



Friends of the Cheat

# Into the Canyon

Newsletter of Friends of the Cheat

Spring 2011

## Monitoring Marcellus in the Lower Cheat

by Amanda Pitzer

### Where We Are Today

Since our last newsletter, the lower Cheat River watershed has seen an influx of Marcellus shale natural gas development. As of early April, there have been over 50 Marcellus related gas permits issued in Preston County and construction has commenced on a natural gas gathering pipeline running south from the WV/PA line northeast of Bruceton Mills. Rumors of a commercial solid waste facility to accept the dried byproduct of produced water swirled this summer. Our region's oil and gas inspector has over 5,000 wells on his roster and development is just getting started. FOC staff, board, and supporters are swimming in successive waves of information from a wide variety of sources with independent agendas. Technologies associated with the industry are changing daily, as was the debate regarding regulation.

Unfortunately, time ran out before state legislators could put together a compromise for a much needed regulatory framework to update WV's 40 year-old gas laws. FOC was actively engaged in this debate voicing our concerns and the need for urgent action to protect public health, environmental quality, property owners, and our wild and wonderful way of life.

As of today, gubernatorial candidates are jockeying for votes to win the May primary election deemed necessary to fill the seat of the late Robert C. Byrd. A growing coalition of grassroots groups, academics, and individual citizens continue to pressure the candidates, and all our representatives, to hold a special session for gas regulation. Twenty-three WV Delegates, the city of Lewisburg, *The Dominion Post*, and many environmental groups have voiced their support of a resolution asking that no new gas permits be issued until regulations are passed.

### Where We Needed to Be Yesterday

Where does FOC stand? FOC's Board of Directors has historically been a diverse group with an ethos of bringing together stakeholders to solve problems. FOC led the formation of the River of Promise in 1995, a think-tank task force comprised of over 20 signatories from industry, academia, government, and environmental groups with a common goal of restoring the Cheat River. We believe one can get more done with an open hand versus a closed fist thus we have not engaged in matters of litigation.

*continued on page 4*

## SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE! CHEAT FEST 2011 INFO INSIDE

You haven't heard from us in a while, but it hasn't been for a lack of information or stories to share. This special double issue of *Into the Canyon* is packed full of a year's worth of work and will be the final issue of its kind. As part of the organization's makeover we have updated the logo, will be launching a new website this Spring, and the newsletter will change looks. We encourage all *Into the Canyon* readers to consider switching to our electronic format, which will be in full color with links to follow up information and references, videos, and special website features such as interactive maps. If that isn't cool enough you are also saving trees and printing and mailing costs for FOC! If you would like to switch to the e-newsletter format, please contact us via e-mail at [info@cheat.org](mailto:info@cheat.org) or by phone.

The website and newsletter makeover, including interactive map development, is funded by the WVDEP Non-Point Source A.G.O. Program. Cash and in-kind support for the project is provided by Gaddy Engineering and MESH Design and Development.

### In this issue

<b>Monitoring Marcellus in the Lower Cheat.....</b>	<b>1, 4</b>
<b>FOC Info, Donors, &amp; Partners.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Cheat River Festival 2011.....</b>	<b>3, 6</b>
<b>Focus on Restoration: The Sovereign Run Watershed.....</b>	<b>5, 6</b>
<b>Volunteers Plant 3,300 Trees on Albright Surface Mine.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>River Rally Recap.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A Retrospect of Cheatfest 2010.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2010 Cheatfest 5K.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>When the Going Gets Tough.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Cheat River Surf Spot: Ralph Teter.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>How I Trained My Human Servant for River Recreation.....</b>	<b>11, 14</b>
<b>FOC Honors Major Donors at Appreciation Event.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Amanda's Yet to Be Titled Column.....</b>	<b>13, 14</b>
<b>Wind Turbine Design &amp; Construction Workshop.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Membership &amp; Merchandise Form.....</b>	<b>15</b>



Friends of the Cheat

# Into the Canyon

Published by:

## Friends of the Cheat

119 S. Price St., Suite 206, Kingwood, WV 26537-1478  
phone: 304-329-3621 fax: 304-329-3622  
web: www.cheat.org e-mail: foc@cheat.org

### Friends of the Cheat Board of Directors & Staff

Chair Dawn Seeburger, Vice Chair Charlie Walbridge, Treasurer Dave Bassage, Secretary Bob Spangler Jr., Jim Snyder, Troy Titchenell, Joan Pitzer  
Amanda Pitzer, Executive Director; Janet Lenox, Associate Director; Jessica Zamias, Mapping & Monitoring Coordinator; Andrew Miller, OSM/VISTA; Brian Hurley, 2010 WVDEP Governor's Intern

### Major Donors with thanks to *all* of our members

**8Z Timber Products, LLC - Charles & Viktoria Badger - Chesapeake Energy - Fayette Progress Council  
Dave & Eloise Milne - Mon Power, Albright Power Station - Charlie & Sandy Walbridge**

Morgantown Energy Associates - Keith & Ivonne Strausbagh

Aquafix Systems - Martha Ferris - James Frid - Gaddy Engineering Company - Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival - John Harvey - Keel Haulers Canoe Club - Lillian Kotchek - Heather Lukas - Tom McCloud - Chip Mefford - Melanie Nichols - Mylan Pharmaceuticals, Inc - Patriot Mining Company, Inc. - Joan Pitzer - Preston Machine Enterprises, Inc. - Peter F. Smith - Joe Sinsheimer & Toddi Steelman Superior Appalachian Pipeline Company - Imre & Janet Szilagyi - Robert Uram

### Stream Stewards

Ben Badger - Steven Barnett - Dave Bassage - David & Shelia Brown - David & Zoann Callahan & Family - Kate Cervantes - Ann S. Clough - CLEAR - Coastal Canoeists - Devra Deems - Debora Dewitt - Edward Eagan - Christopher Earl - Connie & Carl Ervin - Bob Gedekoh - Ann Louise & Maloy Gupta - Keith & Kelly Heasley - Dan Henninger - David Herron - Arthur D. Holmes - David C. Houser - Ann Kmieck & Stephen Ingalls - Jack Kangas - Chris Kirkman - Kenneth Lundy - Harry Marinakis - Joanne McGrew - Arch Moore - P. Pendleton Kennedy Chapter of Trout Unlimited - Howie Pentony - Todd Petty - Philadelphia Canoe Club - John Sweet - Cynthia Taylor - Ann & Cecil Tickamyser - Upper Mon River Association - Pops Walker - Ange & Ladd Williams

### Business Sponsors

**ArborGen - Black Bear Burritos - Fraternal Order of the Eagles, Kingwood - Hartley Insurance Agency - Keystone Lime Company, Inc. - Kingwood Pharmacy - Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort - Patagonia - Price Street Barber Shop - The Book Exchange - Whitegrass Ski Touring Center & Cafe**

Alpine Lake Property Owners Association - Arkley Forestlands - Broken Tractor Winery  
Casteel Law Office, PLLC - Cheat Canyon Campground - Cheat River Outfitters - Coal Train Corporation  
East-West Printing - Electro-Kote Company - Fairmont Chiropractic - H.B. Arrison of WV, Inc. - Marios Fishbowl  
National Paddling Film Festival - O.W. Eckert, Inc. - Ohiopyle Prints - Old Colony Realtors - Preston Memorial Hospital - Richwood Grill - Ridgetop Pottery - Rotruck & Lobb Funeral Home - Teter's Campground  
Waterfront Jeep - WesBanco Bank, Inc.

### Organizations

Adventure Sports Center International - Adventure Sports Institute - Blue Ridge Voyagers  
Friends of Laurel Mountain - Zoar Valley Paddling Club

### Funding Sources

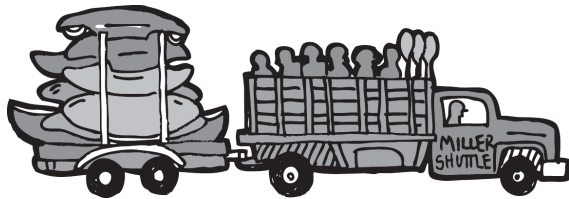
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, NiSource Environmental Challenge Fund, US Environmental Protection Agency, US Office of Surface Mining, WV Department of Environmental Protection Non-Point Source Program & Stream Partners Program, Dominion Foundation, Bikes Belong, WV Department of Highways

## 2011 Cheat River Festival - Saturday, May 7th

By Janet Lenox

The 17th annual Cheat River Festival is quickly approaching! As in years past, FOC is dedicating the 2011 festival to two folks who have done memorable work in support of the organization and for many boaters needing shuttle to and from the river. As our way of saying "thanks", FOC will be dedicating this year's festival to Glen and Donna Miller.

