



SALS JOURNAL

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Repairs that 'Make a Difference'

by Vickie Mullins, VISTA supervisor

The Southern Appalachian Labor School celebrated its annual "Make-A-Difference-Day" on Saturday, October 25th. We hosted several projects, but unfortunately some didn't get completed due to the weather!

This year, there were several families that needed home repairs. This is expected since we always have a long waiting list of folks who need work done. This year, we had the privilege of working with senior citizens in Smithers, WV, who needed some siding replaced. We also helped a single mom who lives in Boomer. She needed some repairs on her roof, since it had several places where it leaked. The AmeriCorps youth were able to put some new wood up and replace some shingles so that now her roof no longer leaks. The last home repair project was for a man in Page who needed help with his roof. Two of the SALS Supervisors, Ron Yelleys and Terry Black, along with several youth shingled a roof because the elderly man had no one to help him. In all of these repairs, the families supplied their own materials and SALS donated the labor.

While many of the youth and supervisors were making a difference doing home repairs, SALS personnel were at the Community Center cleaning off the Center's basketball court that had not been used for two years due to construction work on the Dorm. The court had a lot of debris on it. We also picked up the old lumber and cleaned off all the mud. It still needs pressure-washed, which we plan to do before next spring. We also plan to have the basketball nets replaced.

Although we had more to do than what could be completed, the projects that were finished were done with compassion and love. SALS will continue to celebrate all National Service Days and hopes to continue helping families throughout Fayette County.

Raising Funds by Fun Raising

by Vickie Mullins, VISTA Supervisor

Southern Appalachian Labor School participated in several fund-raisers this year. The first one was our Annual Halloween Carnival. The folks came out for this event from all over Fayette County. The children enjoyed all the fun games, prizes, and mostly the Haunted House, which was a huge success. The kids kept the volunteers coordinating the Haunted House busy, making trips back and forth to the scary places. We had many Businesses donate food, drinks, prizes, candy, and chips. Special thanks to all of those who are no longer at SALS since they continue to help every year with this event. The other fund-raiser was a hot dog sale. The staff decided to sell hot dogs every Friday to help raise money for the after school program.

The sales are turning out very well! Artie Mullins coordinated the events and we all helped out! We raise about \$70 at each sale. We decided to continue this on a weekly basis in order to get our name out with the community so they will support us!

Our VISTA workers will look for new and fresh fund-raising techniques. Chelsea Shaw is very good with

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Popcorn concession at the Halloween Carnival

Mr. Future President, will you be the one to end Black Lung?

Editor's note: This was written in September before the election and posted on a web page called the Daily Yonder. With all the talk of "clean coal" technology, this poignant letter is a sobering reminder that coal is still very dirty where it is mined. The first way we need to clean up coal is by keeping it out of our miner's lungs.

To: Our Future President Obama or McCain

From: Betty Dotson-Lewis

Re: A request – eradicate Black Lung

My name is Betty Dotson-Lewis. I am from a small, rural, coal mining town in West Virginia. The natural rugged beauty of the mountains and the people and the rich coal deposits running through the mountain veins are something we could talk about all day, but I would like to address a serious problem hidden deep in those hollows.

Black lung.

Coal miners get black lung from breathing coal dust. The dust builds up in a miner's lungs and gradually reduces his ability to breathe. Miners with black lung breathe short, raspy breaths. Black lung slowly strangles its victims. Black lung kills many more coal miners than explosions or cave-ins.

On Friday, August 22, 2008, The Charleston Gazette gave front page coverage of a ceremony held in the state capitol marking the 30th anniversary of the opening of the first black lung offices in Charleston and Parkersburg, West Virginia. Important leaders in what became known as the black lung movement — people such as Dr. Donald Rasmussen, Dr. Hawley Wells, Dr. I. E. Buff and Congressman Ken Hechler — were finally given public recognition and honored for their roles in helping miners get the first laws enacted in West Virginia and this country to protect the health and safety of miners.

It was a movement. Miners, a few members of the medical profession and Rep. Hechler literally put their lives on the line for years to pass health and safety laws for coal mines. But politicians turned a deaf ear to their pleas until the Consolidation Coal No. 9 Mine disaster, an underground explosion on November 20, 1968, that killed 78 miners near Farmington. The Farmington disaster was followed on February 18, 1969, by the "black lung strike," when more than 40,000 of West Virginia's 43,000 miners walked off the job to protest the working conditions in the nation's coal mines.

