



S.A.L.S. JOURNAL

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15th Cultural Festival Fun-Filled Success

SALS 15th annual Workers' Solidarity Cultural Festival on May 21st was a big success. Folks came from around the region to our community center in Beards Fork on this pristine Spring day full of sunshine and had a great time watching the performers, visiting with old friends and making new ones.

Pizza and hot dogs were served while the crowd assembled in the cafeteria of the old Beards Fork Elementary School (now the SALS Community Center) to watch several performances including the Brown Singers with SALS employee, Bonita Johnson.

Jude Binder, interpretative cultural artist and director of Heartwood in the Hills, performed a peace dance and displayed an original mask created for the dance. Jude also displayed and explained the origin of the string of 1,000 origami peace doves she danced with. As a part of Peace Week recognizing the 50th anniversary of the destruction of Hiroshima by our nuclear weapons, students at Heartwood created a string of similar peace doves and sent them to the City of Hiroshima in Japan. Several weeks later Heartwood received unannounced, this collection of 1,000 hand made origami peace doves created by the survivors of the bombing along with a heartfelt letter of thanks from the people of Hiroshima. See festival photos inside and www.heartwoodinthehills.org for more info on this unique cultural oasis in rural Calhoun Co. West Virginia.

Next Festival-goers were treated to the sweet sound of a hand-made harp played by cultural ambassador John Lozier, executive director of Harping for Harmony. John played tunes from many of the countries he has visited in his travels and also several modern US tunes. He prefaced each tune with a story of where or how he came across the piece. The particular Harp he played for us that day was painted with the US Bill of Rights. He discovered the harp as an instrument while traveling in rural Venezuela and much of his repertoire is based on Latin American songs. Harping for Harmony's vision is World Peace and



John Lozier harping for harmony at Cultural Fest

its Mission is "Harmony and Community, locally and globally, through harp music. More can be found on this Morgantown, WV based organization on their web page at www.harpingforharmony.org or by calling 304-599-8233.

Randy Gilkey then changed the mood with his one-man band of keyboards, rhythm, and song. According to the Charleston Gazette "Randy's vision for his music chimes through his life, even through his blindness. Gilky has always had an interest in music, and besides piano and keyboard, he also plays guitar, drums and harmonica among other instruments." Randy has played on Public Radio's "Mountain Stage" and has preformed on 90 albums. Randy wowed the Festival crowd with some good 'ol rock & roll covers and sensitive blues.

A local Emergency Response group did free blood pressure screenings and gave out helium balloons to the kids who made good use of the outdoor playground equipment and indoor play areas set up for the after school programs. Much thanks is due to performers Bonita, Randy, John, Jude and all the other volunteers that made our 15th Workers Solidarity Cultural Festival such a big success. Don't miss it next year!

The History of a Bad Idea: The Far Right's Long War on Social Security

Issue Brief & Talking Points for Working Families

by Rick Wilson, American Friends Service Committee, WV Economic Justice Project

A Tradition of Bi-partisan Support

Although Social Security was the signature legislation of the Democratic administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the program has enjoyed bipartisan support for most of its history. The program thrived under Republican presidents Eisenhower, Nixon, Ford, Reagan, and George H. W. Bush. In 1983, when Social Security faced a far more serious and immediate shortfall, a bipartisan commission under Reagan saved the program for decades to come by increasing payroll taxes.

Extremist Opposition

However, from the beginning, conservative extremists have longed to privatize and ultimately undermine the program. As far back as 1936, Republican Presidential candidate Alf Landon referred to Social Security as “a cruel hoax.” In the 1960s, Barry Goldwater, who ran against Lyndon Johnson in 1964, said “Perhaps Social Security should be abolished.” Around the same time, conservative economist Milton Friedman proposed a privatized system where workers could opt out of the program.

