his staff — including a researcher and a film crew — have traveled from flood-ravaged New Orleans to a Lakota reservation in South Dakota, from South Miami to Gary, Ind., a steel-mill ghost town where one in four residents now live in poverty.

They call it a “listening and learning” tour, hearing directly from people in poverty. On Nov. 16 and 17, the tour will culminate in a summit in Washington, D.C., which will include representatives from each community visited. The group, Realizing the Dream Inc., will

Please see **KING, 11A**

KING

Continued from 1A

present strategies to fight poverty on Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday in January, program director Melissa Slaker said.

Ultimately, the crew will produce a documentary, showing interviews with people like Hooper. And the single mother in Compton, a working licensed practical nurse studying to be an RN, who escaped an abusive husband to raise two young children who were among the best students in their class, even though they live in the family car. And the older people in South Dakota, living on less than \$3,000 a year, with no electricity and no heat.

King exclaimed softly when a SALS worker drove him to an apartment building in Hilltop. With its crumbling walls, rotting porches and gaping doorways, it looks abandoned. But it's not.

"People live here?" King murmured. "You are kidding."

SALS is building new affordable houses just down the road from that apartment building.

Of the families that will live in such SALS houses, "90 percent have family incomes less than 50 percent of the median in Fayette County," director John David said. "And the county is below the state. And the state is below the nation, by a big chunk" — No. 49 in 2000.

David, a professor at West Virginia University Tech, met Martin Luther King Jr. before his assassination. "We were both going to Ghana," he said. "I was a Peace Corps volunteer."

One Fayette County couple King met with Tuesday consisted of two Americorps volunteers. Sueshi Navicki, 21, and Chris Shaver, 25, are both graduates of Oak Hill High.

Shaver said SALS helped him get grants to take electrical classes, but he has been unable to find work that accepts his experience level. Navicki said she has taken part of a culinary course at the Fayette vo-tech

center and now wants to attend a major culinary school, but she doesn't know yet if she will be able to get the thousands of dollars in grants — or pay back the thousands of dollars in loans.

Both now work for SALS, and would like to buy a home. But Navicki said it is difficult for people her age who don't have a parent's help.

After King and his crew finished interviewing her, Navicki had a question for them: "How do you plan on putting [this information] into action, instead of just presenting it?"

Johnny Mack, chief operating officer of Realizing the Dream, answered her. "We do plan to come back to the communities we've visited," he said, to "work with organizations like SALS to see what programs we can help ... provide funding for, provide technical support for."

"Cool," Navicki said. "Thank you."

To contact staff writer Tara Tuckewiller, use e-mail or call 348-5189.

Hello from Jessica, Lisa, and Iris.

*Iris Adkins, Lisa Manley, Jessica Williams,
AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteers*

We have been very busy since SALS had a new five week summer program titled the extended food program located at the Community Center in Beards Fork. The first two weeks were from June 9th to June 23rd. The van drivers picked up children from various locations, starting at Oak Hill and ending at Boomer. The children were brought to the Community Center before 9 a.m. for a hot breakfast. The VISTAs arranged volunteers with the children daily. The children made crafts, colored, and played outside. SALS has two separate play areas, one on each side of the building. While some children are playing basketball on one playground, the other children are on the opposite playground swinging. They had their lunch at 12:00 and

were driven home. Volunteers took the children on picnics and swimming outings. All had a great time and enjoyed this part of the extended summer food program very much.

At the end of those two weeks, Energy Express began for the period June 26th to August 4th. The van drivers drove the children from various locations from Oak Hill to Boomer bringing the children to SALS at Beards Fork by 9:00 a.m. for a big breakfast. The program was headed by Jason Crouch, a Fayette County school teacher. There were five AmeriCorps summer mentors who coordinated activities and reading with the children. There were also two additional volunteer coordinators. The children had lunch at noon and then were driven home.

At the end of Energy Express, the extended summer food program restarted on August 7th and continued to August 25th. The program, just like described above for the first two weeks, was very successful.

Healthy Start Project

Vickie Mullins/VISTA Supervisor

A grant in the amount of \$350 was awarded to SALS to organize a Healthy Start Project. Vickie Mullins, VISTA Supervisor, received the check in July from the West Virginia Commission for National and Community Service. The grant allowed the kids to participate in an old fashioned baseball game. They exercised and ate a healthy snack. We also purchased a treadmill for the parents and kids who attend the After School Program, or anyone who wants to start exercising with us at the Community Center in Beards Fork. We also purchased balls, baseball gloves, hats, and t-shirts. The kids liked playing baseball, running around the field, and the parents liked the idea that their kids were exercising.