The strike ended on March 2. The miners carried an empty coffin through the streets of Charleston symbolizing the deaths of their fellow workers on and off the job and because of black lung. Later that year, Congress passed the nation's first serious health and safety law for coal

mines. The act set levels for the amount of coal dust miners could be exposed to and provided monetary benefits to miners disabled by the disease.

So you see, Mr. Future President, keeping the lights on in America is not without its dangers and struggles. Both continue in West Virginia. The mines are too often unsafe. And miners still get black lung.

Dr. Rasmussen, one of the leading experts in the field, told me in an interview he was sure he would be seeking work in a different field or location following the passage of the 1969 Federal Coal Mine Safety and Health Act. With federal standards in place, Rasmussen believed he would no longer be needed to conduct black lung tests on coal miners.

More than thirty years later, this has not been the case. In fact, at one of our Fayette County Black Lung Association Meetings, where Dr. Rasmussen appeared as guest speaker, he told the support group he is now seeing evidence of black lung in younger and younger miners. He is booked solid conducting tests on miners who come to see him from Southwest Virginia and Eastern Kentucky.

Mr. Future President, to give you a better understanding of the overall effects of this depressing, debilitating, disease, I would introduce you to someone special to me who suffered from black lung. The miner I am talking about was John Adkins, a friend and neighbor. John's life story is pretty normal for those living in the coalfields of West Virginia. He began his mining career at the age of 15 — just helping out a neighbor, shoveling coal by hand. John came from a tough mountain family. He loved the mountains, hunting, fishing and riding a four-wheeler. John loved mining coal.

John's work history is short and simple. He was a West Virginia coal miner. He enjoyed the hard work and brotherhood of fellow miners. In 1969, when the Hominy Falls Mine Disaster struck, John was employed by Island Creek Coal Company in the same county. When mine disasters strike in nearby neighborhoods, miners from all over donate their time and expertise. John worked on the opposite end of the county where the disaster occurred. So he put in his regular shift and then traveled to Hominy Falls and worked all night helping to reach the ten stranded miners. John Adkins was not only tough but

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Director's Report

**The season brings tough times.
This is not only true globally, it is
also the case with SALS.**

by John David

Since Spring, we have experienced an unprecedented number of grant rejections. As a result, we have tightened up and lightened up. While the youth and staff have provided extreme cooperation, the bottom line is that support from you is needed as never before. Unless we raise several hundred thousand dollars, our mission will be significantly compromised. Thus, we are asking for you to dig deep and help us through this transitional period. We predict better times for the work we do. We feel that more of what we do is needed on the horizon and we are well equipped to move forward then, if we can get to that point.

Over the past several months, we have launched several new initiatives. First, we are obtaining a foothold with low income multi-family apartment projects. Our initial project is a 28 unit complex in Gauley Bridge, which we plan to own and, in cooperation with SAFE Housing and Economic Development in McDowell County, manage. The second deals with wine racks and cabinets, which was the result of a large donation by Dave Stephens of kits, parts, and components. Third, we have been accepted as a member of the Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises, which among its services provides us and low income families with loan funds. Fourth, we have joined the Central West Virginia Outreach Center in Gassaway, which is a source of donated building materials. Fifth, we have initiated a new program, in cooperation with the WV Housing Development Fund, to rehabilitate coal camp houses. Sixth, in cooperation with Paul Gilmer and Rev. Edwin Harper, we have opened new doors to the Upper Kanawha Valley. Finally, we are exploring new initiatives with the state in regard to services for released prisoners.

We have made substantial progress with new facilities at the SALS Community Center. The walking track is paved and useable while we await installation of lights, benches, and fencing. In the middle of the track is Fayette County's only shuffleboard court, which can also be used for children's games. On the same end, the new Dormitory has a complete exterior while work continues inside. On the other end, a massive playground structure that was purchased from WVU Tech's closed Child Care Center is operational. Nearby, the Gazebo roof support has been installed.

The year of 2009 will bring another major influx of about 2000 volunteers to SALS. Global Volunteers, which began with only a couple of teams a decade ago, is now up to 12-14 teams a year as SALS continues to be one of its three domestic destination sites. The faith-based community is represented through Christian Endeavor and Group



In August, SALS staff steer through the rough & rocky New River in preparation for the rocky economic times to come: Vickie Smith, Construction Manager; Jessica Williams, Housing Counselor; John David; Sadida David; Matt White, YouthBuild; Alisha Young, VISTA and George, the captain

Work Camps. The university community for 2008 consists of students from Wartburg College, Miami University, Florida State University, Boston University, Madison (Wisconsin) Technical College, Rutgers, and the University of Illinois.

