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## KSFF Fall 2018 Newsletter

1 message

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Tue, Oct 2, 2018 at 1:13 PM

# The Forest Friend

## Kanawha State Forest Foundation



*"There is a time in the last few days of summer when the ripeness of autumn fills the air." – Rudolfo Anaya*

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### From the Editor

The days are getting shorter, and there is a slight nip in the air—portends of fall and a new seasonal issue of *The Forest Friend*. In this edition, we are featuring two tribute articles on individuals who played major roles in the development of Kanawha State Forest.

There are three summary articles from our annual Margaret Denison Fall Nature Walks and also a brief account of the WV Day concert in June. The recent dedication of KSF into the national Old Growth Forest Network is described as well. Rock the Park, hosted by the Hot Rod Devils, is again hailed as a regular mid-summer family funfest. In addition, we are pleased to recognize our newest life members of the Foundation and a very generous surprise donor.

As always, our superintendent's report will update you on the activities and plans of Forest management and staff. Also, look for the next renditions of Nature's Medicine Cabinet and the Nature Quiz. Many thanks to all of our contributors and we will continue to strive to keep you informed on news of KSF.

## Upcoming Events

### Board Meeting

Monday, November 12, 2018 at 6 p.m.

Panera Bread at Southridge Mall

All members are welcome

### Shirley Schweizer Winter Walk

Saturday, January 12, 2019 at 1 p.m.

Join Doug Wood for an Ecology Walk in the Woods

*"Degrees of Dormancy: Who's Asleep,  
Who's Awake, and Who's Away in Winter"*

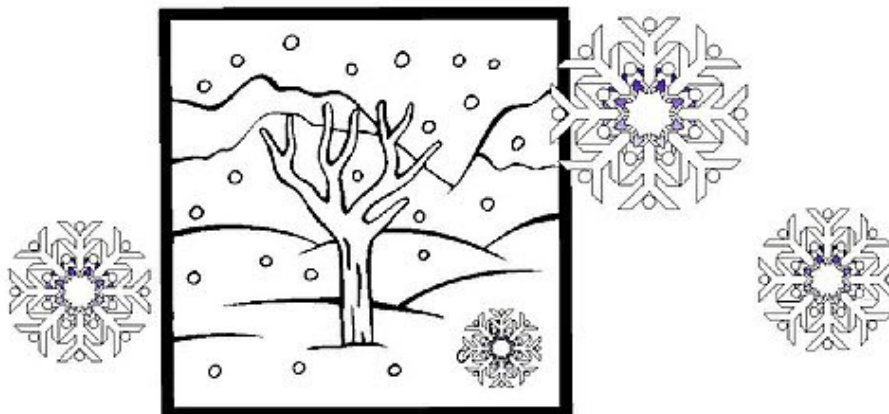
Meet at the Headquarters Building Parking Lot

Admission Free

(See flier below with details.)

# 2019 SHIRLEY SCHWEIZER WINTER WALK

**Saturday, January 12, 1:00 P.M.  
Kanawha State Forest**



**Join Doug Wood for an  
Ecology Walk in the Woods**

***"Degrees of Dormancy:  
Who's Asleep, Who's Awake,  
and Who's Away in Winter"***

**Meet at the Headquarters Building Parking Lot  
Dress according to weather, especially footwear!**

*Free to All — Donations Appreciated!*

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**For more information call 304-558-3500**

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*Sponsored by*  
**Kanawha State Forest Foundation and Mary Ingles Trail Blazers**

## **From the Superintendent's Desk**

*by Kevin Dials*



We've had a busy, albeit rainy summer at Kanawha State Forest. As is the norm, we have had a plethora of trees to cut off trails and roads. But those trees make the Forest so special. On September 9, those trees were recognized in a ceremony where Kanawha State Forest was inducted into the Old Growth Forest Network. Dr. Joan Maloof, Director of the network, presented us with a sign designating KSF as a member of the OGFN. Approximately 30 people joined us for the ceremony and a short hike to see a 200-year-old yellow poplar.