A Model Forged in Dictatorship

Friedman would later be an economic advisor to the brutal dictatorship in Chile of General Augusto Pinochet, whose fascist-style regime routinely tortured and killed its opponents, including many labor activists. Pinochet's Chile developed a privatized retirement system which US conservatives view as a model for this country. Although Chile has since become a democracy, the privatized system which is a legacy of the dictatorship has failed to live up to its promises.

Think Tanks Wage Long Campaign

Conservative think tanks in the US such as the Cato Institute and the Heritage Foundation have advocated privatization since at least the 1980s. In 1983, the Cato Journal carried an article which called for “guerilla warfare against both the current Social Security system and the coalition that supports it.” Heritage Foundation analysts Stuart Butler and Peter Germanis wrote that “It could be many years before the conditions are such that a radical reform of Social Security is possible.” Citing the

example of Russian Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin, they wrote “to be a successful revolutionary, one must also be patient and consistently plan for real reform.”

Big Business Allies

Butler and Germanis in the 1980s laid out the playbook for 2005 when they said that “building a constituency for Social Security reform requires mobilizing the various coalitions that stand to benefit from the change. The business community and financial institutions, in particular, would be an obvious element in the constituency.” After the 2004 election, the Associated Press reported that “The business groups supporting Bush's effort have a financial interest in changing Social Security, including financial services companies that could benefit from fees charged for managing the investment accounts.” The Center for Responsive Politics reports that securities and investment firms were the fourth largest donor to Bush's re-election campaign.

Winning the President's Support.

George W. Bush also has a long history of supporting privatization. According to the Texas Observer, when he ran for congress in 1978, he advocated privatization and predicted that the system would go broke by 1988. Advocates of privatization connected with conservative think tanks began meeting with candidate Bush in the late 1990s to gain his support for their cause. At times, Bush has made downright bizarre statements about the federal program, such as the one made in Nov. 2000: “They [opponents of privatization] want the federal government controlling Social Security like its some kind of federal program.”

BOTTOM LINE: JUST SAY NO. The current drive to privatize is the culmination of decades of effort and is the result of a coalition of ideological extremists and financial companies eager to profit at the public's expense.

Editor's note:
To find out more about how you can protect Social Security see:

www.americansforsocialsecurity.com

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Director's Report

by John David

This time of year is always the busy time for grant writing. All of our major funding sources, including HUD, USDA, Federal Home Loan Bank, and VISTA are due almost at the same time. Increasingly, applications must be submitted electronically, which is a learning experience for us. Jackie Asbury, Vickie Mullins, and Debbie Spurlock are involved with this process. Without question, funds are now less available and the completion is keener. Thus, our sustainability is more of a challenge.

We were pleased to obtain continued support for our state-wide environmental, health, and economic justice work, mainly conducted by Gary Zuckett, from the Commission on Religion in Appalachia and the Appalachian Community Fund. A new funder is the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, with support for the Youth Garage. The Fayette County Commission has provided renewed funding for Energy Express and the Community Center. The WV Housing Development Fund awarded us a CHDO for the housing development near Oak Hill. Mission West Virginia funded our partner entity, Appalachian Community Partners, for volunteer support work. The Claude W. Benedum Foundation renewed its support for matching funds, Group Work Camps, and administrative support. We are especially grateful to all of our funders for their trust and confidence.

Two of our linkage grants through YouthBuild USA (AmeriCorps and Youth Re-Entry) are completing their first year and we expect both to be renewed. Both permit broader outreach and continuation of our YouthBuild program. Both programs are administratively demanding and Brenda Winter and Kathryn South have done excellent work in struggling with these initiatives.

Artie Mullins has had a very busy time with numerous volunteer and Global groups that started coming in January. Thanks to special help from the Madison (Indiana) Presbyterian Church, the annex is now functioning which eases the accommodation squeeze. Artie also coordinated the 15th annual Worker's Solidarity Festival, which gave tribute to numerous friends and relatives of those with SALS including Larry Harless, Bob Friley's mother, Vickie Mullin's uncle, Red Newkirk's uncle, Larry Parsons, Heath Forren's father, Tom Bass's mother, and Carol Sharlip. The talents of Bonita Johnson and the Brown Singers, Jude Binder, Randy Gilkey, and John Lozier made the event a success.