For the last 30 years, Glen and Donna Miller of Mount Nebo, West Virginia have driven shuttles for Cheat and Big Sandy river paddlers in their big stake-bed truck. Thousands of boaters have looked forward to their friendly greeting, a beer from the cooler, and a memorable ride home. Glen, a logger by trade, is known as one of the hardest-working men in the area. What other kind of man would decide to run boater shuttles in his spare time?



Glen began offering shuttle back in the 80's when Hudson Road to Jenkinsburg on the Cheat River was a full-on 4 wheel-drive adventure. His wife Donna fielded the calls, organized the pickups, and drove when things got busy. Although the road improved, his service prospered. The drive from Albright to Jenkinsburg takes 45 minutes each way, so paddlers who used his shuttle got on the water sooner. The Miller's reliability was legendary; several paddlers remember Glen driving the treacherous road into the Cheat Canyon during sudden spring snowstorms to meet grateful paddlers.

Sadly, Donna passed away in February 2008. Glen is still in the area at Heartland Nursing Home, 300 Miller Road, Kingwood, WV 26537. He loves hearing from his paddling friends, so drop him a card! You can sign a oversized card at the festival, and everyone is hoping Glen will be able to visit to the festival to accept our gratitude and reminisce about his many wild rides.

Festival weekend kicks off with Friday's Down River Race, known as the Cheat River "Massacre-ence". Race registration is \$25 in advance and \$30 the day of the race. Participants are invited to the post-race party in addition to free admission to Saturday's festival and a race t-shirt (quantities are limited so sign up now!). To register, download the [2010 form](#) at [www.cheatriverace.com](http://www.cheatriverace.com).



Saturday morning is the 7th Annual Cheat Fest 5K. Run or walk the gentle course through the property of the Preston County Country Club. Handmade medallions are awarded in 10 categories, all racers gain admission to the festival, and the first 100 registered racers receive a free 5K tee. To register visit [www.cheat.org/festival/roadrace](http://www.cheat.org/festival/roadrace).

Four new bands are scheduled to perform at the 2011 festival: Rising Regina, The 23 String Band, Cello Fury, and Johnson's Crossroad. Rising Regina is a versatile band incorporating sounds of American roots music including rock, folk, blues, jazz, bluegrass and Celtic. The 23 String Band, from Kentucky, pays homage to the deep roots of American traditional music, while pushing forward with genre-bending, hard-driving originals and distinctive arrangements. Cello Fury is a group of three classically trained cellists from Pittsburgh. They are a rarity in the music world, developing their own unique style of cello rock performing high-octane music in locales ranging from concert halls to biker bars. Bet you never thought you would hear cello on the Cheat! Johnson's Crossroad, now from Asheville, will return to the band's birthplace of West Virginia to share their honest, soulful music echoing bluegrass, roots country, and old-time styles with Cheat River Festival music lovers. The rest of the lineup includes local favorites and festival staples,



Stewed Mulligan and Halftime String Band. Aurora Celtic, a new local band with familiar faces Mike Broderick and Alice Fleischman—joined by Aaron Martin on guitar, will also take the stage playing Celtic inspired world music. A unique feature of this year's line up is "Jammin Round", a high-energy song swap featuring top notch local and regional musicians. If you are a music fan—you won't want to miss this year's festival! Music starts at 1pm.

The Kids Area is open from 12-5pm and volunteers will again be making acid mine drainage tie-dyes. Kids can also build bird boxes to be installed at the festival site. Children under 12 accompanied by an adult can attend the festival for free and all Kids Area activities are also free.

A new feature at the 2011 festival will be the FOC consignment tent. The public can donate items or place them on consignment with FOC volunteers for sale during the festival. "Leave your wares and FOC will keep a share!" The seller will determine the price, or price range, and FOC will receive 30% of the selling price. For example, a gently used canoe sold for \$200 will earn FOC \$60 and the seller \$140. No household items will be accepted, and all items should have a retail value of \$20 or more.

Visit the FOC Focus Area located in the Eloise Milne pavilion

*continued on page 6*

## Monitoring Marcellus in the Lower Cheat

*continued from page 1*

FOC is pleased to see WV produce a cleaner form of energy. Many denizens have leased their gas rights and used the profit to pay off debt, fix that old tractor, or start their children's college fund. Additionally, many friends and family members are working for the industry in one way or another. Wages are good and opportunity abounds. This money stimulates the economy at a crucial time and experts agree that the industry is an undeniable economic force of great potential.

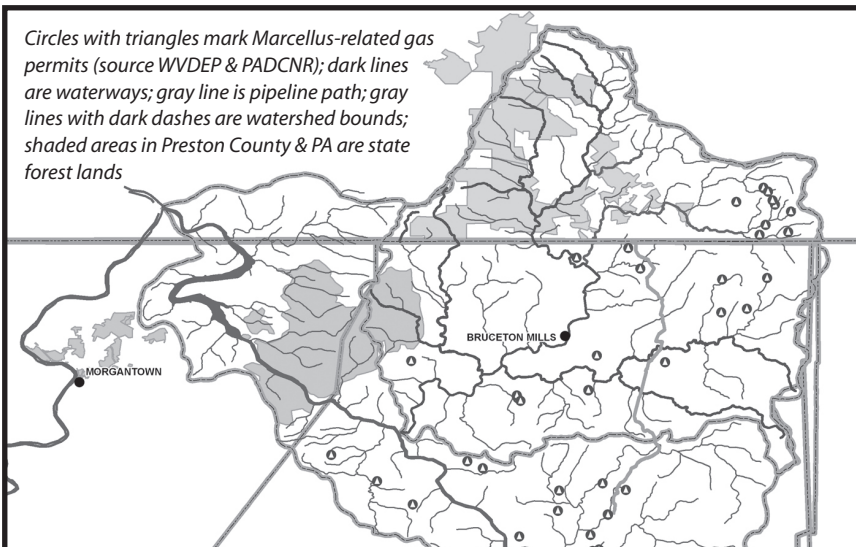
So where do we stand? Well, frankly, we stand to lose a lot more than that old tractor if companies are not mandated to minimize environmental and public health risks in addition to reporting the details of water use. To compound the problem, without adequate and timely permit review and monitoring by trained inspection staff, how can we be sure that our health, land, and way of life is truly protected? We can't. This is why our state legislators must step up to the challenge and do what is best for their people—not just those who stand to gain but those who stand to lose.

FOC supports the call for no new gas permits until industry regulation is passed by state legislators.

### Marcellus Monitoring Efforts

FOC has been keeping a close eye on development in the watershed. Unfortunately, funding to pay staff salaries and purchase new monitoring equipment is thin. FOC has received small grant support from the Dominion Foundation and WVDEP Stream Partners program. Nemaquin Woodlands Resort donated \$2,500 to FOC from the proceeds of its Marcellus Open Golf Classic. Concerned members have also donated funds earmarked for Marcellus monitoring, but a lot more is needed as the development rapidly expands.

One unique opportunity FOC has is a short window of time to collect baseline data on the Big Sandy watershed before the drilling boom hits. Although there are over 20 permitted wells in the Big Sandy basin, only a small few have been drilled.



FOC has installed two continuous data loggers in the watershed to collect water quality information every 15 minutes, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. By collecting and analyzing baseline data, FOC will have a better idea of how natural gas development is impacting the watershed.

FOC staff and volunteers have also been collecting baseline water quality data and taking photographs of key streams in the pathway of the gas pipeline. We have collected data on Little Sandy Creek, Beaver Creek, and Muddy Creek and will continue to watch as construction moves ahead. The pipeline will cross several high quality streams in the next month during high flows and prime trout season.

FOC and its partners are working together to organize and empower a citizen force of Marcellus monitors. FOC will purchase sampling equipment and train volunteers to collect field measurements and take visual assessments, similar to the protocols of the ALLARM program developed by Dickinson College. Stay tuned for more information about the Marcellus monitors program and how you, your family, your church, and your school can get involved.

Although FOC has one of the most respected monitoring programs in the region, we simply do not have the capacity to keep up with new gas development. We encourage all citizens to stay informed and pay attention to your environment. Don't be afraid to be the squeaky wheel if you see something concerning happening in your area. Take photos with date stamps and contact the WV DEP Office of Oil and Gas at (304) 926-0499 and Preston County inspector Bryan Harris at (304) 553-6087.

### Learning From Legacy

FOC works each day to remediate the impacts of pre-regulatory coal mine pollution. The state of WV has spent over \$50 million cleaning up pre-law coal mining impacts in the Cheat River watershed and FOC has orchestrated another 14 treatment systems with millions of grant funds. These programs are mainly funded by a tax on coal—therefore, our citizens are paying for the negligence of industry. Despite the passage of

regulation in 1977, some coal companies walk away and forfeit their bonds, which are typically too small to pay for cleanup, and the state is left with this burden too.