The maintenance crew has worked on several projects along with their seasonal mowing responsibilities. We have replaced the wood on all of our horseshoe pits in the picnic areas. We also began putting siding on the new Forest headquarters building.

We have had several successful events at the Forest. Rock the Park was held again on Labor Day weekend, and nearly \$2,000 was donated to the Kanawha State Forest Foundation. The Margaret Denison Fall Nature Walks brought in around 100 people. Following the walks, Three Rivers Avian Center's raptor program brought in over 200 attendees. As always, we are very appreciative of the volunteers who make these events possible.




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## Nature's Medicine Cabinet

by Rebecca Linger

*Lobelia Siphilitica* - The Blue Cardinal Flower, or Great Blue Lobelia, was given the scientific species name of siphilitica. When a plant is named after a disease, it is logical to assume that it was used to treat that disease. Many of you may know that Lobelia species tend toward toxicity and that ingestion of the plant is ill advised. So, how was this plant linked to syphilis?



The Lobelia species was widely used by the native peoples of the Americas. The aerial parts of *Lobelia inflata* were made into a tea and used as an emetic (to cause vomiting) and dried and smoked to reduce the craving for tobacco. The roots of a variety of Lobelia species were used in childbirth to make a relaxing tea with antispasmodic effects. The leaves were rubbed on the skin to treat sores, stiff joints, and chafing.

*Lobelia siphilitica*'s use in treating syphilis is attributed to the Iroquois, who were reported to dry the plant and grind it into powder to tamp into the syphilitic sores. Sir William Johnson, in his role as superintendent of Indian Affairs in North America from 1756 to 1774, learned about this use and brought the cure back to Europe. Unfortunately, the physicians of his time saw no medicinal value for the powder and dismissed its curative properties.

Carolus Linnaeus, nevertheless, named the beautiful blue flower for the purported cure and thus *Lobelia siphilitica* entered the lexicon botanica.

There is a cautionary tale to be told about all *Lobelia* species. While few herbal texts describe the medicinal use of the plant, it can be used to treat respiratory illness as an expectorant, and it has antispasmodic effects. The active component is lobeline, a parasympathetic nervous system blocker. In high concentration or chronic use, the patient may experience serious side effects of an antimuscarinic nature; nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, tremors, dizziness, profuse sweating hypothermia, hypotension and coma may occur with overuse. In my personal opinion, the blue lobelia that grows along my gravel road can simply be left to decorate the late summer and early fall foliage. No need to use this as medicine!

(Image credit: © Arthur Haines, New England Wild Flower Society, 2018)

## **A huge thanks for the many donations received this summer:**

Meg Reishman

Jamie Simmons

Chris Nagorka & Heidi Talmage

Roger Hardway

James Bush

A special thanks to Courtney Petry who obtained pledges of \$575 from the following for running in the Charleston Distance Run: Erika-May Bartley, Aimee Rittinger, Lynda Snyder, Kimberly McCluskey, Terri Jo Coleman, Charlotte Legg, Donna Hastings, Debra Hanna, Karen Barnette, Donald Coleman, Tami Crewdson, Ruth Waugh, Kelly Petry, Lindsey Coleman, and Leslie Hoover



## Rock the Park

*by Jennifer Bauman*

This year's "Rock the Park" fundraiser, on September 1, featured classic cars, great bands, and lots of fun activities for the kids! This was the fifth year that the Hot Rod Devils generously donated the proceeds from their classic car cruise-in and outdoor concert to the Kanawha State Forest Foundation. A special thanks also goes out to Courtney Petry who donated more than \$1,500 in pledges from the Charleston Distance Run, which she completed that same morning.

