

in depth

west virginia

department of environmental protection

Vol. 24, No. 9

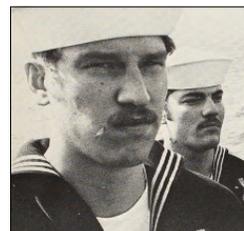
November 2016

**VETERAN'S DAY IS
NOVEMBER 11**

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Thank You!



Youth Environmental Conference Held at Canaan Valley

by Terry Fletcher

A small, but very energetic, group experienced some of the most scenic views West Virginia has to offer at the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection's Youth Environmental Conference held Sept. 30-Oct. 2 at Canaan Valley Resort in Davis.

Youth clubs from across the state sent a total of 19 students and 11 chaperones to take part in the annual event, which featured trips to Seneca Rocks, Smoke Hole Caverns and Dolly Sods.

"I thought the campers who attended enjoyed themselves," Youth Environmental Program Director Diana Haid said. "We had great tours lined up and the ones who came got a lot of really good information relayed to them. Attendance was down this year, but the quality of the conference was still high."

Upon arrival on Friday, campers were greeted with a pizza buffet, door prizes and a presentation on wetlands by Alyssa Hanna of the Canaan Valley Institute.

The next day, the conference got off to an early start, departing at 8 a.m. for Seneca Rocks where campers got a look at the only true peak (a peak inaccessible except through technical rock climbing techniques) on the East Coast.

From there, the conference attendees traveled to one of the most unique geological sites in the state: Smoke Hole Caverns. The campers were treated to a guided tour of the caverns and shopped in one of the largest gift shops in West Virginia before being served a delicious hot lunch.

The final destination of the day was scenic Dolly Sods, where Trail and Wilderness Manager Gray Buckles gave an informative talk about the history and guidelines of the highest plateau east of the Mississippi River.

The campers then returned to Canaan for a quick dinner and a presentation by West Virginia Community and Technical College's Ward Malcolm regarding wind energy and turbine technology. Malcolm also gave a drone presentation.

"Our presenters did a great job and I was very happy with that," said Haid. "I like to expose our participants to places they've never been and things they've never seen and reinforce those with a good environmental message."

It was then the campers' turn to present. They showed off art projects their youth clubs created, and shared stories about community cleanup and outreach efforts they participated in throughout the year.

The weekend wasn't all business, though, as the campers were treated to music by a DJ, swimming, snacks and arts and crafts to close the conference.

Next year's conference is slated for Sept. 29-Oct. 1 at North Bend State Park in Ritchie County, with tentative plans to visit the Oil and Gas Museum, Blennerhasset Island and the Ohio River Wildlife Refuge.

For more information about the YEP, contact Haid at Di-ana.K.Haid@wv.gov.



The students also visited the Sites Homestead near Seneca Rocks. The homestead was built in 1839 and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1993.

Schaer Shares Farm Success Story

by Colleen O'Neill

Julie Schaer raised quite a few eyebrows when she went from being an environmental geologist to an organic farmer.

Now the wife of the DEP's Nick Schaer, an environmental geologist with the Division of Mining and Reclamation, is winning blue ribbons for many of the heirloom vegetables she raises.

She won the Victor Tessero Best In Show award for the best vegetable at the 2016 West Virginia State Fair for her 'Shvelisi' garlic. She also won blue ribbons for her green beans, tomatoes and okra.

"Julie is famous for her garlic," proud husband Nick Schaer says.

"Unlike what you'd find in the grocery store, her garlic is crisp and has a stronger taste."

Julie Schaer has worked the farm for more than 10 years and has been doing it full-time since 2009. Nick helps out as much as he can, providing his wife with what he calls "free labor."

The farm is on old family property in Putnam County. Named the "Potager, it's located off of Hurricane Creek Road, just north of the city of Hurricane.

"We keep about two acres plowed and have a certified organic farm," Schaer said. "We also have a greenhouse and a high tunnel."