It is often easy to see the benefits of a situation but the risks and consequences take more time to understand and quantify. What is the true net gain?

Let's take our time and do it right this time. One thing I learned from my predecessor was patience. We can all wait. The gas will still be 8,000 feet under our beautiful mountain homes in the mean time.

## Focus on Restoration: The Sovern Run Watershed

By Jessica Zamias

The Sovern Run Watershed is a sub-watershed of the Big Sandy River. The confluence of Sovern Run and the Big Sandy is at Rockville. The Sovern watershed drains approximately 5.336 square miles. In 1998, Sovern was listed on the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WV DEP) 303(d) list for acid mine drainage (AMD) impairment. The main source of this pollution is emanating from pre-regulated mines; the watershed's legacy is a scatter of coal refuse piles, deep mines, and surface mines discharging AMD. For the past decade, Friends of the Cheat and its partners, West Virginia Water Research Institute (WV WRI), WV DEP, and the Office of Surface Mining (OSM,) have been working to remove Sovern off of the 303 (d) list of impaired streams.

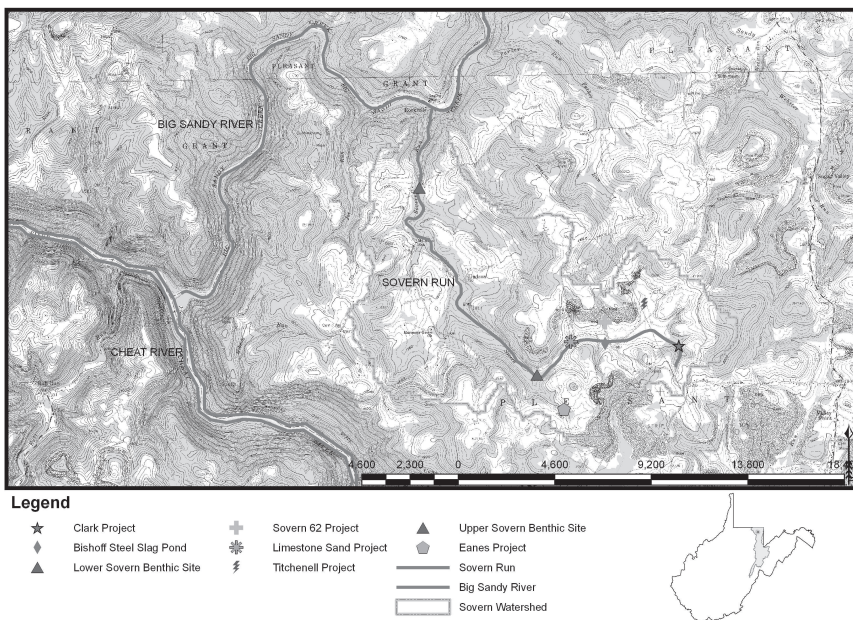
Friends of the Cheat has installed four passive treatment projects to combat AMD in the Sovern Run Watershed (Map 1).

During summer 2010, FOC completed a refurbishment of the Sovern 62 project including the addition of a steel slag leach bed. The Sovern 62 system was only reducing 61% of iron (Fe), 21% of aluminum (Al), and 34% of total acidity. The project goals were to reduce 80% of the metals (Al and Fe) and acidity. The new design is targeted to meet these reductions. The steel slag bed addition on the Bishoff property is designed to introduce excess alkalinity, treating the mainstem of Sovern Run. Brady Gutta from WVU WRI completed the conceptual design. Engineering was completed by Alpha Associates. The project was constructed by C.E. Bolyard and Sons.

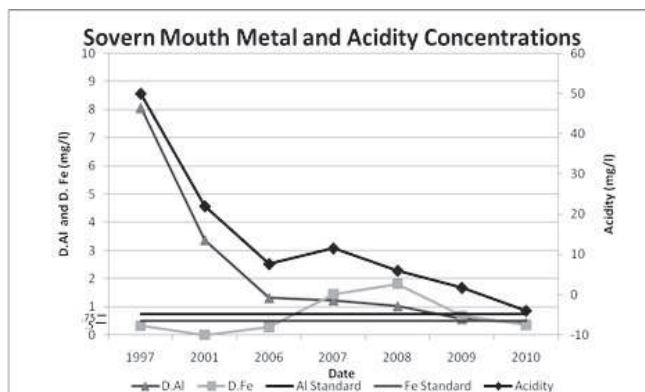
The final step to remove Sovern Run off the 303 (d) list of impaired streams is addressing the last significant acid source in the watershed. FOC has \$319 funding to implement a fifth passive AMD treatment system and has been engaged with cooperative landowners. Landowner consent is vital to building successful treatment systems and FOC will soon be releasing a comprehensive guide for landowners to inform them about "Good Samaritan" remediation.

Friends of the Cheat has been conducting analytical and benthic sampling in the Sovern Run watershed to report to WV DEP to advance the removal of Sovern Run from the 303(d) list of impaired streams. Once a stream makes "the list" it is very rare that this status is rescinded. Dedicated and patient staff, good data, engaged partners, funding, and cooperative landowners are just a few requirements for remediation success. FOC's remediation efforts thus far in the Sovern Run watershed have been successful. This conclusion is supported by the data expressed in the following graphs. Graph 1 illustrates a decrease in acidity and aluminum, notably from 1997 to 2006.

Sovern Run Watershed



Above: **Map 1.** FOC Projects in the Sovern Run Watershed. Below: **Graph 1.** Sovern Mouth data presenting metals and acidity concentrations based on yearly averages. D. Al is dissolved aluminum and D. Fe is dissolved iron.

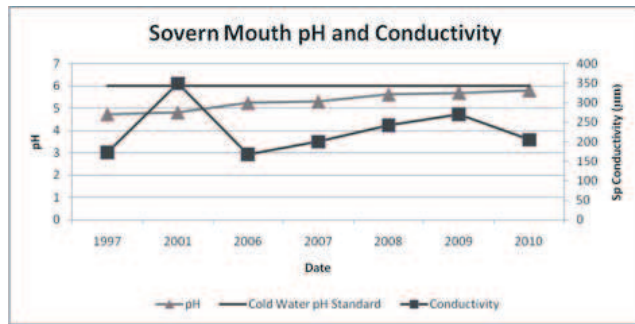


This data corroborates with the time period in which the four passive treatment systems were installed. The passive treatment technology utilizes limestone and other alkaline agents in the form of open limestone channels, leach beds, wetlands, and other structures, to neutralize the acidity. The reduction of iron (Fe), and aluminum (Al), which is associated with acidity, has decreased over time. The graph includes criteria standards for cold water fisheries, which are <0.75 mg/L for Al and <0.5 mg/L for Fe. It is FOC and our partners' goal to achieve these standards throughout the Sovern Run mainstem, all the way to the mouth. Graph 2 (on page 6) displays the pH and the conductivity over time. As the acid water is being treated in the headwaters, the pH is increasing to a more neutral level. The decrease in conductivity is due to the reduction of metals. The graph includes pH criteria for trout, which is 6.

continued on page 6

## Focus on Remediation: The Sovern Run Watershed

*continued from page 5*



Above: **Graph 2.** displays the pH and conductivity values based on yearly averages at the mouth

The data collected from benthic sampling was taken at an upper and lower sample site along the Sovern Run mainstem (Map 1). Friends of the Cheat rated the streams based on the WV DEP Save Our Streams protocols which include two integrity ratings, the Stream Condition Index (SCI) and Level One Score (LOS). A healthy stream with an abundance of aquatic life has a SCI and LOS integrity rating of 80-100, which means the stream has optimal benthic communities. The Upper Sovern Run SCI rating was 30.5 and the LOS was 37—poor. The Lower Sovern Run SCI was 47.9 and LOS was 50—marginal. Our remediation goal is to achieve optimal ratings at both sampling locations on Sovern Run. FOC will be completing bi-annual benthic surveys to monitor the benthic life and water quality. There have been fish sightings the mouth of Sovern Run during summer 2010 and partners are already talking about the possibility of stocking Sovern Run with fingerling brook trout in the future.

Friends of the Cheat would like to acknowledge and express our gratitude to the landowners in the Sovern Run Watershed: Terry and John Peaslee and the Peaslee Family, Norma Jean Bishoff, William and Sandra Bishoff, Richard Titchenell, Dennis Clark, Mark Dixon, Jeff Eanes.

FOC would also like to acknowledge its partners supporting the restoration of Sovern Run: WV DEP Non-Point Source Program, Lou Schmidt; Office of Surface Mine (OSM) Watershed Cooperative Agreement Program, Nancy Roberts and Rick Buckley; WVU WRI, Brady Gutta; and all River of Promise participants. Without the continued support and cooperation of our invaluable landowners and partners, the removal of Sovern Run from the 303 (d) list and restoration of a native brook trout fishery would be impossible.