There was a threat of rain, but it didn't seem to dampen spirits as visitors admired some beautifully restored classic cars like Steve Childress's 1930 Packard and many more. Bands included "Non-Friction," "Stephanie Stacy and the Aftermath," guitarist, Dave Monk, and jazz band, "Somethin' Special."

Some children played mini-golf, others enjoyed a blow-up slide, and some took part in a 50-50 Matchbox car race. When it was time to eat, guests were able to enjoy a hot dog or some great Dem2Brothers BBQ, with Kona Ice providing the option of a frosty dessert.



Kanawha State Forest Foundation historian, Carl McLaughlin, brought binders of documents and photographs so visitors could learn about the coal and timber industries which once thrived in Shrewsbury Hollow. Carl also shared how the Civilian Conservation Corps built many of the picnic shelters still used in Kanawha State Forest today.



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## Life Memberships

One way to demonstrate your dedication to the mission of the Foundation is to become a Life Member. An individual Life Membership fee is \$300, and a Family Life Membership is \$450.

Members who have recently made this commitment are Martha Hopper, Peggy Kourey, and Carl McLaughlin. Many thanks to these individuals for their generous support. All are regular and reliable volunteers at many of our special events so we also extend our appreciation for their many hours of service.

# Welcome New Members

James Bush, Charleston

Meg Reishman, Charleston

Erik Meadows, Charleston

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## Pat Kirk - Guardian of the Forest

*By Bob Beanblossom*

With today's sophisticated technology, mechanized equipment, aircraft of all types and sizes and rapid communications, forest fire suppression still boils down to hard, dirty brutal work. One can only imagine what it was like as early pioneers in the field of forest protection began their efforts to control rampant forest fires across the state. One such individual was Patrick W. "Pat" Kirk, who later served as the assistant custodian of Kanawha State Forest.

It was in the early days of April 1923 that a young Pat reported to work for what was then the Game and Fish Commission. He was hired by E. N. "Pop" Wriston, a legendary figure in forestry circles in West Virginia. Pop hired Pat as a forest ranger—a ranger without tools, without a car, without any of the equipment a modern-day forester takes for granted. He walked to his fires and when he arrived at one, he fought them with anything available—garden hoes, "coffee sacks," forked sticks, or even his own bare hands.

Pat also worked as a fire tower observer and maintenance man helping build at least six fire towers and stringing miles of telephone line to each one.

Once, in the late 1920s, Pat walked from Hernshaw to Olcott, in Boone County, to fight a fire. After controlling the blaze, he walked back again—a sixteen-mile round trip! A few years later, Pat fought the largest fire of his career. Extreme drought conditions prevailed across the eastern United States in the early 1930s creating explosive fire behavior. Five thousand blazing acres in Cabin Creek sent huge clouds of smoke into the sky. Combined with that of other fires, a choking blanket of smoke covered most of West Virginia. High winds fanned the inferno causing the fire to jump control line after control line. Pat and his crew were on the fire three days and nights straight; at one time Pat, himself, worked 18 hours without a bite of food. Another fire on Armstrong Creek was finally stopped on Loop Creek about 12 miles away.

It was soon after, around 1935, that Pat was appointed assistant custodian of Kanawha State Forest, a post he held for 14 years. His day-to-day work helped make the Forest what



it is today. With advancing age Pat was assigned lesser duties and was transferred to the Charleston Office of the Conservation Commission (now DNR) as a janitor-messenger in 1949 where he served until his retirement in the early 1960s. Pat was well liked by his colleagues and took great pride in watching the development of Kanawha State Forest unfold.

I tell the story of Pat because we often forget the human dimension of the complex task of natural resource management. The healing power of nature is awesome, but the helping hand of man is required to protect and maintain a healthy environment for our enjoyment. An army of men and women have worked and continue to work quietly and diligently to give us a legacy of beautiful, regenerated forests. Let us always remember the handiwork of this earlier generation. Thanks, Pat!