Above: Julie Schaer tends to the field.

Left: The Schaers' son Henry is pictured with the prize-winning Shvelisi garlic. This type of garlic originates from the region surrounding Georgia, Russia. It is characterized by beautiful purple stripes and is great for cooking.

DEP Hosts Employee Appreciation Picnic at Kanawha City HQ

by Terry Fletcher

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection's Employee Appreciation Picnic took place Wednesday, Oct. 19, at DEP headquarters in Kanawha City.

Employees were provided with lunch and a bevy of fun activities to celebrate their hard work throughout the year.

Dennis Stottlemeyer, Chris Gatens and Nancy Hunt helped lead hikes overlooking the Kanawha River Valley, while lunch was served and employees played corn hole.

After enjoying a fantastic spread of barbecue, sides, salad and desserts from Topspot Catering, DEP Cabinet Secretary Randy C. Huffman handed out certificates to employees celebrating their years of service (see page 3).

The biggest awards of the day were to Steven Clark of the Business and Technology Office for employee of the month, and to the BTO's Craig Hatcher, who was named employee of

the year and given a \$1,500 check.

In between awards, door prizes, which included gift cards for various retailers and restaurants, were handed out, and the 50/50 raffle winner was announced. After the ceremony, fierce games of bingo ensued, Jeremy Davis and Lynn Dunlap led a painting class and Mandy Strader taught a tree-topper craft class.

"Quotable"



"The woods are lovely, dark and deep. But I have promises to keep. And miles to go before I sleep, and miles to go before I sleep."

- Robert Frost
"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening (1922)"



Five years of service



10 years of service



15 years of service



20 years of service



25 years of service



30 years of service



Retirement (after 30 years)



35 years of service



40 years of service



**2016 Employee of the Year
Craig Hatcher, BTO**



**September Employee of the Month
Steven Clark, BTO-IRIS**

Thank you for your dedication to DEP!

Determination

Months of work pays off at Ironman North Carolina

First-hand accounts of endurance racing from DEP's Jake Glance and Rich Boehm



Jake Glance, PIO

It's cold. I am shivering in my wetsuit, surrounded by more than 1,200 other anxious triathletes.

We've all thought of this day for months. Standing in the wet sand in Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina, I think of a Robert Frost poem - "I have promises to keep. And miles to go before I sleep, and miles to go before I sleep."

The water is mostly clear to six feet down. I can't see the bottom. Sharks maybe. I swim. Splashing all around me. I have 2.4 miles of water, 56 miles of biking (not 112, thanks to Hurricane Matthew), and 26.2 miles of running ahead of me. There are thousands - *thousands* - of training miles behind me. That's not salt water in my goggles. Am I crying? I am happy. I am smiling as I swim. Is this joy? Bliss? I am young. And strong.

A blast of cold water. That's ocean current. Ride that. Forget about the salt burns already forming on your shoulder and under your arms. Swim. Breathe. Calm. I use the length of my arm to grip more water. Smooth stroke. Glide. Don't kick too much. I will need my legs many hours from now.

Make the turn, see the marina.



Rich Boehm, DAQ

On Saturday, Oct. 22, I raced in the Wilmington, North Carolina, Half Ironman. The race is comprised of three disciplines: swimming, biking and running; and covers a total distance of 70.3 miles. After having trained for several months, I was fortunate to stay healthy and have many great friends, and co-workers, to train alongside.

Having swam the 1.2 mile distance before, I felt comfortable with the many pool swims and lake swims I had done to get ready. Unfortunately, I was

not too prepared for the choppy waves, nearby race participants, or the excess consumption of salt water on the distance. Pushing through, I exited the water with one of my faster swims. I'll chalk this up to adrenaline and the desire to break clear of the masses in the race.

Once out of the water, I was anxious to get through the transition and onto my bike. I wasn't sure how this would go, as many summer training rides were filled with excessive heat and poor training, leaving me second guessing my preparedness.