FOC's work in the Sovern Run watershed was recently highlighted on WBOY Channel 12. Also, a short documentary piece produced by Sean Peoples and Michael Miller was filmed early this winter. The video can be viewed on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPQT1077HJc> or by searching "Friends of the Cheat—Sovern Run."

*Focus on Restoration will be a regular article in future newsletters.*

## Cheat River Festival 2011

*continued from page 3*

to bid on auction items (outdoor gear, rafting trips, fine art, clothing and more), purchase your 2011 festival t-shirt, talk to FOC volunteers, and learn more about how FOC works to restore, preserve, and promote the Cheat River watershed. Other regional non-profits will also have displays and activities at the festival.

FOC still needs volunteers for this year's festival. Fill out the volunteer form on the FOC website; e-mail Kelli Geswein, volunteer coordinator, at [kelligeswein@hotmail.com](mailto:kelligeswein@hotmail.com); or call the office to volunteer four hours of your time. Volunteers gain free admission to the festival, a discounted festival t-shirt, and unlimited access to the Hospitality Café backstage, which is stocked with yummy food and drink.

All festival proceeds benefit Friends of the Cheat. Over 40% of FOC's annual overhead budget is funded by the festival. Bring your family down to the banks of the Cheat River in Albright for a day of music, sport, art, education, food, friends, and fun—all in support of Friends of the Cheat.

Festival tickets are now available for sale at the FOC office in Kingwood and through the FOC website at [www.cheat.org/festival](http://www.cheat.org/festival). Tickets can also be purchased at the following locations for \$10 through May 4th, 2011: Morgantown, Black Bear Burritos, Blue Moose, and Mountain Peoples Co-op; Bruceton Mills, Little Sandy's Truck Stop. Tickets purchased after May 4th are \$15.

## FOC Wish List Spring 2011

Donations of goods are just as valuable as cash to FOC. Think of us when you are doing your spring cleaning! Our current wish list includes:

**Gently used medium-sized backpack**

**Neoprene gloves**

**Good quality speaker phone**

**Automatic paper folder**

**Flatscreen monitors**

**10' x 10' "Easy-Up style" tent**

**10' x 20' tents**

**Small local house or office modular**

**Volunteers!**

## Volunteers Plant 3,300 Trees on Albright Surface Mine

By Andrew Miller

Over 20 volunteers braved the snow and joined forces with Friends of the Cheat to plant 3,000 hardwood trees on a former surface mine in Albright, West Virginia. The planting event, which took place on Saturday, April 2nd, was part of the Appalachian Region Reforestation Initiative (ARRI), and collaborative effort to reforest surface mines across the region.

ARRI projects utilize a new approach in surface mine reclamation. "They used to employ a method of reclamation that emphasized compacting the soil and seeding grasses," said Andrew Miller, OSM/VISTA for Friends of the Cheat, "there was little to no natural succession of native trees creating an ecological desert." ARRI emphasizes loosening or tilling the soils before planting trees, a process called "ripping". The Albright site was "ripped" by Camp Dawson Natural Resources in October of 2010.

ArborGen, a commercial tree nursery in Summerville, South Carolina, generously donated and delivered 3,300 hardwood tree seedlings for the project. Ten blight resistant American chestnut seedlings were also planted on the former mine site. The American chestnut, a massive deciduous tree, once dominated the Appalachian tree canopy but was decimated by blight in the mid twentieth century. The Rowlesburg Revitalization Committee, who organizes the annual West Virginia Chestnut Festival, provided a delicious lunch.

The volunteers were eager to see the site reach its full potential. "I think it will be exciting to come back in a few years and see how everything has grown," said volunteer Mary Luckini. The actual tree planting is an opportunity for outreach and education in the community by like ARRI and Friends of the Cheat. "The big part of this is not necessarily about the 5 or 6 acres," said ARRI representative Scott Eggerud, "it's about the awareness we're creating and working with the volunteers and just trying to educate everyone on proper mine-land reforestation."

## River Rally Recap

By Dave Bassage

Every year the national organization River Network recognizes five "River Heroes" from across the country at their annual River Rally. This past May I had the honor of presenting Joan Pitzer with a symbolic paddle in honor of her husband Keith for his many heroic contributions to the Cheat River watershed.

This was the first ever posthumous River Hero presentation, and it was an emotional experience for all.

River Rally is a multi-day multi-track conference packed with invaluable workshops and presentations. Joan and I pored over the agenda and divided our time between the sessions most likely to be of value to Friends of the Cheat, all the while trying to prepare for the closing banquet where the awards would be

presented.

We learned about budgeting, recruiting and keeping major donors, strategic planning, Board development, how best to get our message out and how to prevent burnout, among many valuable topics. Our brains were stuffed full with volumes of great information and tips from experts and peers alike. But it was our hearts that were touched the most.

I only had a few minutes to introduce Joan. Generally I prefer to speak from a few scribbled notes, but for such an important moment I carefully put together prepared remarks, sharing them with Joan so she could transition smoothly into her acceptance speech on behalf of Keith.

Several hundred participants packed the banquet hall when the evening arrived. We were slated to go last, as all involved knew honoring Keith would be an impossible act to follow. As our turn neared and we both strove to keep our composure I suddenly found myself reminded of an old West Wing episode.

President Bartlett was about to go on stage to make a critical speech, and to break the stress of the moment his wife cut off his tie with some scissors, leaving just enough time for him to rush into a new one before stepping on stage, where he rose magnificently to the moment.

I was reminded of that because just before our time arrived a waiter spilled Joan's drink all over her lap, breaking the tension of the moment.

Soon after that I made my brief introduction, only choking up once as I outlined Keith's many accomplishments and how much he meant to so many.

Joan brought down the house, speaking eloquently and poignantly as images of Keith flashed across the screen behind her. By the time she finished there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

I thought it might be fitting to finish here with the last part of my presentation:

*"While we may no longer have Keith's warm smile, calm confidence, daily dedication, and deceptively innocent question: 'Is this a good time to talk?' to go with his inspired music, thanks to Keith more than anyone else, today the eternal song of nature plays once again in the Cheat Canyon, where the fish have returned and with them the playful otter and soaring osprey and eagle.*

*Keith's body lives no more, but in its stead lives a river that now nurtures life after life and will long after all of us follow Keith. I think many might agree that that's why we all do what we do. I'm humbled and honored tonight to present this paddle to Keith's wife Joan to accept on Keith's behalf, as Keith honored all of us and rivers everywhere through a life that ended far too soon.*

*Keith is indeed a hero to the river, to me, and to many, many more. I miss him every day."*



## A Retrospect of Cheatfest 2010

By Janet Lenox

A wonderful crowd of over 3,000 attendees and a beautiful day set the stage for another record breaking festival. It truly was a memorable tribute to Keith Pitzer, a man who not only left a legacy within this organization, but also in the lives he touched with his music which has always been a part of this festival. This was evident from when the first campers started to show at Teter's campground on Friday afternoon and one could hear Keith and Joan's music playing throughout the day. This continued through the festival as musicians paid tribute to Keith including the Ohio band Bibs and Barefeet who played Keith's song "Hot Day in July"—which could have been renamed Hot Day in May. Mitchell Bell dedicated his song "With You" to Keith. The best tribute was made by Keith's wife Joan when she came out on stage with a bottle of champagne and led a group toast to Keith.

Another sound that could be heard as vendors were setting up on Friday was that of a nail gun, as Jake Pitzer, Seth Pitzer, and Chris Bern covered the roof of the Eloise Milne Pavilion with tarpaper in preparation for metal sheeting. The pavilion roof was completed in July. The Eloise Milne Pavilion was one of many projects that was started during Keith's tenure. After years of fundraising, endless hours of labor, and countless volunteer hours by many, its completion is a tribute to all who have worked hard to make this possible. FOC would like to send out a thank you to Chip Mefford and Jim Snyder who upgraded the festival site and pavilion electric last spring. Chip and Keith Strausbaugh donated lots of materials to the project too. The pavilion was funded through grants from the WV DEP and private donations, including our major individual benefactors Eloise and Dave Milne. The pavilion will be a main gathering point during the annual festival, in addition to being the keystone of the Doug Ferris Outdoor Classroom. The effort to expand the outdoor classroom is an ongoing project for which we continue to seek funding & donations to complete. The pavilion will also serve as a venue for other events at the festival site. Two couples have already reserved the pavilion for their summer 2011 weddings.