*(A member of the Society of American Foresters, Robert Beanblossom retired from the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources after a 42-year career and is currently the volunteer caretaker at the Cradle of Forestry on the Pisgah National Forest in western North Carolina.)*

## Nature Quiz

Q: This is a hardy little evergreen plant with a simple, rather leathery triangular leaf that is broadest at its heart-shaped base. The prolonged tip may be very short or reach a foot or more in length. The arching leaves will root at the end when touching the ground and give rise to a new plantlet, creating a walking effect.

*(Answer appears later in newsletter)*



*Jennifer Bauman Photos*



*Jennifer Bauman Photos*



*Jennifer Bauman Photos*

## West Virginia Day Celebration

*by Bill Hall*

An audience of nearly 100 people gathered in the shade of Kanawha State Forest on Sunday, June 17, 2018, for the annual summer concert sponsored by the KSFF. They were treated to a series of varied and often rousing compositions in honor of the 155th birthday of our state. Our celebration, as always, featured the Kanawha Valley Community Band under the direction of Dr. David Williams. The weather was warm, but cold water was available for the asking through the duration of the performance.

The concert began with a suite of music from Leonard Bernstein's score for the well-known stage play, "West Side Story." Next was a selection from early American concert history with a rendition of "Siegfried's Funeral Music" from Richard Wagner's "Twilight of the Gods" (1876). Lighter fare was then offered including music from Santana and a mix of Cajun folk songs by Ticheli. A version of the unofficial state song "Almost Heaven," composed by band member Delford Chaffin, lifted our spirits later in the program. The last piece was a march titled "Across the Western Ocean" (with the melody taken from an Irish drinking song) written by lead euphonium player, Garrett Maner.

Foundation volunteers served West Virginia birthday cake and cold drinks for refreshments following an inspirational and fun event.

The KSFF sincerely appreciates its ongoing affiliation with the KVCB and looks forward to many more celebrations to come!



## Old Growth Forest Network Dedication

*by Bill Hall*

On Sunday, September 9, at 1:00 pm, a portion of the eastern watershed tracts of Kanawha State Forest officially joined the national Old Growth Forest Network. The dedication ceremony took place at the Four Mile trailhead. Joan Maloof, Ph.D., founder and executive director of the OGFN, presented the framed certificate to Superintendent Kevin Dials.



The OGFN is a network of protected, mature, publicly accessible, native forests stretching across the country. Its staff seek to identify such forests, ensure their protection from logging, and inform people of their locations to strengthen the connection among those who support their goals. The OGFN specifically recognizes exceptional forest advocates, educates about the ecological and wellness benefits of old-growth forests, and speaks out against immediate threats to ancient forested land. It was started in 2012 and currently has more than 75 forests in 20 states. KSF is one of seven in West Virginia and all are in different counties.

Kudos to Superintendent Dials for initiating the application for KSF to the OGFN. Foundation member Doug Wood is especially commended for many hours spent searching for and measuring old-growth trees and then mapping the boundaries of the proposed tract. There are two co-coordinators representing Kanawha County in the OGFN, Jesse Johnson and Nancy Ward.

Following the presentation and photos, Jesse led our group of about 40 on a two-mile round-trip hike to the old-growth region. Dr. Maloof pointed out several old-growth specimens and explained the physical features used to identify them. She emphasized their critical importance in sustaining a healthy and vibrant forest ecosystem. She ended by expressing her appreciation to all the participants and encouraged them to become supporters of OGFN and to also spread the word of the organization and its mission to others.





# Flora of Kanawha State Forest

*by Bill Hall*

Margaret Denison, in collaboration with former superintendent Osbra Eye, compiled the original Flora of Kanawha State Forest in 1975. This is a compendium of all grasses, ferns, flowering plants, shrubs, and trees found in the Forest. The guide has notations of where you can expect to locate each species and when they are most likely to be in bloom.

It was edited and reprinted several years ago, and copies are available in the Forest office for the reduced price of \$5. Pick up your copy soon and see how many you can identify to start your own list!