Fortunately for this leg, the temperatures and humidity were perfect for some great riding. I started the ride pushing the speed but after a few short

Do not swallow salt water. Not too much anyway. Grab a volunteer's hand and yank myself out of the water. Stop at the showers. Rinse off as much salt water as I can.

Transition. Legs feel strong as I run to my bike. The Black Stallion, a matte black carbon fiber Specialized Shiv with carbon aero wheels and red bar tape and red accents on the tires. She looks fast even when racked. Don't start too fast. Don't start too fast. Miles to go before I sleep.

The wind. *Lord, the wind.* From directly ahead at 15-20. I can't get any smaller. I'm not aero. Shift up, increase cadence. Don't draft. Someone crashed. Make the turn at mile 40. The headwind just became a tail wind. I am flying. *Flying.* Shift down and enjoy being strong. Eat. Drink. Hit the salt. Hammer the biggest gear I can. I trained for this. I can cash this check, even with miles to go before I sleep.

There are people cheering. People I don't know. They look at me. I see blurs. Unclip from pedals, hand my bike off to a volunteer. The Black Stallion treated me well today, despite the wind. Into the changing tent. Fresh socks, running shoes. Hoka. Set your watch. Go. Go. Go.

Out of transition, onto the road. I hear a voice scream my name. I get a jolt of power. Miles to go before I sleep. Pavement. Sun. Hundreds of

people around me. Strangers, training partners, older people, younger people. I see a kit from Colombia. Poland. United States.

Aid station after aid station. Eat. Drink. Not too much. Hit your salt again. You have salt streaks on your kit, man. Your pace is good, man. Keep it up, man. I'm already at mile 5. Just zone out. Breathe. It's just like a long run on Kanawha Boulevard.

Make the turn at 13.1. Get my special needs bag. Fresh Nuun. Tasty. Almonds. Please, no more gel.

Mile 18.63. I think of 1863, when West Virginia became a state. Don't drift off. Breathe. Cadence. Pace is good. There's a training partner. Run with her. Talk about something. *Anything.* She says her quads are burning. My back hurts. Mile 21. One last quick bite. Hit the salt again. High five.

Mile 25. It happens. Adrenaline. I am going to finish. I speed up. She says don't wait for her. I don't. A volunteer smacks me on the backside - hard. It wakes me up even more.

Along the river, next to the USS North Carolina. The finish is around the corner. More strangers along the chute. I see a face. It's done. From weak to strong. It's done.

So many miles. Promises kept. So many hours. Time to rest. I've never felt more tired.

Or stronger.

course turns I was headed right into a head wind that humbled me, cutting my speed by a good 5-10 mph.

Trying to push through the wind only made my legs more fatigued so I backed off a little and hoped that at the turn the tail wind would help push me back. After about 40 miles of struggling into the wind, the turn came and I could immediately feel the push back to the finish. I pushed a little harder on the return and it paid off. My goal bike time was under 3 hours, and I came in at 2:52.

Now off the bike, I was hoping that my legs still had a little left in them to run the complete half marathon.

Hot Summer, Drought Mean Less Vibrant and Short Lived Fall Foliage

by Jake Glance

The hot temperatures and sporadic rainfall throughout the summer and early fall mean the foliage that inspires mountain road trips won't be as spectacular this year.

Not only were the colors not as vibrant, but the leaves fell off the trees sooner.

According to U.S. climate data, in Charleston in August of 2016, 25 of 30 days were hotter than the historic average of 84 degrees. There were 14 days in August where the high temperature reached over 90 degrees.

During that same time period, the area received more than a half an inch less of rainfall than usual.

In an area of the state famous for fall foliage, Elkins in Randolph County, it was much the same story.

In August, 25 of 30 days were hotter than the historic average of 80 degrees. The city experienced five days of over 90 degrees.

Elkins also saw about .7 inches less rainfall than normal.



Earl Ray Tomblin

Governor

Randy C. Huffman

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Thank you for your service!