The new Dormitory Addition is moving along again. Vickie Smith has met with Bob Hazelwood, an engineer and Vice-President of Pentree Engineering, in regard to

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John & SALS Chair Helen Powell enjoy Cultural Fest

design and specifications. Vickie and her crews have also done an exceptional job in completing several rehabilitated homes and a new home over the past period. There have however, been some theft and vandalism at the sites and we are exploring the possibility of a larger storage facility.

The 21st Century "Accent Education" Community Learning Center collaborative with New River Health Association and Fayette County Schools is beginning its third year. Both the After-School and the Energy Express programs at the SALS Community Center in Beards Fork have increased enrollment. There is also a new community center in Mt. Hope and three other sites for the after-school program. AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers Lisa King, Lisa Manley, Iris Adkins, and Jeanie Williams are all directly involved with the project.

New River Health Association has also opened the Beards Fork Clinic and Health Project. Professional services offered by Dr. Dan Doyle, M.D., assisted by Sally Hurst from NRHA and Marie Settle from SALS, began in January. Base-line physicals and Health Passports are on tap for the youth and young adults, in addition to office visits as requested. Artie Mullins has also been taking youth for dental work at WVU-Tech in Montgomery and Health-Right in Charleston.

There have been several major conferences and area work workshops. Kathryn South and Brenda Winter have attended Workforce Investment Act and YouthBuild USA sponsored events, with Kathryn focusing on "Green Building" and Brenda on "Youth Counseling and Case

Continued on page 9

Notes from Jackie's desk

By Jackie Asbury, Housing Director

It's Spring time, the weather is nice, and we are doing lots of work on homes in Fayette County. Group work camp did two weeks in June and July and approximately 120 homes received minor repairs. I completed two proposals to the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh for rehabs and purchase of existing housing. We should hear about these grants in the very near future. If funded, the grants will bring in \$200,000 for our home rehab and new home programs.

SALS did a closing in Minden in early April and a family of five received a new home. We also completed two other proposals to USDA Rural Development which were due mid-May, along with YouthBuild and Rural Housing Economic Development (RHED). Hopefully, we will receive funding from all sources, to continue our housing efforts here at SALS.

SALS held a Homebuyer's Education class recently and approximately four families attended this class in hopes of qualifying for the new home program.

Program Links Youth to Employment

Heath Forren, Out of School Advisor

In the last few months much has been going on with our youth enrichment services program. We took a trip to Charleston in February, and efforts have been coordinated to place youth in employment.

On February 17th our Youth Enrichment Service's "Out of School Youth" program took a trip to tour the West Virginia state capitol. We boarded a charter bus in Beckley and departed for Charleston around 9am. Upon arrival we toured the governor's mansion, the capitol, and the state cultural center. We also met with Secretary of State, Betty Ireland. Betty Ireland is the first female to hold that office in West Virginia. She took time to discuss the duties of her position, and speak with participating youth and staff. We ended the day with a late lunch at The Fifth Quarter downtown, and departed after a full day.

Our youth program has been fortunate of late to receive assistance for exiting youth required to pursue employment. Marie Settle the File Manager for SALS, and Artie Mullins, Volunteer Coordinator, have been aiding Labor School clients with obtaining unsubsidized employ-

ment.

Any participant in the WIA/Youth Enrichment Services program is required to enter employment before being exited. Unsubsidized employment refers to any employment that is obtained that does not depend on government grant funding. Examples of subsidized employment would be Youth Enrichment Services/ WIA, Youth Build, AmeriCorps, or any program that is operated with grant money.