SALS Housing continues to make major headway, both in regards to new homes at Hilltop and rehabilitated homes throughout the county. SALS has obtained two homes in the Montgomery area that will be rehabilitated and several large land tracts in the Oak Hill/Fayetteville area. In actual fact, we now have considerable work that needs to be done.

The children's programs are scraping along, as the result of no outside funding. The after-school program continues to have record numbers and this summer's Energy Express program was one of the best ever. In addition, we provided summer lunches to children in Montgomery, thanks to a pilot program through the WV Department of Education and USDA. Our VISTA program, which consists of two VISTAs, was administratively transferred to the Step-By-Step umbrella. Step-By-Step sponsors similar programs and state VISTA personnel thought our project would have a better fit there.

As many of you know, we were saddened by the passing of Sister Clara Lill. Sister Clara, based at the Good Shepherd Mission in East Bank, was our Treasurer and inspirational force in the upper Kanawha Valley and SALS for many years.

Finally, as SALS approaches its 30th Anniversary, I wish to convey my personal appreciation for your support and generosity over the years. We rely on you for making our work worth doing and wish you a healthy year. We have many activities going on at all times and we invite you to call 304/779-2772, check on what is coming up, and plan to join us in making a difference for a better tomorrow.

Volunteer Update

Artie Mullins, Volunteer Coordinator

The summer passed in a blurry series of weeks that seemed to mount into a crescendo in July of volunteers hammering their way through Fayette County. It was a wonderful thing to witness the totally unselfish manner in which the volunteers gave of themselves to improve the lives of people that they barely knew and in some instances would never meet. The summer faded into fall and the number of volunteers began to decline, but the same desire to serve our local population was still afire. The final team of the year arrived in October to an exhausted but receptive group of SALS YouthBuild and AmeriCorps youth.

The volunteer groups I hosted as team leader and organizer included groups sent from Global Volunteers, colleges and civic groups. The volunteers made their home in the SALS dorm in Beards Fork, WV. The dorm is just a five-minute walk from the Beards Fork SALS Community Center where the volunteers have access to laundry facilities, telephones, computers, televisions, and additional showers. The community center is also where the volunteers meet for the Sunday orientations with SALS staff and key community people, in addition to being invited to musical concerts held weekly to entertain volunteers and locals held in the center. The dorm was previously a church and still bares semblances of its former use. The lower level was renovated into the sleeping quarters and the upstairs sports three bathrooms, for showers, a kitchen and a dinning room.

The volunteers traveled from all over the states to contribute to our projects here at SALS. The majority of the volunteers staying in Beards Fork this summer came through our Global Volunteer connection. Vickie Smith and Debbie Spurlock hosted a thousand additional volunteers in the Montgomery and Oak Hill area. The teams sent through Global Volunteers worked at Hill Top, our rehab on Gatewood Road in Oak Hill. Local musicians Billy Payne, 2BLUE (Harold Allen and Terri Lively) and "Uncle Dud" Settle entertained the volunteers. They traveled to Beckley for the opportunity to eat and shop at the Tamarack craft mall and to tour the Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine. In Fayetteville, the volunteers visited the New River Gorge Bridge and many of them participated in weekend white water rafting provided by our friends at Adventures Mountain Rivers.

I enjoyed working with the volunteers this summer and everyone here at SALS are aware how fortunate we were to have such dedicated and selfless individuals to pass through our small community. The volunteers enjoyed an

abundant experience of life in Appalachia. They were served up generous portions of life with our SALS youth and the sweat and tears that goes into rehabilitating and building homes. In return, the volunteers enriched our lives and left us with warm memories that we will reflect on often.

Volunteer Listings for 2009

So far, (11-08) we have the following groups bringing over 1700 volunteers to work through our various service programs in 2009:

January 17-24	Global Volunteers
February 14-21	Global Volunteers
March 1-7	Wartbury College
March 8-14	Miami University
March 8-14	Florida State
March 8-14	Boston University
March 14-21	Global Volunteers
March 14-21	Madison Technical (WI)
March 14-21	Rutgers
March 21-28	University of Illinois
April 18-25	Global Volunteers
May 16-23	Global Volunteers
June 6-13	Global Volunteers
June 21-27	Christen Endeavor
June 28 – July 4	Group WorkCamps
June 28 – July 4	Christen Endeavor
July 5-11	Christen Endeavor
July 12-18	Group WorkCamps
July 18-25	Global Volunteers
July 25 – August 1	Global Volunteers
August 15-22	Global Volunteers
August 22-29	Global Volunteers
September 12-19	Global Volunteers