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Rank: Major
Years of Service: 2000-Present
DEP Service and Division: 1 1/2 years with DWWM



Name: Sally Brown
Branch: United States Army
Rank: Specialist 5 (Sergeant)
Years of Service: 1978-1982
DEP Service and Division: 17 years with EE



Name: Neil Chakrabarty
Branch: United States Army
Rank: Sergeant
Years of Service: 4
DEP Service and Division: 20 years with BTO



Name: Jeremy Davis
Branch: United States Marine Corps
Rank: E-3 (Lance Corporal)
Years of Service: 1989-1991
DEP Service and Division: 4 years with Legal Services



Name: Stephanie Ferrell
Branch: United States Army
Rank: 1LT (P)
Years of Service: 13
DEP Service and Division: 6 years with DWWM



Name: Paul Frantz
Branch: United States Army
Rank: Specialist 4
Years of Service: 1975-1978
DEP Service and Division: 30 with DNR & Dam Safety



Name: Amy Higgs
Branch: West Virginia Air National Guard
Rank: E-5 (SSgt)
Years of Service: 4.5 active, 2 with WVANG
DEP Service and Division: 2.5 years with EE



Name: Randy Huffman
Branch: West Virginia Air National Guard
Rank: Colonel
Years of Service: 36
DEP Service and Division: 30 years, multiple divisions



Name: Robert Jackson
Branch: West Virginia National Guard
Rank: E-5 (Sergeant)
Years of Service: 10
DEP Service and Division: 3 years with DWWM



Name: James Jarrett
Branch: United States Army
Rank: E-3 (PFC)
Years of Service: 1988-1994
DEP Service and Division: 6 years with DAQ



Name: Mark Kesner
Branch: United States Army Reserve
Rank: Specialist 4
Years of Service: 1989-1996
DEP Service and Division: 5 years with EE



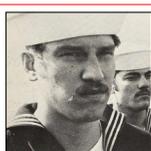
Name: John Killian
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Years of Service: 20 years
DEP Service and Division: 8 years with DWWM



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Branch: United States Army
Rank: E-5 (Sergeant)
Years of Service: 2
DEP Service and Division: 24 years with DMR



Name: Nathan Meadows
Branch: United States Air Force/WVANG
Rank: First Sergeant, Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 18
DEP Service and Division: 6 years with HSER



Name: Robert Price
Branch: United States Navy
Rank: E-4
Years of Service: 3 active, 3 reserve
DEP Service and Division: 6 years with DMR



Name: Alan Snyder
Branch: United States Army, U.S. Army Reserves
Rank: E-5 (Sergeant)
Years of Service: 7
DEP Service and Division: 15 years with DMR



Name: Ken Stevens
Branch: United States Navy
Rank: Petty Officer First Class
Years of Service: 8
DEP Service and Division: 17 years with BTO



Name: Dennis Stottleyer
Branch: United States Marine Corps
Rank: Corporal
Years of Service: 5
DEP Service and Division: 12 years with Env. Advocate



Name: Petru Tutuian
Branch: West Virginia National Guard
Rank: E-5 (Sergeant)
Years of Service: 4
DEP Service and Division: 2 years with DAQ

America's Last Veterans

Who were the final verified veterans of America's conflicts?

The American Revolution (1775-1783)

Daniel Frederick Bakeman (1759-1869)

The War of 1812 (1812-1815)

Hiram Cronk (1800-1905)

Texas Revolution (1835-1836)

William Zuber (1820-1913)

Mexican-American War (1846-1848)

Owen Thomas Edgar (1831-1929)

American Civil War (1861-1865)

Last Union: Albert Henry Woolson (1850-1956)

Last Confederate: Pleasant Riggs Crump (1847-1951)

Spanish American War (1898)

Jones Morgan (1882-1993)

World War I (1914-1918)

Frank Woodruff Buckles (1901-2011)



IRONMAN

con't from Page 4

My last go at a Half Ironman had me walking a few miles, so I was determined to just keep running. At the start of the run, I wound through the waterfront boardwalk of downtown Wilmington. The many turns definitely increased the risk of cramping for me, so I took it easy. Shuffling along, I saw my wife and a few friends at about mile 3.