The 2010 t-shirt design developed by artist John K. Victor gave life to Keith's passion for music and the outdoor and included

the quote "Let your Spirit Float & Dream" from Keith's song "Mountains of Blues". The design included a scene of a man resembling Keith playing his guitar by the river. If you missed getting a shirt, we have several long sleeve and a few short sleeve shirts still available for sale--call the FOC office if you are interested at (304) 329-3621.

One reason the festival comes together so easily these days (after seventeen years!) is the fact that we have a group of dedicated individuals that return year after year to do what they do best. Kelli Geswein, Volunteer Coordinator, makes a tough job look easy as she recruits and manages over 100 volunteers. Karen Koehnlein, Hospitality Coordinator, finagles food and beverage donations to keep the volunteers and musicians nourished throughout the day and evening. Joan Pitzer, Entertainment Director, recruits and manages all the musicians, some who travel long distances to donate their musical talents to our cause. Ralph Teter takes care of the festival grounds before the festival and throughout the summer months. Jennifer Roberts coordinated all the activities in the Kids Area this year, which continues to be a favorite spot for the young and young at heart. Gail Anderson does a great job with the Artist Market, bringing in top quality art and craft vendors from across the region. Troy Helmick and the Arts Council of Preston County once again had the hard job of organizing parking for all the festival attendees. Last, but not least, is Sally Wilts our recycling guru who coordinates all the festival recycling with help from Sierra Club volunteers. Below is a summary of what was collected during the 2010 festival weekend. A special thanks to the Mon County Solid Waste Authority for donating the recycling receptacle and for providing these statistics:

OCC (cardboard) = 500 lbs  
Aluminum cans = 165 lbs = 5,775 cans  
#1 plastic bottles = 155 lbs = 2,480 plastic bottles  
Brown glass bottles = 615 lbs = 2,460 bottles  
Green glass bottles = 275 lbs = 1,100 bottles  
Clear glass bottles = 220 lbs = 880 bottles

So as you can see, it is not just the Friends of the Cheat staff, Board of Directors, or festival committee alone that makes this festival possible—it is everyone that shows their support for the work we do to improve life in the Cheat River watershed. This includes our sponsors, vendors, volunteers, musicians, donors, and everyone who comes to enjoy the festival each year, rain or shine. Without you, our work in the watershed including the festival would be impossible to maintain.

Thanks to our 2010 sponsors: Primary, Allegheny Power and Chesapeake Energy; Major, Aquafix/Microtel Inn & Suites Hazelton, Patriot Mining Company, Inc, Preston Machine Enterprises; Watershed Guardian, Mylan Pharmaceuticals, Inc.; Business, Waterfront Jeep, Alpine Lake Property Owners Association.

*Cheatfest 2011 is Saturday, May 7th! See page 3 and 6 for more information.*





## 2010 Cheat Fest 5K

By Andrew Miller

The 2010 Cheat River Festival kicked off with the sixth annual Cheat Fest 5K. Sunny skies and warm weather greeted the 101 racers who participated in the race. This year's 5K was the most profitable in its short history, as just over \$2,500 was raised from sponsor and racer registration fees. The money will be used to support the Preston Rail Trail Committee (PRTC), a group dedicated to acquiring abandon rail lines in Preston County and converting them to recreational trails.

Special thanks are in order to our wonderful sponsors who make this event possible year after year. Friends of the Cheat and the Preston Rail Trail Committee would like to send its deep gratitude to the following sponsors of the 5K: The Book Exchange, Kingwood Pharmacy, Black Bear Burritos, Dr. John Keefe, Mountaineer Lawncare, The Richwood Grill, Mettiki Coal, Old Colony Realtors, Healthworks Rehab and Fitness, Casteel and Poling, WesBanco, Alpine Lake Resort, and Country Roads Cyclist. We would also like to thank the businesses and individuals who donated items to the race raffle and gift bags. They include: The Lakeview Proshop at Lakeview Resort, Wamsley Cycles, Forks of the Cheat Winery, The Mountain People's Co-op, Kroger Grocery Stores, Road ID, and Runners World.

A big thank you is also in order to the Preston Country Club (PCC). The PCC has allowed Friends of the Cheat and the PRTC to hold this event at their facility for the past four years. Cindy Cooper and the PCC grounds crew have provided a wonderful home for the 5K. Neal Dana of Culligan also deserves recognition for donating and dispensing drinking water for the 5K and the Hospitality Café at Cheat Fest.

Just as important as our project sponsors are the volunteers who continue to donate their time and energy to make this event run smoothly. This year 14 volunteers donated 85 hours of service to the Cheat Fest 5K. Many thanks to Aaron Miller, Connie Miller, Megan Bullock, Melanie Nichols, Martha Ferris, Ben Mack, Lynn Mack, Beth Schrayshuen, Joe Kimmert, Shannon Waliser, Ben Badger, Jessica Zambias, Mandy Mitchell, Jennifer Garlesky, Carl Ervin, and Friday and Virginia Zetty and their grandchildren. In addition, the Mountaineer Area Rescue Group provided safety and emergency care for the event. Thanks again, everyone!

Disappointed you missed the 2010 Cheat Fest 5K? Want to take down Derek Bolyard, last year's champion? The 7th annual Cheat River Festival and Cheat Fest 5K are just around the corner. The race will be held on Saturday, May 7th at the Preston Country Club. Start time once again is at 10:00 AM with registration running from 8:30-9:45. All race participants will receive free admission into the Cheat River Festival and the first 100 to register will receive a free Cheat Fest 5K race t-shirt. See you at the starting line! Visit [www.cheat.org/festival/roadrace](http://www.cheat.org/festival/roadrace) to sign up.

2010 CHEAT FESTIVAL 5K RESULTS			
FINISH	NAME	TIME	OVERALL
OVERALL MALE			
1	Derek Bolyard	16:51.5	1
2	Tommy Boone	16:54.6	2
3	Anthony Hancock	18:31.4	3
OVERALL FEMALE			
1	Katie Wolpert	20:35.2	10
2	Debbie Conner	20:43.0	11
3	Tammy E. Kirksey	21:37.9	15
MALE 1-14			
1	Declan Horner	21:36.6	14
2	Christian Bean	24:01.5	27
3	Mason Chaney	44:37.1	86
MALE 15-19			
1	Dustin Matres	19:21.3	4
2	Mitch Hall	22:01.3	17
3	Josh Handrahan	25:32.6	36
MALE 20-29			
1	James Fogartie	19:40.5	6
2	Mike Will	19:46.2	7
3	Derek Sparks	19:54.2	8
MALE 30-39			
1	Pat Pell	20:22.2	9
2	Jason Sadlek	21:20.2	13
3	Shane Dixon	22:35.3	21
MALE 40-49			
1	James Work	19:31.0	5
2	Gerry Perez	22:26.7	20
3	Lonie Ward	25:39.7	38
MALE 50-59			
1	Warren Smith	21:10.0	12
2	Chuck Perrotta	29:22.8	58
3	David Pauly	29:43.9	59
MALE 60-69			
No Participants			
MALE 70 +			
1	Robert Cole	37:22.0	81
FEMALE 1-14			
1	Tashala Turner	22:06.9	18
FEMALE 15-19			
1	Marie Friend	23:59.4	26
2	Barbara Fellenstein	31:39.9	64
FEMALE 20-29			
1	Elizabeth LaFayette	23:05.3	22
2	Amber Kocela	23:22.0	23
3	Megan Gyongyosi	23:23.9	24
FEMALE 30-39			
1	Tammy Turner	22:11.6	19
2	Crystal Pell	23:52.8	25
3	Sara Litzou	24:43.6	29
FEMALE 40-49			
1	Kelly Keifer	25:42.3	39
2	Ruthann Brooks	26:21.8	43
3	Jennifer Smith	26:39.9	44
FEMALE 50-59			
1	Lynne Ryan	25:33.5	37
2	Nancy Pope	31:55.0	67
3	Pamela Kay Early	52:06.8	91
FEMALE 60-69			
1	Janet Hardesty	35:53.2	79
FEMALE 70 +			
No Participants			

## When the Going Gets Tough...

By Jim Snyder

Wow, it seems like a lifetime since I've written an article for the newsletter. In fact, I think it has been. I recall the winter before last when we lost our beloved Keith Pitzer, our hero. I remember it was a cold and snowy day when he slipped the surly bonds. And then the coldest deepest winter anyone remembers set in. It was like Keith left as peacefully as possible, but then the door slammed shut behind him. Here we are picking up the pieces.

I have a lot of cool memories from this last year, but not all of them came easy. This time last year, I had started on a new kayak design I was sure would be the best thing yet. But, it didn't prove out that way... at first. I knew I was on to a good thing and I kept after it and now, over a year later and hundreds and hundreds of hours of work, I have it dialed in! My satisfaction level is way up there! It was so hard, but I was compelled by the vision of a better thing ahead, a real reward. And I was right. My dream came true. And now others can enjoy it too. Investments are often like that—worthwhile someday further on.