Artie, Marie, and our program are all working hard to link individuals to employment opportunities. To strengthen the work force in Fayette County, SALS provides an opportunity to make participants more marketable employees. The opportunity is also there to make positive things happen for any and all program participants. The opportunities SALS creates for youth and the community is very real. Resources are in place for every participant to improve their situation.

School Days Plus

By Charlene "Red" Newkirk

I am the Coordinator of the "Accent Education" After School Program which is funded through the 21st Century Community Learning Center. It operates with collaboration between NRHA, SALS, Fayette County Board of Education, Rivers and Bridges RHEP, Mt. Hope High School, and Collins Middle School. This Program emphasizes four curriculum standards: social, physical, academic and emotional health. This program was designed to implement programs to help improve academic performance.

Since the last newsletter, we have done several activities like going to the Capitol to meet the governor of West Virginia, starting a sewing class at the Center, making Easter baskets, doing yoga, creating different crafts, and having other fun activities. We also have a birthday party once a month for all children who had a birthday that month.

In addition, the kids have participated in Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and also National Volunteer Service week by going out into the communities and picking up trash and helping elderly persons in need. They also participated in a walk-a-thon for St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital

We have seen several of the students improve their grades after coming to the program. We hope to continue this success in the future.

YouthBuild/WIA/DOL updates

Kathryn South, YouthBuild Project Director

Spring & Summer bring lots of activity on the construction sites and at the SALS community building.

Brenda and I attended two trainings earlier this year, Both were YouthBuild and DOL Youth Offender/Re-entry related workshops. The first training was held in Miami, which was the yearly YouthBuild Director's Conference. This is the first time this training was held in the South. The weather was nice and warm and the information was timely and rewarding. New folks from new YouthBuild sites attended so it is always good to meet new people who have the same issues and problems with employing youth and trying to help them move on into more training and jobs.

The DOL training was the second since SALS received the grant for work with youth offenders. The information was on how to keep good records and administrative tasks. Several other trainings are planned later in the year.

The second training was a Transformation for Change training and included a workshop on GREEN BUILDING. I attended the green building workshop and I felt that it was one of the best trainings that I have attended. We worked on building headers for doors and windows using a technique that recycles scrap materials and insulation to build the framework. About 15 people registered for this workshop and lots of information was exchanged with other sites. Building codes are different for various areas of the country so some of the tips would not work in all states. But small things to try to conserve our natural resources are a beginning to saving our valuable forestry and do more recycling whenever possible.

Brenda attended the counseling workshop and came back with some new ideas on how to help the youth to open up more and become more involved in his or her recovery process.

Our youth are still involved in building on various sites around the county. We have not enrolled any new folks at this point. We are trying to help a few folks with getting jobs since this is the time people are looking to hire for construction work.

Travis Reed did pass the GED test with flying scores. GOOD JOB TRAVIS

Ms Gore and Ms Flint are always doing the best job possible to help the youth with the GED preparation. Thanks!

Health Project on Track

Marie Settle, Youth Case Worker

In the Fall/Winter SALS Journal I mentioned SALS had several projects in the planning stage and hopefully we would have more accomplishments to "brag" about. The biggest accomplishment has been a partnership between New River Health Association and SALS together forming, "The New River/Beards Fork Clinic and Health Project". The clinic is headed by Dr. Dan Doyle from the New River Health Association in Scarbro. I am a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) and help Dr. Doyle in the clinic. I schedule appointments, check in patients, and help make Dr. Doyle's visit at SALS run as smoothly as possible. At the present time, the clinic is opened to SALS employees and their families. Hopefully, we will soon be open to the public. The clinic is in operation only one or two days a month, as Dr. Doyle's schedule permits.

In addition to my clinic duties, I accepted a new position as file manager (I'm no longer a VISTA). I have been busy taking YouthBuild members for job interviews and to the DMV to obtain their driver's license, so when a job becomes available, they will be ready to spread their wings, putting all the valuable work experience gained at SALS to their advantage ensuring a bright future in the work force.