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## The Saulters Loop

*by Dale Porter*

When I joined the Mountain State Wheelers Bicycle Club in 1980, one of the key members was Jim Saulters. A road cyclist when I first met him, he joined the mountain bike revolution as it developed. Being the closest public area of reasonable size to Charleston, Kanawha State Forest soon became a local destination for mountain bikers, and Jim was among them.



At the time, if you wanted some flat, single-track riding, your only option was Davis Creek Trail. The other single-track trails were the technical trails that you either descended or climbed from or to Middle Ridge Road and Boundary Road.

Jim was the person who came up with the idea of the Middle Ridge Trail System. He envisioned a series of loops off of Middle Ridge Road that followed the ridge lines and provided hikers and bikers with a relatively flat and generally non-technical riding experience. He presented the idea to John Hendley, who was KSF superintendent at the time, and he bought into the idea. John, also a mountain biker, not only recognized the recreational value but also that injuries were occurring more on Middle Ridge Road rather than on the single-track trails. This was because riders were pedaling faster, were less focused, and vehicle activity on the road often left treacherous ruts. By getting riders off Middle Ridge Road, he hoped to reduce the number of injuries.

Jim helped sell the idea to John's superiors, promising volunteer efforts to build and maintain the trails. Jim laid out the initial loops in accordance with International Mountain Bike Association guidelines. He set up trail building days and recruited volunteers and worked untold hours on his own. He got the Mountain State Wheelers Bicycle Club to buy several hundred dollars worth of tools to facilitate the construction of the loops.

Every time I ride or walk the Middle Ridge Trail loops, I thank Jim for his foresight and initiative. What Jim started has been continued by many other dedicated volunteers who

have added several more loops so that one can now hike/ride the length of Middle Ridge while spending little time on the road.

Of course this could not have happened without the cooperation and work of the management and staff of Kanawha State Forest.

When Jim died in 2015, the Mountain State Wheelers Bicycle Club petitioned the Kanawha State Forest to allow one of the loops to be named for Jim. This request was reviewed and approved, and the loop opposite Mossy Road Trail was designated "The Saulter Loop."

## Reports from the Margaret Denison Fall Nature Walks held September 15, 2018



### Overview

by Bill Hall

The morning weather was ideal for the annual fall walks hosted by the KSFF on September 15. Despite the torrential rain and flooding in the Carolinas, we were fortunate to have moderate temperatures and dry conditions. An estimated 70 participants chose from diverse themes including wildflowers and trees, mushrooms, edible and useful plants, geology, nature for kids and parents, and general ecology. Following about three hours on

the trails and in the field, some were lucky enough to win one of several door prizes. In addition, the Department of Natural Resources donated two nights of free camping at Twin Falls State Park as the grand prize for our raffle. Congratulations to our winner Ron Dials!

Special thanks to our chief organizer, Martha Hopper; Jim Waggy for developing the walk itinerary and recruiting our leaders and assistants; the walk leaders themselves, who generously donated their time and delivered expert presentations; volunteers who staffed our registration and information tables; and Forest staff for their contributions to this successful event.

We hope you enjoy the summaries of specific walks or activities below. As always, we invite you to join us for each of our upcoming events to experience the wonder of Kanawha State Forest during each season of the year!

\* \* \* \* \*

## Wildflowers and Trees

*by Chris Gatens and Sara Miller*

This mid-September gathering took us and roughly twelve participants on our annual route from the mouth of Polly Hollow, along the trail paralleling the stream, to a leaning stand of larch, and back along Polly Hollow's road, tiptoeing across creek crossings.