Helping New Home Owners

by Brenda Winter, Housing Director

We've been very busy dealing with various housing issues. I've attended many trainings dealing with foreclosure prevention, home buyer's education and post purchase counseling. I helped a single lady become the proud owner of a new home. I counseled her, helped her obtain a loan through USDA and attended the closing with her. She is very happy and satisfied with her new home. I've also been working with a family with four children who live in a two bedroom trailer. I am hoping to help them obtain a new, larger home through the West Virginia Housing Development Fund's 'New Home' Program.

Besides helping folks get new homes, I've been working with some families to help save their homes from foreclosure. I did this by contacting their lenders and setting up a work-out plan. I've also been working with folks to clear up their credit problems.

So, as you see, there are lots to do in the housing department. There are houses to sell, homes to save, and credit problems to repair.

After School at SALS Community Center

by Charlene Newkirk, Site Coordinator

This has been a challenging year for the after-school program. The program has around 25 children a day. However, the 21st Century funds through the New River Health Association were discontinued. Thus, SALS is trying to run the program with donations. The program is designed for children in grades kindergarten through 12th grade. They are bussed after school from Oak Hill and Montgomery/ Smithers schools to Beards Fork. When arriving at SALS the children receive a snack and a drink. They do their homework with Mercedes Newkirk and Calvin Hardy through Community Services courses at WVU-Tech. Two parents, Lynn and Billy Austin, volunteer during the after-school program. We also have Vickie Mullins with SALS, Chelsea Shaw (VISTA), Wilda Salter with Foster Grandparents and Regina Gilbert with Experience Works. After homework, the children play outside, do artwork, dance and learn to cook. Then they eat dinner and we take them home on the vans. Here is one of the recipes that the kids made:

WINTER THYME SNOW MAN SOUP

Empty a packet of cocoa into a special mug, fill it with steamy water and a Hug and a Kiss. Mix it with the special peppermint stick, add a few marshmallows and you will be so happy for the falling snow.

YouthBuild News

by Kathryn South, YouthBuild/AmeriCorps/DOL

Since the last issue of the newsletter, we have had lots of activity around the SALS YouthBuild sites. The YouthBuild program from Detroit, Michigan visited in early October and spent a few days with our supervisors and the staff of SALS to learn more about our operation and to learn more about the area. One of our supervisors, Ralph Shockey, used to live in Detroit so he knew some of the same folks that the Detroit people knew who were in the construction business. Beverly Mannix, Executive Director of Young Detroit Builders, is a long-time advocate for youth and for programs that benefit the people who need social programs the most. She and our Director, John David, have a lot in common, since John came here from Michigan and knows about that area. They had some lively discussions about the news from both states and compared the funding sources for both YouthBuild programs. We are planning a trip in the next year or so to Detroit to visit that site.

Brenda Winter and I enjoyed our visit to New Mexico this fall and we stayed at the only Native American hotel in Santa Fe. It was very nice. The YouthBuild rural site gathering was held in New Mexico as it is every two years or so. The workshops were very informative and offered some tips for career planning for our youth. Brenda attended the workshop that dealt with drug and alcohol prevention and treatment. This workshop was offered by the White Bison organization that works primarily Native Americans who suffer from alcohol addiction.

Two youth and Ralph Shockey, supervisor, attended a leadership camp at Blackwater Falls this fall. The youth showed the group a craft that they made and it was a big hit. The two youth were Winifred (Buck) Shoemaker and Chris Buck. John David was a guest presenter at the event.

Due to rain and cool weather, Make-A-Difference-Day was cold and soggy this year, so we had to do some make-up work to get the jobs completed. Two roofs were repaired and some siding was reinstalled as part of our tasks for the day of service. Two other jobs that were planned were put on hold until better weather. We also had SHARE as part of the activities and the preparation for the Halloween party and haunted house.

Congratulations to Joseph Neely and Josh Persinger for completing the YouthBuild program and being employed by area businesses. Our good wishes to both of you on your successes. Also, Winifrede Shoemaker and Shane Moore got their GEDs in the last few months. We are very proud of all of our youth people who fulfill their goals.