All at SALS have been very busy working together to make a difference in our community. Everyone has different projects and work schedules, with the After School Program, DOL, YouthBuild, AmeriCorps, VISTA's and the clinic, there is never an idle moment at SALS.

AmeriCorps/ DOL News

Brenda Winter, AmeriCorps/DOL Project Director

Thanks to a National Direct grant from the Corporation of National Service to YouthBuild USA, the Southern Appalachian Labor School welcomed six full time AmeriCorps members to the organization last December. The new members are assisting with our Group Work Camp faith-based partners to enlist 150 area families for the summer home repair project. The six AmeriCorps members are responsible for selecting the families, providing site write-ups, and creating detailed directions to the homes. The members also work alongside the Group Work Camp troubleshooters in July.

The six AmeriCorps members must complete a required 1700 hours to receive an Education Award from the Corporation for National Service. The members will be able to use the education award for vocational school,

college, school supplies or to apply towards repayment of a student loan.

SALS has also welcomed ten young adults who were enrolled under a grant received through YouthBuild USA from the U.S. Department of Labor. The focus of the grant is to educate and train youth who had minor infractions with law enforcement. Many of these youth lack a high school diploma and have sustained a DUI or were involved a similar offense. Our goal is to assist the youth in acquiring a GED through vo-tech and to provide them sound job training that will prevent other legal troubles. SALS is one of thirty sites nationwide selected by YouthBuild USA that received this type of grant. We anticipate great success with our young adults.



Volunteers construct gazebo at Community Center

Busy But Rewarding, SALS AmeriCorps/VISTAs Speak Out

Lisa Manley/AmeriCorps VISTA

It's hard to believe that I have been a VISTA for almost a year! Time has gone by so fast. There has been a lot to do. We had fund-raisers to get new playground equipment especially a wooden train for the kids to play on (if anyone wants to make a donation feel free).

The After School Program ended in May, but the summer reading and nutrition program Energy Express kept us busy for six weeks in June and July (no rest for the weary).

We also had a walk-a-thon for St. Jude's Research Hospital. The kids in the After School Program participated. A local business (Strata Resources) donated three

bikes to be given away. One of the kids (Tony Manley) donated his t-shirt from St. Jude's to one of the other kids. We also had a volunteer appreciation dinner for eight members of the community who have helped us in so many ways. Yes, it has been a busy time but a rewarding time.

Lisa King, AmeriCorps/VISTA

Hello, My name is Lisa King, and this is my second year as a VISTA, here at SALS. We are finished with the After School Program. We have also been busy with a Memorial Park here at the Community Center, in honor of fellow employees who have passed away. Also we worked on the Cultural Programs and getting ready for the summer program, Energy Express. It has been a real experience working here at SALS. But just like every spring it is a time of rebirth, here and in the community.

Linda Dillard, AmeriCorps

Hello, I'm Linda Dillard, and I am a new AmeriCorps member. I started last December, working on the Group Work Camps project by signing people up to get their homes approved.

Group Work Camp assists people in getting their houses painted, porches repaired, weatherization installed and wheel chair ramps built.

I also helped with the college volunteers who came from New York and Boston, helped the VISTA's get donations for Energy Express and worked on several fund-raisers.

I am responsible for keeping the building clean and organized. Basically I am here to help wherever needed.

Iris Adkins, AmeriCorps/VISTA

I am a new VISTA at SALS. Pre service orientation was in Atlanta Georgia, in January 2005. It was my first plane flight (very exciting).

The PSO meetings were well organized and the group leaders prepared new members for volunteer service.

SALS has an after school program for children 1st through 5th grades and has a large computer room for the children to do homework and other studies on the Internet. With VISTA supervision, the children enjoy this every day.

Also VISTAs assist in supervising after school children on the play ground. They have swings and other

playground equipment to play on, and a basket ball court they enjoy.