It's amazing the boost of confidence you get when you get a few well wishes along the way. The run course was filled with 3,000 of your closest friends, this also helps to keep you motivated.

Although I missed my goal run of under 2 hours (2:01), I was still happy to just be able to run the complete distance.

The race, the city, the crowd, and the support was absolutely amazing, I look forward to going back again soon and possibly even attempting the full distance next go around.



The first "Ironman" triathlon was held in 1978 - and only 12 people finished the race.

Today, thousands of people compete in and finish Ironman brand races around the world.

The Ironman triathlon consists of a 2.4 mile swim, a 112 mile bike, and a 26.2 mile run - all done in immediate succession for a total of 140.6 miles. These events are often referred to as a "full Ironman."

In 2005, Ironman began the "Ironman 70.3" racing series, commonly referred to as the "half Ironman." All of the portions of the full Ironman are cut in half.

Competitors in full Ironman races have 17 hours to complete the entire course, while during half Ironman races the time cutoff is 8.5 hours.

The winning time for the full Ironman has decreased from 11:46:58 in 1978 to 8:06:30 in 2016.

A Vision for the Future at Rock Creek Development Park

A column by Governor Earl Ray Tomblin



For the past 30 years, I have looked at thousands of acres of flat land at the Hobet mine site in Boone and Lincoln counties and thought about the enormous possibilities those acres could bring about for West Virginia - if we ever had the opportunity. Today, opportunity is exactly what we have.

Since first announcing my vision for developing this site for economic growth nearly one year ago, this effort has simply been known as, "the Hobet project." As we move even closer to this dream becoming a reality, we have announced its new and official name: Rock Creek Development Park.

We also announced Rock Creek's first tenant, the West Virginia National

Guard. Beginning immediately, the Guard is expanding operations to the site. Through vehicle maintenance work and expanded training for Guard members, we'll be bringing jobs and activity to Rock Creek. In addition, our state's agriculture industry stands to see a boost, with a Guard project that includes apple trees and greenhouses - and has the long-term potential for production operations that employ West Virginians.

Through a truly successful public-private approach, we have worked with local landowners who are donating land that will result in more than 12,000 developable acres for Rock Creek. With the Guard activities located on property

adjacent to plots of land identified for development, we have such immense opportunity at our fingertips - opportunity nearly the size of the city of Huntington - to build up a region of our state hit hard by the downturn in the coal industry.

To realize its full potential, and thanks to a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission, we have contracted with expert consultants for a long-term strategic plan for Rock Creek. These consultants are analyzing demographics and market trends to identify the best investment opportunities for the park, while also mapping out plans for infrastructure and design.

With a new name, a first tenant and

strategic planning under way, Rock Creek is poised to become a hub for industrial, commercial and residential development. I have been working closely with local officials in Boone, Lincoln, Mingo, Logan and Kanawha counties. We believe, together, in the future of Southern West Virginia. And we are committed to seeing Rock Creek succeed.

For decades, our coal miners, workers and their families have kept our state strong. Now, it's our turn to help them.

For more information on Rock Creek Development Park, visit www.rockcreekwv.com.



New Hires

Timothy Casto, Environmental Enforcement
John Helms, Division of Land Restoration
Fadi Qutaish, Division of Air Quality
Linda Stanley, Business and Technology Office

Recent/Upcoming Retirements

Ralph Coffield, Abandoned Mine Lands
Vera Funk, Division of Mining and Reclamation
Ed Hamrick, Executive
Gleason Horrocks, Division of Mining and Reclamation
Mavis Layton, Division of Water and Waste Management
David Montali, Division of Water and Waste Management
Robert Price, Division of Mining and Reclamation