Learn & Serve Conference Notes

By Samantha J. Kessler (12th grade Oak Hill High School)

Note: SALS has a collaborative AmeriCorps Learn and Serve grant with Fayette County Schools. The annual conference at Blackwater State Park was attended by Vickie Smith (SALS) and Samantha Kessler (Oak Hill High School).

Since the Learn and Serve conference, I have been looking at many of the staff at my school differently, because I now feel that serving others and treating others as if it were you is a great way to be.

One of the many people that I met is Mr. David King, who is Director of Camp Horseshoe. Just by him telling me that I have a great smile and his way of handling different things with other people, he inspired me to be even more outgoing that I already was. It made me realize how important it is to treat others as you would want to be treated.



A SALS paint crew prepares to prime the walls

Volunteers Inspire Us

Debra Spurlock/Housing

It's hard to believe that another summer has come and gone. As I look back over the warm days of spring and summer I remember the hundreds of volunteers who passed through our small communities. These people gave up their free time to help us to help others. Not only did they help by fixing up homes, but they also showed people here caring and understanding. They made us feel wanted and they made friendships that would last forever. Those WONDERFUL folks were with The Group WorkCamp Program, Christian Endeavor, Global Volunteers, and all the various college groups. It's hard to believe there are so many people out there like these folks who give up their free time to help others. These people should be an inspiration to all of us. I believe the folks from Group WorkCamp deserve a special thanks. After the program was over they donated their left over food to us (SALS) for our summer foods program. This was a great help.

Even though the summer programs are over and all the hard work that goes into preparing for them is completed, work continues here at SALS. I get at least two calls every day from people who need repair work done on their homes. This makes our list go on and on. It's hard to help everybody who needs help. But we try! My days are busy working on rehab files, working on our SHARE program, preparing for next year's Group

WorkCamp, helping with the food reimbursement papers, and many many other things. There is always a lot going on at SALS everyday and I am always willing to help out if I can.

I hope we can continue helping folks out for many years to come. It's a great feeling knowing that you've helped make someone's life a little bit easier.

YouthBuild Updates

Kathryn South/YouthBuild and DOL

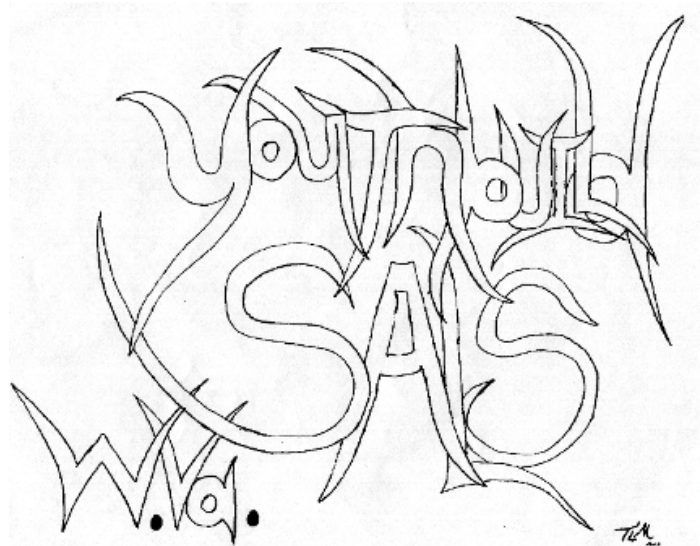
Since we went to press this summer, we have added a few new faces to our YouthBuild family. A few of the folks were here before and have decided to try the program again with better results this time. Nicholas Bragg, David Buck, and Theron Murphy were in the program for a short time and Nick has really been working hard on Ron Yellet's site. This is a big help with the new recruits. Theron and David have been back for a very short time and are learning the ropes again on the job sites and at Vo-Tech. We are also beginning a new AmeriCorps cycle with 12 new members. The youth will earn an education award worth \$1,800 for 675 hours of service building and rehabbing housing in the area.

Artie, John, Brenda, and I have been working with the YouthBuild USA folks in Somerville, MA getting everything in line to verify education awards for persons enrolled into the program. This is a great opportunity for folks to obtain more education and get started on a career. Full awards of 1700 hours are worth \$4,700 towards college or another accredited education program.

The crews are working hard this fall to get houses under roof so that there will be work to do when the weather is really nasty. In Hilltop, Jim Adkins has about 10 folks working on five houses that were constructed this summer. Ron Yellets and Terry Black are finishing up a house on Virginia Street in Oak Hill and Dave Shaver and George Hensley are working on a house in Page that was burned and rehabbed.

Make A Difference Day was a big success with crews working all over the county doing various tasks from building ramps to repairing a roof. This is an annual event that SALS has been part of for over five years and we intend to continue to make a difference by helping those in need.

SALS Journal



YouthBuild and Flex-E-Grant Renewals

SALS has been renewed for several grants, including its successful YouthBuild program. YouthBuild primarily serves youth who have dropped out of school, providing them with GED preparation and construction competencies while working on the homes of low-income families.