Halloween Carnival & Haunted House

By Chelsea Shaw, VISTA Volunteer

This year's Halloween Carnival and Haunted House was a lot of fun! A special thanks to everyone who donated their time or resources to help make our day a success. We had numerous volunteers who spent hours decorating and lending a helping hand. We also received some great donations from many merchants around our area!

We had around 100 people attend the carnival. The kids and parents enjoyed food, games, a cake walk, face painting and a scary Haunted House tour! We sold hot dogs, nachos, pizza, snow cones, popcorn and soft drinks. The kids played carnival games to win prizes. We also had around 10 cake walks where the kids won Halloween cakes. I painted over 30 faces with bright colored pumpkins, bats, butterflies, skeletons, scars, cats, stars and moons, scary faces and more. The Haunted House was as scary as ever with three different rooms of terror! Included was a man in chains who "came to life", an "axe murderer", a "dead woman" in a coffin, and many other scary surprises.

The Carnival and Haunted House was a success and the kids had a lot of fun. We raised close to \$400 for our After School Program. Thanks again to everyone who participated. Without the support of the community this event would not have been possible!

Hilltop Housing News

Ralph J. Shockey, Site Supervisor, YouthBuild Trainer

I started this job March 3, 2008 and took on Hilltop. We have conveyed house #3 to Beth Pelkey. She is very excited and has many ideas for her new home. Congratulations to crew member Shane Moore on passing and receiving his G.E.D. Great job. Keep up the good work!

Now for some good news! House #6 is completed and House #4 is nearly completed. Also House #7 and House #5 are under roof with windows and doors set. The foundation is completed for House #2. It's been a busy summer and fall so we will keep up the work through the winter. Have a Great Year and a Busy Winter!

Housing Matters

by Debbie Spurlock, Housing Specialist/SHARE

Along with summer, Group WorkCamp has come and gone. Even though the projects have been completed for



Halloween Fun at the Carnival

this year, I still get many calls. Folks are already calling for next year. There are a large number of people who need home repairs. Some of the people just look forward to spending a week with the campers. For a lot of these folks this is the only company they have. I really think this is a wonderful program and I hope we have it around for many years to come.

I have also been busy helping folks obtain grants to get more extensive home repairs. This is done through out Rehab Program. There are lots of forms to complete, pictures to take, and information to gather. It takes a lot of hard work to put a file together.

We also have a FEMA Program. Under this program folks can receive help on their utility bills. In order to qualify you must have a disconnect notice and a referral from the DHHR. We can also help out with food once a month with a referral.

Speaking of food, we also have the SHARE program. SHARE provides food at a minimum cost to all people who want to stretch their food dollars. I take orders at the beginning of the month, complete all of the necessary paperwork, travel to the pick-up site (very early on Saturday morning), load the van, then travel back to our site and unload the food, make up all the boxes and wait for people to come and pick them up. Sometimes my husband, Carlos, has to deliver some of the boxes. He volunteers to help me out.

October was a busy month. Along with all of the above we had Make A Difference Day and our annual Halloween Carnival and Haunted House. For Make a Difference Day, our crews helped an elderly man replace some siding, helped a family and a single mother with their roofs, and helped with a fundraiser for the after school program. As you can imagine, SALS is a very busy place!

McGinnis Job Site

Ron Yellets and Gary Warrick

Ron Yellets and Crew worked alongside Gary Warrick's crew to complete the McGinnis job site. The task was more difficult than normal due to the fact that it was an overrun manufactured home. Tasks performed included: eliminating and adding new windows, replacing water damaged flooring, replacing all outlets and switches, constructing more needed closet space, replacing light fixtures, reconstructing the kitchen area and installing new cabinets, drywalling bedrooms and baths to allow a more colorful environment, installing new floor coverings, and new bathroom fixtures.

Outside tasks included: tying down the mobile home, putting on new siding and underpinning, building an entrance deck, repairing back porch, and putting in gravel walkways. Along side our crew, we had the help of several volunteers which was greatly appreciated.

While Gary completed final phases on the mobile home, Ron and his crew began the Wells home on Armstrong Creek. The guys worked very hard pushing a deadline so that a wedding reception could be held at the home. Although it was not fully completed, it was very presentable. Even though not yet finished, people who attended the reception had very positive comments about how nice it looked. The tasks completed included: repairing falling ceilings, changing outlets and switches, cosmetic repair to walls and painting, reconstructing entrance area, replacing inadequate light fixtures, installing new floor coverings and installing a new kitchen. Also the electric services were updated.

