



New River Land Trust

Conserving farmland, forests, open spaces and historic places in Virginia's New River region since 2002

NEWS

Fall 2016

Land Trust To Hold New Easement in Carroll County

The New River Land Trust is working with Diane and Chuck Flynt of Foggy Ridge Cider to establish a new conservation easement. The following is owner Diane Flynt's story about conserving their land.

Stretching over several hills and hollers in the lee of Buffalo Mountain, sliced and bordered by mountain creeks, this Carroll County property is typical Southern Appalachian farm land. Our neighbors remember wooded hills planted in corn and beans, and what's now a scrubby bog grazed by sheep "as close as a golf course." Farmers are scarce these days, and until we purchased our first parcel in 1997, this land had not been farmed in decades. Chuck and I have attempted, in our small way, to preserve this corner of the Blue Ridge Plateau as a working farm, albeit one appropriate for the 21st century.

Carrie Spence raised nine children on part of this farm in a two-room house

built into a hillside near one of the many springs on the property. We were privileged to know Carrie the last decade of her life and she taught us much about rural life in the last century—hauling water from the spring, canning peaches, taking produce to sell in an oxen drawn cart. But most of all she liked to talk about walking with her children down Rock House Creek to Buffalo Presbyterian Church, the first "rock church" founded by Rev. Bob Childress.

I believe we're all born with a native landscape inside us, at least those of us attuned to the natural world. While I appreciate the coast and admire rugged western views, my landscape is an eastern deciduous forest and rolling farmland. Here every season has its charms - spring ephemerals carpet the woods with delicate blooms before trees leaf out in May; summer is dense with foliage, and spring fed creeks run full even in drought. As a cider apple grower and cider maker, fall is all about fruit and



View of Buffalo Mountain on Flynt Property

the mad dash that is apple harvest. And winter, the long dark, is best of all - quiet, trees bold against pale winter skies and plenty of time to read and cook.

Chuck and I are happy to place this property under conservation protection. We both believe that land can teach us much, not just about flora and fauna, but also about people and culture. We look forward to continuing our education.

Lifelong Learning Class Takes Trip into History

Imagine living on the land your family has owned and farmed continuously since the 1700's. Lewis Ingles "Bud" Jeffries doesn't have to. Bud is a direct descendant of Mary Draper and William Ingles, who settled the land in the late 1750's. Mary made a famous trek of hundreds of miles home after being captured by the Shawnee. The entire farm at the time was made up of Bud's property and the property across the river, now owned by the Barbour, Ingles, and Steele families. Both properties are under conservation easement.

Thirty-five members of Virginia Tech's Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) visited

Ingles Ferry Farm last month with New River Land Trust. "We enjoyed the tour and the talk by owner Bud Jeffries. It's such a beautiful place and we're glad to know it will remain that way. Our members appreciated learning the story of the Ingles family from one of its own." said Molly McClintock, a member of LLI. Members toured the farms on both sides of the river, including the historic Ingles Ferry Tavern.

Bud Jeffries summed up his family's decision to put a conservation easement on the property in 2002: "We didn't want to sell our heritage. But even if one

day the property is owned by someone other than a family member, the land will stay much as it was when Mary and William settled here."



Bud Jeffries Talks About Ingles Farm

NRLT Receives National Recognition

The New River Land Trust is part of larger conservation community. This community follows professional standards set by the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) and NRLT is proud to say it was accredited by the LTA's Accreditation Commission in 2013. The LTA also supports land trusts through educational programming and grant funding. In 2016, the NRLT is excited to announce that its work and potential have again been recognized by the LTA.

"The NRLT is honored to receive this national recognition and greatly appreciates the support from the LTA which will advance the quality and quantity of the organizations conservation work for many years to come."

-John Eustis, Executive Director

In the spring of 2016, the NRLT was invited to join the LTA's Wentworth Leadership Program. The program is a two year program designed to meet the needs of executive directors who have reached a high skill level in their careers but still desire a more advanced set of leadership skills to assist them in navigating the specialized conservation needs that all land trusts face. Having completed the first year of the program, John Eustis, the NRLT's Executive Director, has found the program incredibly beneficial.

"The training provided by the Leadership Program has been exceptional and the opportunity to network with and learn from other land trust leaders has proven invaluable."

Then in July, the NRLT was invited to join the LTA's National Excellence Program. Through the program, the NRLT applied for a grant and has been awarded \$15,000 to support hiring a part-time Conservation Coordinator. There is an increasing need for conservation services in the New River region and this new position will help the NRLT fill this need by enhancing its capacity to provide conservation outreach, education, facilitation and implementation services. You can read about our new staff member below.



- Sound Finances
- Ethical Conduct
- Responsible Governance
- Lasting Stewardship

Conservation Outreach Coordinator joins NRLT



Kirby Walke and daughters

In July, the NRLT was invited to join the Land Trust Alliance's National Excellence Program. The program awarded the NRLT a grant to support hiring part-time Conservation Outreach Coordinator, Kirby Walke.

Kirby describes his motivation for working with the Land Trust: "Early on I discovered a passion for nature. From growing up exploring the banks of the James River, to a move to the mountains of Roanoke, I understood quickly that open and wild places would play a role in my daily life. This love and passion grew and took me on a journey both professionally and personally throughout Virginia. During this continued journey I have learned there are lessons and

stories to be told around every bend and ridge top. Today I am lucky enough to not only work to conserve lands with the NRLT but to also instill my love for open spaces in my two daughters. I strive to teach them and the community that open spaces shape us in ways we often overlook. With a quick glance to the skyline we can be reminded that the world is bigger and wilder than we can imagine. I hope to keep it that way, forever." One of his favorite quotes:

"We want for people to get out and fall in love, because you will not protect something unless you love it. Unless you go out into these hills and the wind is in your face and things hurt, it's raining, it stings your face. That's when you fall in love." - Kris Tompkins

Nature Play Space Opens in Heritage Park

We celebrated the opening of the Nature Play Space in Blacksburg's Heritage Park by hosting a Nature Play Date for the community with guests Rick Van Noy, author of *A Natural Sense of Wonder: Connecting Kids with Nature through the Seasons*, and Sharon Stacy, who provided music and a sing along. The next phase of the Play Space will include interpretive signs, a welcoming arbor entry way,

a butterfly garden, birdhouses and more. More at: tinyurl.com/playspaceNRLT.

Join us for our next **Outdoor Family Class: Animal Survival**. The class will be from 9:30-11:30 on December 3 in the Nature Play Space at Heritage Park. As always, the class is free, but space is limited. Email youthoutreach@newriverlandtrust.org to register.



Singing Songs at the Play Space