The weather was pleasant, and although many plants had already passed, there were several left to see. Circling the parking area were Osage Orange, Black and White Walnuts, Spice Bush, Wingstem, Yellow Crownbeard, and Paw Paw, one fruit of which a walker took home to ripen. Along the trail were several ferns, including: Silvery Athyrium, Intermediate Shield, Maidenhair, Christmas, Lady, and Stone Cap species. There were also asters such as White Wood, Big-leaved, and Crooked-stem. Apart from asters, there were Indian Cucumber Root, Wild Ginger, and towering Red Oaks.

Last but not least, before departing for the Three Rivers Avian Center's Wings of Wonder presentation, was a Narrow-leaved Sunflower, a rarity for this time in the season, soaking up the sun in a forest opening.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Fall Flora Wildflower Walk

*by Jim Smith*

This walk, led by Dr. Mark Watson, started up Shrewsbury Hollow road and returned on CCC Snipe Trail. The weather was beautiful! Just a perfect fall day.

The group was comprised of five participants, in addition to our leader and his assistant, Jim Smith. All of the participants were quite knowledgeable of the flora discovered along the way.

With Mark's expert guidance, we identified and studied at least 42 species or varieties of plants. Most of these were not currently in flower. A partial list of the flora identified is listed



below. With all this, we still got back in time for lunch on our own.

Flora identified: Japanese Stilt Grass, Common Smartweed, Common Speedwell, Spleenwort, Clearweed, Stonecrop, Greek Valerian, Stinging Nettle, Wingstem, Great Blue Lobelia, Silvery Athyrium Fern, Spotted Jewelweed, Pale Jewelweed, Christmas Fern, Grape Fern, Wild Ginger, Spicebush, False Nettle, Crooked Stem Aster, Wood Poppy, White Snakeroot, Virginia Smartweed, Spikenard, Elephant's Foot, Goldenrod, Maidenhair Fern, Wild Yam, Agrimony, Hog Peanut, Beechdrops, Late Purple Aster, New York Fern, Trailing Arbutus, Indian Cucumber Root, Poison Ivy, Wild Lettuce, Silverrod, Joe Pye Weed, Rattlesnake Plantain, Jack-in-the-Pulpit berries, Liverwort, and Three-seeded Mercury.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Edible and Useful Plants

by Ted Jones

This walk, led by Becky Linger with the assistance of Ted Jones, followed the shooting range road; there were 14 participants. The pace was slow, and the trail was easy. The habitat varied from field to forest to roadside. A list of edible and/or useful plants included Jewelweed or Touch-me-not, Joe-Pye weed, Smartweed, Horsetail, Wingstem, Ragweed, Goldenrod, Great Blue Lobelia, Cardinal Flower (the only red lobelia), Beggartick, Wild Anise, Turtlehead, and Poison Ivy. Shrubs and trees included Spicebush, Sycamore, Umbrella Magnolia, and River Birch. Sensitive fern was identified and discussed as well.

Information highlighted included: 1) Witch Hazel forked branches were used as a divining rod to locate underground water and 2) Spicebush stems can be boiled and used to make tea to relieve pain, and tea from the berries has an Allspice taste. The group also enjoyed chewing the seeds of Smartweed and their peppery taste.




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## Nature Quiz Answer:

Walking Fern (*Camptosorus rhizophyllus*). Look for this plant on shaded rocks and in moist ravines. They have been found on moss-covered sandstone and moss-covered decaying logs in Dunlop and Shrewsbury Hollows. A few plants with forked fronds have been found in Shrewsbury Hollow as well.



## KSFF Membership & Donations

The Kanawha State Forest Foundation depends on your dues and donations. The Forest needs your support. Something always needs to be repaired, renovated, or rebuilt at the Forest, and there is never quite enough in the budget from the State. Your membership dues are the fixers for the Forest.

The Foundation membership year is January 1 through December 31. Membership renewals are due by January 1 of each year. Please help the Forest by keeping your membership up to date!

Make checks payable to:

**Kanawha State Forest Foundation**

Send to:

**John Fischer, Treasurer,  
100 Wills Drive, Charleston, WV 25309**

- Family Membership – \$25
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