Crew members involved in these projects were Gary's crew: Kenneth Price, Daniel David, and David Buck. Ron's crew consisted of: Sam Pozzie, Buck Shoemaker, and Wesley Yellets.

We are very proud to announce that along the way, Buck Shoemaker has successfully passed his GED. Wesley Yellets has passed all but one part and is also very close to receiving his GED.

We would also like to take the opportunity to commend Kenneth Price, who is setting an outstanding example for all of YouthBuild members. Kenneth is a very hard worker, extremely considerate and polite, and conscientious about his performance.



Construction Progress

by Vickie Smith, Construction Manager

As our year comes to an end great things have been accomplished this past year. We have sold another new home and now have another one waiting for a new owner. We currently have 4 more under way. The homes are beautiful and our young folks are proud of them. The young people in our program have worked hard this year and can be proud of their accomplishments.

Our rehab program has moved forward nicely also. Our crews have become much faster. This was partly due to the fact that we had a large volume of volunteers and our staff and youth embraced them and worked very well together.

We have also had most of our vendors make donations to the organization this past year. This is especially important to our organization in these difficult economic times when grants are not being awarded. Our community is in need of housing programs such as the ones that we have offered for years, but the future of these programs are not looking too promising at this time. We will continue these programs as long as possible.



Volunteer leads students during writing project

10-1-08 M. Arnold

BEARDS FORK

Jody Lynn Smith this summer visited Southern Appalachian Labor School (SALS) for a week of service, along with her 16-year-old son, Jared Messersmith, as members of the Global Volunteers Adventures in Service program.

Artie Mullens, the Global Volunteer Program coordinator, asked the group to identify three goals to be reached during their stay. When Smith, who is a professional author and social entrepreneur, asked if Mullens thought the school children participating in the Energy Express program would be interested in a writing project, he introduced her to Anne Lathen, the Energy Express coordinator at SALS. Lathen was interested in anything that would engage the young people in more writing.

She set up a schedule, and an hour later, Smith walked into the imaginations of 40+ kids and five mentors. Lathen's idea was for Smith to spend 20 minutes with each group for the four mornings that Smith was in West Virginia. In the afternoon, Smith went to a construction job site run by SALS to work side by side with her son and the other Global Volunteers.

Smith assigned each class a part of the book and built on the story with each team every day. One class chose the type of story and ways to make it interesting. Another class was in charge of the action and the challenges that the hero would face. Another class wrote about their hometown and SALS and also the places that they might like to go on their journey. Yet another class was in charge of the objects that would give the hero strength and also what might make the hero weak, and another class decided on the characters.

Finally, the mentors,



AmeriCorps member and Energy Express mentor Emily Pino helps Emilie and Leland with their part of the writing project led by Jody Smith.

volunteers and staff at SALS each contributed words of encouragement.

"I moved around each class based on a schedule that was convenient to SALS. It was a challenge because the schedule had little to do with the order of the book and the age groups varied from 5 to 11. My goal was to grab their interest and engage and build trust in the young people quickly. It is coming together much like the popular Madlibs game, and it is very entertaining.

"On Day 1, I left with 100 words from all groups combined. Here it is Day 3, and now I have half pages from nearly every young author and pictures to go with it," Smith told Lathen. "Some of the young people asked to keep their paper so they could write more."

When her week was up, Smith took the work of the young authors back and will put the pieces together into a book that she will publish and send back to SALS. Smith's company will donate two books for every SALS participant who contributed to the book. The contributor will get to keep one book if they

read at least one page for fun. They will get to keep the second book to give as a gift if they read a second page to someone that they care about.

All contributors whose parent or guardian gave permission is to have their names printed in the book and will be given author/illustrator credits. Additional copies will be printed and offered for sale on Amazon.com and through SALS with 90 percent of profits given to the SALS program to use as they determine.

Energy Express, an award-winning summer reading program, provides two meals a day and reading-based educational activities that help children maintain their reading skills and good nutrition during the summer months.

Major funding for Energy Express comes from the West Virginia University Extension Service, the West Virginia Commission for National and Community Service, the Summer Food Service Program through the West Virginia Department of Education and the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts. In addition

to these state partners, there is also a tremendous local support for the program. Local partners include New River Health Association, 4-H, Southern Appalachian Labor School, Tyree's Funeral Home, Economy Heating, United National Bank, City of Montgomery, Valley Elementary PTO, AmeriCorps, Fayette County Commission, City of Oak Hill, Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation, Fayetteville Junior Women's Club and the Fayette County Board of Education.