VISTAs are now assisting with Energy Express, a summer school program for children K-5th grade. I'm enjoying Energy Express at SALS and helping to make a difference for children.

Mt. Hope Community Center

Hi, my name is Jessica Williams, VISTA here at SALS. I have spent the last four months at the new Mt. Hope Community Center. In collaboration with New River Health Association and the City of Mt. Hope we are in the process of starting a community center. Mr. Benitez Jackson, Mrs. Heather Maynor, myself and several volunteers have been working on the old YMCA building in Mt. Hope.

A lot of work has been put into this 81 year old building, patching walls, painting, and many other things have been done.

We received a grant from Mission West Virginia for our computer lab, now we have 10 computers online. We hope to get the community more involved with the kids. We have put in a weight room for community members to come and lift weights. The kids can also come and play basketball in the gym. We also have a kick-boxing class on Monday's and Friday's.

We are accepting any kind of donations for our community center so the kids can have things to do. We are also working on getting volunteers to come and do various activities with children. If you or any one you know are interested, contact Benitez Jackson at 465-2033 or Jessica Williams at the center at 877-3211.

We also completed the After School program at the Mt. Hope High School for this school year. We finished the program with 10-15 kids coming daily. The kids were sad to see the program end but are excited to come back next year. I would also like to thank Ms. Katie Gleasman for letting me be part of such a wonderful program. I can't wait until next year to see my little 'youngens' again

Debbie's News

Debra Spurlock, Housing Counselor

Well its that time of the year again. Its time to prepare for Group WorkCamps. The past few months have been very busy. A lot of hard work goes into getting everything set up for the volunteers when they arrive in

late July. Sites have to be identified, directions taken, measurements completed and write-ups finished.

Once again this year we have one week in the Oak Hill area and one week in the Montgomery area. All of the tasks involved must be completed twice, once for each area. We hope to help approximately 150 families this year.

The preparations for Group WorkCamps were completed by Brenda Winter and her AmeriCorps members. Group WorkCamps is a very rewarding program. Not only does it help folks with their home repairs but it also gives them some companionship. The older folks really enjoy the volunteers because most of them don't have anybody to talk to. This gives them some new friends who keep in contact with them over the years.

Work also continues on our Rehab Program. Lots of hard work goes into rehabbing the older homes. Funding is made available for these repairs through various grants like the Federal Home Loan Bank Grant and the Housing Preservation Grant from the USDA. These projects not only help the homeowner, but it helps bring up the property values for the whole community.

Over the past few months we have continued our work with Multi-Cap. This involved traveling to Charleston to pick up food, separating and inventorying the food and re-loading our share of the food to bring back to Beards Fork for families in our service area. We then prepare the individual boxes for distribution.

I have acquired a new task the past few months. I've taken over the SHARE Program. Along with the regular Share we have a new project where 25 eligible families can receive a free share package for three consecutive months. This a great opportunity for folks to see how they can stretch their food budget. They get a wide variety of food, ranging from fresh fruits and vegetables to meats and desserts. So after they receive their free packages they can begin to purchase them each month at a reduced cost.

I've also helped complete another round of the Homebuyer's Education Classes. Anyone interested in buying a new home through SALS and the West Virginia Housing Development Fund must have a minimum of eight hours of counseling.

What's New At SALS!

by Vickie Mullins, Housing Specialist

The Southern Appalachian Labor School had a successful year in 2004, and kicked off 2005 with several exciting events. We started off with our annual Martin Luther King Day event, with beginning the construction of

a memorial park in honor of our past employees. We also had several fund-raisers for the community center at SALS. Monies are allowing us to build a wooden train for the After School kids and community kids. The train will be placed on the lower end of the playground. Its being built by Mr. Bill Waldell, one of our volunteers from Wriston, WV.