A high point of my year was sighting the first known eagle's nest in the watershed during my long run down the Cheat. By now there have been many sightings. I even saw a juvenile turning adult on a camping trip down the upper Cheat not long ago. I also saw a huge river otter on my long run this year above Parsons, huge! He was like, "Wassup brother?" Totally un-intimidated by my presence.

We also took a great trip down the Cheat Canyon at very low water in August, something I do many times each year. This trip was special because most of the FOC staff went down and for many, including Amanda and Andrew, this was a close up and personal look at the real mission of FOC. The acid mine drainage (AMD) pollution is most potent in the summer and clean up efforts of FOC are most noticeable then too. We were all in "duckies" (inflatable kayaks), so it was every man or woman for themselves! The trip was beautiful, but not without difficulty or incidence. Half way down at a good sized drop called "Little Nastiest" Amanda got "de-ducked" from her boat and ended up stranded on a big rock in the middle of the rapid. Her boat listed aimlessly in the eddy below missing its pilot. Without hesitation, she leaped off the rock and landed perfectly in her boat waiting below. "Wow, she's hard to daunt!" I thought.

Amanda then got hooked up way under a bad log at the top of Tier Drop Rapid, one of the biggest rockiest drops in the Canyon. She had to fight her way out of a potentially lethal entrapment. She put her kit back together at the brink of the hardest part of the drop. Her eyes were wide open and I asked "Are you OK?" She simply said she had to wrestle a bad log just a few seconds ago. That's all. Later I saw the log—pretty much the worst, most-in-your-way log on the whole river. She was so over that though.

Then she got pinned again on a rock right in the middle of the last pitch of the rapid and pinned deep. She got out of the boat

(swimming this bit would have been a terrible option) and fought to free her boat. It was a long hard fight which she won. Then the boat, full of water, broke free without her in it and she was stranded in dangerous neighborhood. She made a leap for shore and was able to grab my hand to avoid the nasty swim. Despite these back-to-back episodes, she was still committed to having a good time with us! I've seen many tough people want me to "call them a helicopter" after this much adversity.

The point is—this woman has some grit and she doesn't flag under pressure. We're going to need that because FOC has some choppy waters ahead.

I remember my trip to Japan this year. It was notable because we had 11 "gaijin" (Americans) visiting to stage the "World Mystery Championships". We had a spectacular time—from landing the huge jet in zero visibility during tropical storm "Mallou" to my memorable flight home when I had a heart attack over the Alleutian Islands. I was able to endure over 5 hard hours before I could get an angioplasty in a hospital in Chicago. I'm now the proud owner of two new stents in my heart! And my diet's better! What this taught me was to focus on the heart of things. Why we are all here. Why you are reading this. I missed my family so much that it hurt my heart. I wanted to live so bad that it hurt my heart. I wanted to complete my mission on this beautiful earth. I'm really focused now—you can bet on it!

FOC has survived a recent financial crisis. Amanda demands the highest level of accountability for our billings and FOC is reaching a new level of paperwork and detail so we can achieve the highest level of transparency and accountability. But this effort created a lag in our grant billing ability, and our bills keep coming. A lot of Friends found out about it and sent in emergency donations and that really saved the day. We're not out of the woods yet, but our chances are good. The mission keeps on. Thank God for Friends in a time of need.

An even larger issue is the changing terrain of the reclamation business which is our main focus. Recent lawsuits have basically dried up virtually all the funding for reclamation efforts in the state. Much of FOC's income relies on the 3% administration fee we glean for getting all the details right when we administer state and federal reclamation grants. That's barely a working business model. I'd like to see the government function on 3% and have the rest hit the ground as progress! In any case, we have to learn to do with less. This is in the face of us wrapping up about a dozen projects we have been laboring on for the last several years. We have success, although the going is hard.

Friends of the Cheat will endure this. Our mission is pure and it's for the benefit of all. We have a mandate from all the Friends to persist. So that's the deal. We just need a woman with some grit in the trenches and we will surf this out. We will still come up with results. We are up to good. That's the sound bite. That is what we will be remembered for. That is our footprint. Keith would be proud.

## Cheat River Surf Spot: Ralph Teter

By Jessica Zamias

Many of the readers know Ralph and Kathy Teter from their warm and smiling faces welcoming you into their campground during Cheat Fest, the Cheat boating season or camping in Preston County. Ralph has been a dedicated board member since August 10, 1998. He officially retired from the board on October 1, 2010. Throughout his board term, he has devoted countless hours to the organization by educating the public about FOC's mission, Cheat Fest, and the river in general. For the past twelve years, he has been the primary care taker of the festival grounds and has volunteered at least 20 hours a month to the organization during that time. His tireless duties have included mowing the festival grounds and the rafting companies' grounds, assisting in knotweed eradication, and maintenance of the groundskeeping equipment. Ralph has contributed his time in many other fashions throughout his board term including painting the FOC office when it moved to Kingwood and helping with Adopt-a Highway clean ups. He has had a steady and tremendous presence in the organization.

Ralph was born in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania and moved to Preston County when he was three. He started work in Chapel Mine at the age of 18. In 1967, he was drafted to the military and stationed in Vietnam. He earned two purple hearts during the war. After the war, he came back to Preston County and married Kathy Sheets in 1970. He went back to the mines until he retired in 1995. He spent a total of 26 years working underground. In April 1996, Ralph and Kathy started Teter's Campground. In addition to working at the campground, Kathy volunteers her time by selling memberships, FOC apparel, educating the public about FOC, and has assisted in the organization's office duties. Ralph and Kathy spend their summers in Preston County and winters in Florida. They are actively engaged in the local community and spend their time riding bikes, walking on the beach, and enjoying the warm weather.

Ralph Teter is a honest and hard working individual. He has served his country and local community with integrity and compassion. FOC has had the privilege and honor to have Ralph and Kathy's dedication and long term support. Their contribution and friendship is immeasurable and heartfelt.

Ralph and Kathy will continue to operate the campground, taking care of the festival site and volunteering for Friends of the Cheat. If you see Ralph and Kathy show them a sign of appreciation as Friends of the Cheat and the Cheat River would not be the same without them!

*The Cheat River Surf Spot will be a reoccurring feature in each newsletter highlighting the contributions of a volunteer, board member, partner or other special person or group that has helped FOC and the Cheat River community. If you have a suggestion for a Surf Spot candidate, please e-mail Amanda at [amanda@cheat.org](mailto:amanda@cheat.org).*

## How I Trained My Human Servant for River Recreation

Transcribed by Bob Spangler, Jr. as dictated by Hopperton Wigglebutt Spangler

Well, I'm happy to report that all of the time that I spent training my human servant has finally paid off. This speaks volumes to my patience, as the human servant that I chose is somewhat dim-witted and stubborn. On top of the usual letting me in and out of the house when I impatiently scratch the door, feeding me, rubbing my belly, throwing the stick, and spoiling me, he makes up for his dim-wittedness in his willingness to take me to the river and to let me sleep in. In fact, he excels in these last two regards.

As a respectable lady dog, it was first necessary to teach my human servant to clear a comfortable place in the Jeep for me. To this end I demanded that he remove the rear seat so that I could comfortably lay down on all of his delightfully odorous paddling gear. I found that my servant's paddling gear offers a scent that perfectly complements that offered by the dead fish in which I like to roll. For a while he made an unpleasant grunting sound and pointed to the back seat when I tried to sit up front. Since I was born into the ranks of princesses, I had to break my human servant of this disagreeable habit. It was a battle of attrition, but I am happy to say that I am now free to ride in the front seat. It is a big sacrifice for my human servant, as he has yet to go on a second date after requiring that his potential suitors ride in the back at my discretion. Perhaps they do not find his paddling gear as agreeable as I do.

Although my drink of choice is Scotch on the rocks (as I am a respectable lady dog), I found that it's often unavailable on the back roads between our farm and my favorite river spots. I therefore had to train my servant to stop at a variety of small gas stations so that he can buy cheap American lager to keep me hydrated while on the river. To this end, I'm sad to report that my diligence in training him was only partially successful. While he was very reliable in procuring said lager, he would often drink the bulk of it himself! In addition, he would sometimes forget to refill my bowl for an hour at a time! This is very difficult to accept, as I already suffer the disadvantage that I must let my beer go flat so that it doesn't irritate my nose when I slurp it up. I hope, by next summer, to train my human



servant to build a supersonic-aided degasser to make my beer go flat more quickly. This will allow me to then drink more of it before my servant inevitably drinks the rest and falls asleep by the side of the river.