Smith is president of Context Engineering LLC, which is located near Annapolis, Md. The company's primary focus is to help would-be authors start, finish or market and promote their books by creating a context that makes it easy for them to see the beginning, the middle and the end. Current book projects vary from nonfiction motivation to inspirational to high drama to children's books. They share a common theme in that there is a message in every work. You can learn more at www.123context.com.

— American Journalist
HEYWOOD BROWN, 1888-1939,
founder of the American
Newspaper Guild in 1933

Perspective

Sunday

Gazette-Mail
11/2/08

Editorial 2, Religion 5, Obituaries 6



JOHN
DAVID

Poor didn't make this bed; they'll sleep in it

FEW economists would disagree that the nation is in a recession and some would say the nation is in a depression.

Panic has permeated inner circles, as policy makers and legislators scramble each weekend for yet another financial prescription. So far, none have worked. The president is relegated to making announcements that federal prosecutors have opened criminal probes into the price fixing of eggs and tomatoes as well as noting that economic recovery is just around the corner, which eerily echoes former President Herbert Hoover's false prophesy 80 years ago as the nation plunged into the Great Depression.

Most of the financial prescriptions are rescue missions that bail out banks and companies. Unfortunately, they also spend government money that must be borrowed. Borrowing gigantic sums, with taxpayers and future generations on the hook for an increased allocation of interest payments out of the federal budget, causes two major problems:

- More and more loan sources are less and less likely to lend. For example, the China Banking Regulatory Commission has told China's banks to stop lending to the United States

- The higher cost of interest payments in the federal budget will extinguish any oxygen in the room for implementing reforms promised by presidential candidates. Thus, those expecting major public improvements for health care, clean energy and similar programs

noted and never enforced, legislated that unemployment rates by 1983 should not be more than 3 percent for those over age 20, inflation rates should be 0 percent by 1988, and if not achieved, the government should create a "reservoir of public employment."

All of the bailouts cost money. The fairness question is whether people at the bottom should have the equal opportunity to be bailed out as those who once profited at the top. The economic question is how to pay for the bailouts, which brings clearly into focus whether our society can afford both "guns" and "butter." Having both is not sustainable and politicians will need to re-examine priorities. History teaches us that without "butter" on the table, increased domestic turmoil is not distant.

the surf on the last wave, the economic impact has been temporarily camouflaged by the energy boom. However, those at the bottom of the boat are already hurting due to higher prices for utilities, wiped out retirement savings and an employment decline in key industries like retail sales and construction. This downward spiral will, in turn, cause further economic decline for many as the state spins further into the economic apartheid phenomenon of concurrent but separate economic systems.

Interestingly, Congress has on the books a solution for low-income and unemployed people that relates to the bailout provided the wealthy. Based on the Employment Act of 1946, Congress passed in 1978 the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act. This law, seldom

ly affordable housing options and avoids mention of continuing single-family initiatives for low-income families. The campaign appears to target the Community Re-investment Act and related initiatives that provided affordable housing instead of unscrupulous lenders who pushed greed-driven loans in middle- and upper-class neighborhoods. In fact, there is little evidence that low-income families who obtained single-family affordable housing were those who defaulted in a massive wave. Furthermore, in an analogy similar to combating drugs, the issue on the table is whether the culprit is the recipient (user) or the lender (pusher/seller).

Without question, the impact is huge and will have long-term repercussions. Since West Virginia's economy typically rides

POOR

FROM PAGE 1E

ing Act (an act which prohibited the integration of banks, securities firms and insurance companies) and blockage of legislation that would oversee mortgage operations in a manner similar to banking operations. When the housing bubble burst, it was the non-regulated mortgage lending component that led the way.

Spin doctors are now busy assigning blame for the mess, and the convenient targets are always those who are disenfranchised and powerless, namely low-income families. Even the bailout legislation, to the extent concessions are included for "main street," focuses primarily on multi-fami-

will discover that the bailed-out financiers have already emptied the piggy bank.

Many of the bailed-out financiers and their political friends have spent years criticizing federal regulations and oversight. The rallying call has regularly been to allow competition to rule the marketplace. This has led, for example, to the 1999 repeal of the Depression-era Glass-Steagall Bank-

SEE POOR, 4E

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

Fun-Raising, continued from page one

graphic designs. Once the SALS Banner and information booklets are completed, community folks may want designs for their group or business. We must continue to work together in order to find new ways of funding.