The VISTA's held a Walk-a-Thon for the St. Jude Hospital, to help raise money for children suffering with cancer. The event was a success, and three bikes were donated to give to the kids who participated and whose names were drawn. The children that received bikes were: Samatha Raynes, Tony Manley, and Darcy Moore. Congratulations kids, you did a fine job! I know that St. Jude will be grateful. VISTA's organized a dinner to honor volunteers in the community for national volunteer week. The event was a success and awards were given out along with small gifts to show our appreciation.

Energy Express began June 21 and ended July 29th. The six-week summer reading and nutrition program served kids throughout Fayette Co. The program is designed to help kids maintain their reading level or in some cases bring it up! They also participate in non-competitive games, art work, and are provided with two nutritional meals each day. Energy Express is a great summer program and for the last five years has been the only one in Fayette Co. It has been operating at SALS for nine years.

Our annual Festival was held May 21st. Entertainment was provided by local performers from the Fayette County area. We enjoyed the songs, dances, and the food. YouthBuild members played the Harps for Harmony which was taught by John Lozier. Overall the day was great!



Jude Bender dances with 1,000 Peace Cranes from Hiroshima at May Worker's Cultural Festival

SALS Journal



Vickie Smith, a hands-on Construction Coordinator

Construction News

by Vickie Smith, Construction Coordinator

Summer is here and we have kicked into high gear. We have four rehabs in various stages of completion and one new home in the beginning stages. We are waiting on crews to get jobs completed so that we can start our new project at Hilltop and several new rehabs. We are hosting large numbers of volunteers who come in to help us with our endeavors and are hoping this will move us forward at a faster pace. We are hoping to begin construction on the annex at Beardsfork this Fall.

Thomas McClung, Site Supervisor

The past few months have been very busy for me and my crew. We have been working on one of the older homes in North Page. This has been a very big project because there was so much to be done. All of the inside had to be redone from putting up walls to installing flooring. The old wood siding that was on the outside was replaced with new vinyl siding. The home didn't have a bathroom until we installed one. But after months and months of hard work the home is almost completed.

My crew and I have also been helping out at George's site putting up trusses on a new home going up in Page. Putting up trusses requires a lot of people at one time. We will continue to help out at this site until it is under roof. But we are all working together anyway.

When I am through with these two sites, I will move on to another home to continue helping others.

Community Cleanup A Success

Kenny Gibson, AmeriCorps Member

This spring SALS and AmeriCorps sponsored a community clean up in Beards Fork, Robson and Mulberry. With the assistance of Mr. Joe Carrelli of Fayette Solid Waste Authority, inmates in the work program from Southern Regional Jail, and local volunteers, we collected 36 tons of trash. Local volunteers included several of SALS/DOL and YouthBuild workers, Mr. Opal Barrett, Mr. Gary Robertson, Mr. Virgil "Pink Panther" Payne, and local youth organized by Mrs. Charlene "Red" Newkirk.

The months leading up to March were spent doing write-ups for Group Work Camps. The repair of selected homes began in July. AmeriCorps members acted as trouble shooters for the groups of teens who arrive to improve homes in our area. AmeriCorps members were also responsible for compiling directions and mileage to each home.

In May I traveled to Boston, Mass. to represent SALS AmeriCorps. The trip was an inspiration to me. I had the opportunity to meet other members from all across the country and to share information on how our perspective sites operate. I left Boston with a deeper sense of what it means to be an AmeriCorps member and a sense of pride in the things we are doing at SALS.

In May I also began to plant a small garden at the SALS community center at Beards Fork. The students in the after school program pitched in and claimed individual plants that I marked with painted stones with the students name on them. Many students have returned for our summer reading program and continue nursing their chosen plants. In the fall, we'll harvest our vegetables and the students will learn about canning and freezing.