*continued on page 14*

## Eat for the Cheat Update

By Andrew Miller

I'd like to send out a big thank you to everyone who is participating in our Eat for the Cheat fundraiser. By using your Kroger gift cards, you have raised \$884.25 for Friends of the Cheat. So far we have used that money to pay one month's rent and the shipping costs of 3,300 trees for a reforestation project. That's a great start but we need people to continue to reload and use their cards. Our monthly expenditure totals have been dropping recently so if you have a card and haven't been using it, dust that baby off so you can have 5% of your purchases go to FOC!

We also need new participants in the program. If you have a Kroger grocery store or fuel center in your town, please sign up for Eat for the Cheat and 5% of your grocery and fuel purchases will go toward Friends of the Cheat. Grocery shopping and fueling up is something you do anyway—simply fill out the form at right and mail with \$5 to FOC to get your Kroger gift card and help us continue our work in the watershed.

## FOC Honors Major Donors at First Annual Event

By Amanda Pitzer

This March, Friends of the Cheat held its first major donor appreciation event. Any individual or business that donates \$250 or more in cash in one year is a major donor. FOC has many supporters that contribute in different ways, and all of these donors are vital to the organization's success. Not everyone can open up their checkbook and write a check for \$250, or \$500, or \$1,000—and FOC felt it was important to honor these supporters with a special event.

As guests arrived, Bob Shank entertained the crowd with hammered dulcimer and banjo tunes while everyone munched appetizers and mingled. Our new Board Chair Dawn Seeburger addressed the crowd prior to the meal, reflecting on the challenges of non-profit board governance and the ever-changing funding climate. Michael Seeburger, Dawn's son, with assistance from his friend Josh Tolliver, served a classy and delectable meal with chicken chaucier as the entree. Dessert included delicious sweets, that even skilled baker Janet Szilagyi noted, "tasted as good as they looked!"

Although the event was not designed as a fundraiser, we secured several high quality items for a small but potent silent auction. A special thanks to all our donors including: OfAlbright Photography, Dave Cerbone; John K. Victor; Dawn Seeburger; Art Attacks and Strokes, Chad Pitts; Laurel Mountain Music, Joan Pitzer; Jack Sanders; Broken Tractor Winery, Bob Spangler; and Patty Strahin Markley. \$500 was raised from only 9 items, including the big prize, a handmade sassafras end table by Jack Sanders won by major donor and longtime FOC supporter, Sandy Walbridge. To further help offset event costs, Chesapeake Energy sponsored the dinner through a \$1,000 donation.

### Please sign me up for Eat for the Cheat!

Fill out this form and send it to the Friends of the Cheat office with a five dollar check (please make checks payable to Friends of the Cheat and write *Eat for the Cheat* on the memo line). In return, we will send you a "reloadable" Kroger gift card with a balance of \$5.00. When you use this card at Kroger grocery stores and Kroger fuel stations 5% of your purchase will be donated to Friends of the Cheat by Kroger.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Friends of the Cheat office address

Friends of the Cheat  
119 South Price Street, Suite 206  
Kingwood, WV 26537



Following dinner, the staff addressed the audience. Jessica Zamias outlined the history and expansion of FOC's Mapping and Monitoring Program and remediation efforts. Andrew Miller followed with a summary of natural gas development in the lower Cheat watershed and FOC's current Marcellus monitoring plan. I wrapped up the presentation with an overview of other current projects, new opportunities, and potential threats to the organization. The overall message was of appreciation, but was underscored with an urgent reminder of how important it is that we maintain current giving levels. Special recognition was also given to Eloise and Dave Milne. The Milne's are our most generous, consistent donors. Not only do they support FOC financially, but they also inspire the staff and Board to keep striving for restoration success in the Muddy Creek watershed.

In the last three years, FOC's membership dues and donations have remained solid. This is truly amazing, as individuals and businesses across the country struggle to rebound from recession. However, the cost of doing business continues to rise and FOC needs our major donors—and all our supporters—now more than ever. To learn more about how to support FOC by becoming a major donor please contact us.

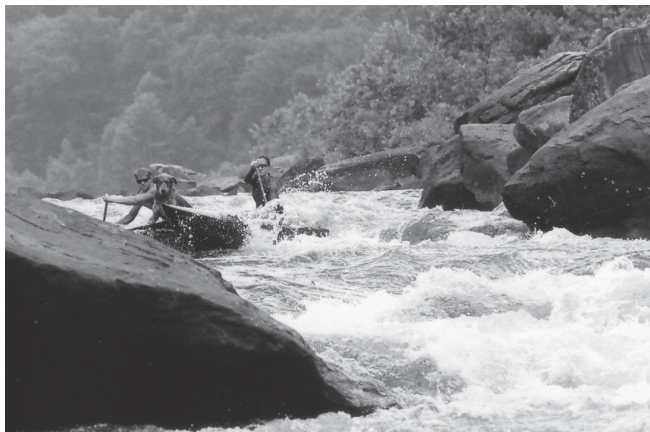
FOC seeks to expand the major donor appreciation event by offering daytime watershed tours and other educational opportunities to its supporters. Join the ranks of our major donors and enjoy these and other perks of our appreciation program! Thanks to everyone who made our first major donor appreciation event a success, including Michael Seeburger and Josh Tolliver, Bridge Road Bistro, the Rowlesburg Revitalization Committee, Chesapeake Energy, FOC staff and Board and spouses, Bob Shank, and volunteer bartender Lydia Darrow.

## Amanda's Yet to Be Titled Column

By Amanda Pitzer

What an exciting ride the first 9 months of my new position as Executive Director has been! Within the first two weeks of being at the helm of Friends of the Cheat, we caught wind that a Canadian company was preparing to seek permits for a commercial solid waste facility near the confluence of Big Sandy and Little Sandy Creeks outside of Bruceton Mills. It was rumored that the landfill would be designed to accept the brittle solid waste left behind from evaporated flowback, or produced water, from open Marcellus shale drilling pits. Natural gas development was finally upon us...and I was in charge. It was quite an intimidating realization that the first drainage FOC and its partners had seen recover from acid mine drainage was at risk. Although plans for this facility have still not been presented to the Preston County Solid Waste Authority, Marcellus shale natural gas development is here to stay, and the Sandy is the first area seeing a booming influx of development.

Downstream, FOC's work in the Muddy Creek drainage was being impeded by the fallout of a good-natured lawsuit against WVDEP. FOC's \$1.3 million EPA-funded Targeted Watershed Initiative includes WVDEP as an integral partner in the treatment of Fickey Run—Muddy's worst tributary. Due to the new liability risk posed by the dosing plan agreed upon by WVDEP in 2006, they no longer could uphold their commitment to treat Fickey's AMD, both pre-law and post-law, with an in stream lime doser. In the last few months, WVDEP, FOC, and our partners at WVU have forged a new plan to dose Fickey Run and meet the objectives of our grant agreement. However, this solution is not designed to be permanent. FOC will only be able to pay for approximately 4 to 5 months of chemical treatment (\$50,000 - \$75,000!), which will allow us to collect important data on Fickey Run and the impacts of this treatment downstream. You can see Fickey Run as you drive along Route 26 at the base of Dream Mountain Game Ranch. One WVDEP employee, who works on special reclamation sites all over WV, stated that Fickey may be the worst AMD-impacted stream in the state. The treatment of Fickey Run is vital to the restoration of the Muddy Creek watershed, and we were so close! Although we are disappointed, the knowledge gained from the study is still a step forward and will be a good tool in future decision making.



The most recent controversy surrounds arsenic exceedences from the Albright Power Station's ash pile. Following the filing of a lawsuit against the company, I spoke with Allegheny Energy's (now Mon Power) environmental specialist, Bill Cannon. After this initial conversation where Mr. Cannon explained the details of the lawsuit, Board member Jim Snyder and myself were invited to attend a regular meeting of the station's Citizen Advisory Panel (CAP). Other community members were in attendance for the meeting that started with a tour of the ash pile area. After the tour Mr. Cannon gave a lengthy, detailed presentation. He began by stating that the power plant had not made any recent changes in the pond structure or ash handling protocols. The wetlands and ponds have been in place for 21 years. He explained how the allowed discharge rate is based on loadings, which is a function of concentration and flow. This was familiar talk to me as FOC's employs loadings when quantifying impacts and treatment of AMD. The highest concentrations happen at times of lowest flow, the dry months. During the dry months the flows in the accepting channels is practically zero. During the months of July – September of 2010, 6 samplings at ponds 3 and 5 revealed exceedences of newly modified arsenic permit limits. The highest level was 4 parts per billion (ppb) at a low flow of 1.7 gallons per minute (gpm). As normal flows resumed the concentrations dropped back below legal standards and have remained in compliance since.