As a team, one person cannot carry the entire work and collaboration is the key!

Black Lung, continued from page two

compassionate.

John worked 40+ years in the coal mines and somewhere along the way he developed black lung. One expert explained black lung to me this way: The lungs become petrified. They are cut to pieces by the coal dust inhaled. The miner coughs, hacks phlegm, spits, and can't breathe. There is no cure for black lung – death is the only way out. The only compensation are the benefits established under the 1969 act.

Following the black lung diagnosis, John was unable to work. He then began the long, disappointing process of seeking black lung benefits. At one point he was awarded benefits for nearly one year, only to have them taken away. He and his wife, Grace, had to repay the amount they had received, which was not only devastating mentally but it meant the loss of his pickup truck.

One of my last visits with John was a late afternoon. Grace called to tell me John was feeling down and asked, if I had the time would I stop by. I did. I parked in a wide spot on the side of the road and walked across the wooden bridge to Grace's and John's house. Grace was tending her little grocery store. I knocked on the door and John's faint voice summoned me to come in.

He struggled to get up slowly from the couch. His breathing was labored. He used a walker in one hand and a handmade cane in the other to shift the weight of his thin body. He finally positioned himself so the bulk of his weight rested between the cracks in the cushions on the couch. This made the pain less. Oxygen tanks were on both ends of the couch and a wheelchair was stationed near the door. He showed me a handful of pills prescribed by the doctors. One was a breathing pill.

John was waiting for a decision on his black lung benefits. He had made his last allowable appeal with the help of one of the few lawyers representing black lung claimants, John Cline. John Adkins talked of the bitterness and anger he felt towards the coal companies and the politicians he had trusted to act fairly. John accepted the fact that his health would never return. A few days later, he learned his appeal for Black Lung benefits had been denied again as well.

John's only trips out of his house following that visit were to the local hospital and then finally to the family cemetery.

Mr. Future President, please eradicate black lung.

Editor's footnote: The lawyer mentioned in this article, John Cline, is also a current SALS board member.

SALS Journal



Water Ride fun for area youth this past summer supported by SALS Community Center

AmeriCorps Matters

Alisha Young, AmeriCorps VISTA

Being an AmeriCorps member has been exciting for me, from working with college students to working with the youth who volunteered for Group Workcamps. I have also been working at the Beards Fork Health Clinic with Dr. Daniel Doyle M.D. from New River Health Association. I usually help the Doctor intake patients by taking their blood pressure, pulse, and new weight. It helps to make his job go by a little easier. I enjoy working with him each month.

It has all been a new experience, from learning how to write grants to learning how to properly give a presentation in front of a group of peers. I have also completed a grant proposal that would help fund the after school programs. If funded we would put on presentations in front of school-age children about their need to know subjects that they should be aware of at their age. Those subjects would include not smoking or using drugs and how to properly evaluate if they are being abused and who is available for them to call. This proposal would enable me to talk with children along with other presenters on these subjects.

The Southern Appalachian Labor School received a grant at the end of the year of 2007 that will help with the health initiative we have for our youth. The grant is for a walking track that is being constructed next to the Beards Fork Community Center in Beards Fork. We currently have the track itself laid down but we are currently waiting on the rest of the grant to come in so that we can finish putting up the fences and bench areas. It will be the closest place in about a 15-20 mile radius that residents can exercise without having to drive to the next town.

Southern Appalachian Labor School - Who We Are

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304-779-2772, or 779-2280

WVU-Tech office: 304-442-3042

Construction Coordinator: 304-469-9721

John David, Director - 304-442-3157

WEB: www.sals.info

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Ralph Shockey	Youth Build Trainer
Gary Warrick	Youth Build Trainer
Jimmy Adkins	Youth Build Trainer
Terry Black	Youth Build Trainer
Jessica Williams	Housing Counselor

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Regina Gilbert	Experience Works
Chelsea Shaw	AmeriCorps/VISTA
Alisha Young	AmeriCorps/VISTA
Melissa Adkins	Teacher
Wilda Salter	Foster Grandparent

New River/Beards Fork Health Clinic Project

Dr. Dan Doyle, M.D.

Energy Express

Anne Lathen

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

LeeAnn Gore & Mary Lynn Flint

WVU Extension Service

Dianne Meadows

Debbie Tate

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\$

Or print a donation form at www.sals.info

Please send me a thank you gift ☐ \$50 + donors will receive a SALS License Plate, or similar item

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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.
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We appreciate Your Support!

John David, Director



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