For this cycle, which is the final HUD cycle prior to the program moving to the U.S. Department of Labor next year. SALS chose to apply for the maximum possible award instead of the smaller rural set-aside amount. This decision proved wise as SALS successfully competed with projects in major cities throughout the U.S. Overall, only 65 projects nationally were funded.

Another grant that was refunded was the Flex-E-Grant program offered through the West Virginia Development Office in collaboration with the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Benedum Foundation. This initiative will continue the development of oversight Focus Advisory Committees, consisting of private/public sector representatives, community leaders, SALS Board Members, and staff.

Focus Advisory Committees have been established in each of SALS' major program areas and the intent is that the committees will become more directly involved in the particular designated areas of work.

Alaska, Continued from page two

serve a share of the state's wealth. A multi-thousand dollar rebate, for example, for each resident would reverse the impoverishment direction, improve the quality of life for many, stimulate a boom in retail economic activity, and address in a more democratic form the issue of who owns and controls West Virginia's wealth.

There are those who would cry "foul" about such a plan. The argument in regard to coal, for example, is that mining must compete with operations elsewhere. But the fact is that coal is a key and valuable energy source and is physically located in only certain geographical locations. The current question is not whether coal will be mined but at what profit level coal will be mined safely. The sharing of some profit with the residents of the state, most of whom are also impacted by the consequences of mining, will not cause poverty, increase hunger, or reduce the quality of life for those who currently reap all of the benefits from controlling coal.

Without an internal economic restructuring, the nation now at war in Iraq will evolve into a nation at war within itself. Economic apartheid will not create a sustainable society. Violence will increase, and democracy will fail unless this issue of increased wealth inequality is addressed. As noted by the Rev. Dr. Joseph E. Lowery, the eminent civil rights leader, we as a nation have a moral and ethic obligation to deal with this growing disparity and seek to re-build our society with more humane priorities.

Accent Education at Beards Fork

Tony Canada, Collaborative Director

The Accent Education 21st Century Program is in its third year of providing after school enrichment services for students in and around the Beards Fork area, grades K-12. Anthony Canada is the new Accent Education Director for the 21st Century Program in Fayette County replacing former director Benitez Jackson. Mr. Jackson has accepted employment with the WV Division of Curriculum and Instructional Services.

The Beards Fork program operates four days a week Monday through Thursday between the hours of 2 pm-6 pm. It provides students with mastery skills, tutoring, enrichment and physical activity in a safe environment. We are thankful and appreciative of Charlene "Red" Newkirk and the staff at Southern Appalachian

Labor School for their continued support and look forward to providing services to this site in the future.

Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Prevention Planning Grant

By Scott Thompson, Project Director

In January the Fayette County Prevention Partnership, a consortium of local organizations dedicated to the well-being of our citizens, was awarded a one year, \$31,000+, planning grant. The grant was to research the county's drug, alcohol, and tobacco prevention needs and put together a four year implementation plan for prevention programs. SALS is one of the three key partners, along with the Fayette County Sheriff's Department, and New River Health Association. Dr. David, Vickie Mullins, and Brenda Winter have each devoted many hours to this project.

But what *is* prevention? First of all, it isn't counseling, or substance abuse treatment, or law enforcement. The federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention has a fairly clear picture of what programs are effective in preventing tobacco, alcohol, and drug addiction. It's a lot cheaper and less disastrous to prevent these addictions than it is to pay for treating them.

A small example - the West Virginia Prevention Resource Center (WVPRC) reveals that young people in our county report the following: rules at home are not clear-cut and in any case they're not consistently enforced. Research shows us that inconsistent discipline at home increases the risk that young people will abuse tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. Therefore two of our partners have submitted plans to implement a computer-based parenting program. We know this program is effective because it has proven itself through a careful process of evaluation.

Our current status. The WVPRC has submitted a state plan to Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP). In that plan, Fayette County is one of 15 counties that will be invited to submit an application for a four year implementation grant. The PRC is optimistic their state plan will be approved. If our county partnership is awarded a grant under the state plan, the likely amount will be \$107,000 per annum.

The PRC has told us that our partnership is doing well so far, but the process ain't over yet. So please stay tuned.

Southern Appalachian Labor School - Who We Are

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George Hensley, Jr YouthBuild Trainer
Jimmy Adkins YouthBuild Trainer
Terry Black YouthBuild Trainer

21st Century 'Accent Education' After School Program:

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Terri Harlin Project Coordinator
Tony Canada Project Director
Lisa Manley AmeriCorps/VISTA
Iris Adkins AmeriCorps/VISTA
Lisa King AmeriCorps/VISTA
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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\$_____

Or Print a donation form at www.sals.info

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