Daugherty Run is a productive trout stream even holding brook trout, an environmentally sensitive species. In February 2009, WVDEP published results of a study conducted from 2005-07 for several streams in WV, including Daugherty Run. This included ash pile affected streams and contained information about water chemistry and fish tissue studies. Daugherty Run was omitted from the ash pile-affected group because it was determined the ash pile had no effect on Daugherty's water chemistry or fish tissues, and including the data would have statistically skewed results. At this point, Friends of the Cheat has not joined in with or contributed to the lawsuit. Look for more detailed information about arsenic in Daugherty in our next newsletter.

So, as you can see, I have been keeping quite busy. You also probably noticed that I haven't chosen a name for this column. I have brainstormed over and over, consulted friends and family, skimmed favorite books, and "googled" ideas often. Dave and Keith's titles were timely, fit their personalities, and referenced water—"Streams of Consciousness" and "Working Upstream," respectively. Dang overachievers. What I want my title to allude to are the influences that brought me to this beautiful place and my important position at FOC. I realized while choosing photographs to accompany this untitled column that my two favorites reminded me of a letter I wrote explaining just that—how I got to West Virginia and why I wanted to be Executive Director. This letter was my cover letter that I submitted to the Search Committee over a year ago. I'll leave you, my new Friends, with part of this same letter, as I want all of you to share the confidence and support that the Board has shown for me. (I'm still taking suggestions on the column name.)

*continued on page 14*

## How I Trained My Human Servant

*continued from page 11*

On some days just sitting by the side of the river with my dog friends and their human servants just isn't enough excitement for a worldly lady dog. For these days, I have trained my servant to bring a kayak so that he can escort me down the river. While I have trained him to paddle more difficult waters than what I'll entertain (I wouldn't want to scruff up my paws, after all), I usually demand that he takes me down the Cheat Narrows, the

Lower Yough, or the Arden section of the Tygart. These are beautiful stretches of river, and they are not too difficult for a fine swimmer such as me. While I am perfectly capable of portaging any rapid I do not wish to swim, I have trained my servant to offer yet another service. He will switch his paddle so that it runs the length of an arm, lean away from me and into the paddle, then put his free hand behind my head so that I can shimmy up onto the boat. My servant will then paddle the rapid (for my amusement) in this awkward and compromised position. If I do it right, I can even get him to flip over at the end (after I no longer require his services, of course).

Needless to say, it hasn't been easy teaching that fat-headed oaf all of these tricks, but it has certainly been worthwhile. My advice to fellow dogs in the midst of training their masters, and this cannot be emphasized enough, is to look cute! If you are skilled at looking cute, your servant will do anything that you demand.

## Amanda's Untitled Column

*continued from page 13*

How exactly does a river draw you to a place? For the Pitzer family, the Cheat River represented a new beginning. Similar to the way a headwater stream begins, the Pitzer family gathered together, carried what they could, and moved to a new place in the hills where they cut out their own way of life. They crashed against boulders blocking their way, which changed not only the land around them but each of them as individuals.

In late summer 2005, I was well on my way to carving out my own path when I met Jake, Keith and Joan's third son. I moved to southwest Virginia only three weeks later to begin my career as a high school art and science teacher. For almost a year, Jake and I traveled back and forth along the ridges of the Appalachian Mountains to spend only two or three days together at a time. Nearly every time I came to Preston County we would drive his old Jeep Wrangler from Bruceton Mills to the top of Laurel Mountain above the Cheat River to visit his parents. The 12-mile stretch from Caddell Bridge to Fill Hollow Road was my favorite part of the trip and during that year I saw the river change with the seasons. When we finally got to the farm I always had lots of questions for Keith about the river and his work. During our long talks about acid mine drainage, local dumping practices, stewardship, and fishing his passion fired me up and I felt my own late father's commitment to conservation creeping back into my mind.

I knew before the school year was over that Preston County would

*continued at right*

## Wind Turbine Design and Construction Workshop, June 18 & 19

Briery Mountain Enterprises, LLC, located in Terra Alta, WV is conducting a wind turbine design and construction seminar.

This is a two day "hands on" workshop where participants will learn how to make a quiet and durable wind turbine from scratch. Participants will develop knowledge and skills and complete one 10' diameter wind turbine.

Attendees will fabricate a 3-phase axial flux alternator, wooden blades, and the metal frame for the turbines from scratch. This is an ambitious workshop so expect to stay busy! It provides an excellent opportunity to learn about wind energy, wind turbine design, and teaches a variety of hands-on skills.

**For more information go to <http://www.briery.com/training/>  
Registration deadline is Saturday, May 28th.**

be my home. Jake found an amazing little cottage along the Narrows, wedged between the river and what will someday be the rail trail. Serendipitously, an education position came available at Friends of Deckers Creek in late 2006 and since then I have been able to share my passion and devotion for environmental protection with over 1,000 local young people. My greatest honor was receiving the 2008 WV Watershed Network Guiding Light Award, joining the ranks of my watershed heroes including Keith, Evan Hansen, and Bill Thorne.

Like a river, nothing ever stays the same. Jake shared with me Keith's initial diagnosis while I was with [the FODC] Youth Advisory Board atop Spruce Knob. I broke down in front of the kids and they comforted me as best they could. The next day, as we floated down the South Branch of the Potomac, we watched two bald eagles lock talons and free fall through the air only to let go of each other moments before crashing into the ground. Like many people, I held on to Keith in a similar way, barely able to let go even when I saw the jagged rocks below.

What I can hold on to is my love for Keith and this land. Each day, I work to make him proud and want to lead the group that will execute his many visions. I know firsthand the size of the waders to be filled and I am aware of rapids needing navigated. I believe I can bring new energy and passion to the group and refocus goals and objectives. In addition to board development, strategic planning, and revamping the organization's financial accounting system, I would like to see Friends of the Cheat become more visibly engaged in the community through the recruitment, training, and utilization volunteers, hosting outreach education events, participating in local community events, and developing another annual fundraising event. This expansion would naturally flow into increased individual and business memberships with the next step being creating a major donor program.

Like a single leaf floating atop the water, I was drawn into the current of watershed protection by one of the best. I can only hope that I will have the chance to toss my own pebble into these waters and create a ripple effect that reaches as many people as Keith has.

## Why YOU Should Get Involved...or Become More Involved...with Friends of the Cheat

From its headwaters in Pocahontas County, West Virginia, the Cheat River flows 157 miles to the Pennsylvania state line. In its lower 20 miles, the river has been severely polluted by acid mine drainage. Many of its tributaries in this area are dead. Most of this damage is caused by underground and surface coal mines that were abandoned decades ago before regulations mandating cleanup were in place. The continuing legacy of this pollution has been the loss of fish, benthic creatures, and other wildlife; degraded drinking water; economic loss from diminished property values and river recreation; and aesthetics.

FOC works to improve the watershed by fostering cooperative efforts by federal and state agencies, academia, private industry, and local landowners to address the severe acid mine drainage pollution that paints the Cheat Canyon orange. Today, signs of life are starting to reappear in the Canyon, but we still need your support to continue to create a new legacy for the Cheat River. Our membership includes fisherman, paddlers, guides, and outfitters; land owners, renters, and visitors; geologists and biologists; small business and large industry; politicians and activists. We are a diverse group with a common goal to *restore, preserve, and promote the outstanding natural qualities of the Cheat River*. Our vision is a healthy river that provides multiple recreational opportunities and sustains viable local economies.

**Help us make that vision reality. Rivers carry the lifeblood of the planet but they should not run red. Restore water quality in the Cheat!**

Become a member today by completing the form below and sending it to FOC with your tax-deductible donation--or by visiting our website at [www.cheat.org](http://www.cheat.org). Memberships make great gifts for the hard to buy for conservationist. Consider including FOC in your estate planning too. Contact FOC for more information on how you can help us achieve our goals!

## Yes, I want to be a Friend of the Cheat!

### Membership & Merchandise Order Form

*Memberships follow the calendar year & all donations are tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to Friends of the Cheat & mail to 119 South Price St. Ste. 206, Kingwood, WV 26537*

**Individual & Family \$25**

**Organization \$50**

**Business \$100**

**Stream Steward \$150**  
Includes FOC ball cap & DVD

**Watershed Watch \$250**  
Includes FOC classic map tee & DVD (please select tee size below)

**River of Promise DVD: A Catalyst for Change, Price of a Legacy, A Promise Kept \$20**

**Classic Map Tees \$20 (only \$15 with a donation \$50 or more)**

Medium #\_\_\_\_  Large #\_\_\_\_  XL #\_\_\_\_  XXL #\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  I would like to receive an electronic newsletter

*Cheat River Festival Sponsorships Available--advertise your business & help FOC! Contact FOC for more information about sponsorship.*