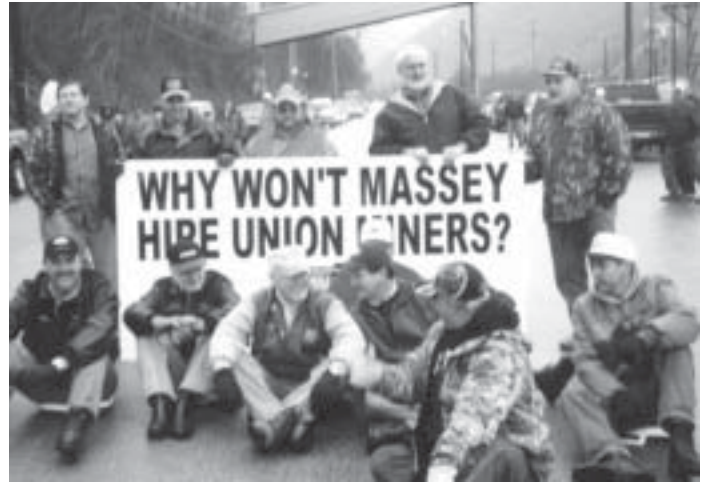
Director's Report from page three

Management". Jackie Asbury and Debbie Spurlock attended a special program with the WV Housing Development Fund and participated in several discussions with the Federal Home Loan Bank and Enterprise Foundation/Rural Gateway.

Mike Krantz from Group Work Camps visited us in May and outlined plans for both 2005 and 2006. Brenda Baylor, the CRA Officer for United Bank, and Guy Dooley, Chair of the Advisory Board for United Bank in Fayette County, also came to SALS and visited several rehabilitated homes. Mr. Dooley, who celebrated his 80th birthday with a cake at SALS, donated his "trademark" Jeep to us as well.

Board member Jim Hores used his potter's wheel to make another batch of beautiful SALS's mugs. The mugs are used to thank those who donate to SALS.

SALS Journal



UMWA Protests Loss of Pensions

Excerpted from Charleston Gazette 2/25/05

Ten United Mine Workers members, including UMW President Cecil Roberts, were arrested Thursday after a peaceful sit-in across U.S. 60, near a Massey Energy cleaning plant in Smithers.

Another 200 miners and supporters lined both sides of the road as the 10 men sat in the cold rain near an entrance to the old Cannelton Coal cleaning plant on the Kanawha River.

When the 10 moved onto the main road, dozens of other protesters stood near them for nearly 40 minutes until Kanawha County sheriff's deputies arrived to arrest them.

"We chose to rally at the Cannelton cleaning plant because what happened to UMWA members at this operation last year is a perfect example of the harmful economic impact America's federal bankruptcy laws can have on good, honest, hard-working people," Roberts said.

Massey Energy bought the Cannelton mining complex from bankrupt Horizon Natural Resources last summer. They bought it after U.S. Bankruptcy Judge William Howard nullified the UMW contract at the mine, ending health-care benefits the contract promised miners

for the rest of their lives.

More than 1,000 miners, as well as 4,000 retired miners and spouses, lost their health benefits when Howard issued his ruling.

The UMW is also upset that Massey reopened the mine as a non-union operation. The UMW had represented



Cecil Roberts being arrested UMW had represented workers at Cannelton since the mine opened in 1947.

SALS Loses a Friend

Folks at SALS and countless others are mourning the tragic loss of a long time friend and activist, Peggy Rossi. A former SALS Board member, she was director of REACHH Family Resource Center in Hinton.

According to friends, Peggy was in El Salvador with her husband John Averill, visiting their foster children. The family was swimming in the ocean when John noticed that their 18 year old foster son Emerson was in trouble. He tried to rescue him but was unsuccessful. Peggy noticed the trouble, but didn't hear John say not to try a rescue because of the riptide. Emerson drowned, and in trying to rescue him, Peggy was overcome as well.

At her memorial, friends and family gathered to honor Peggy's many selfless works and spirit. Below is a brief collection of words collected by family describing Peggy Rossi:

A Patchwork of Peggy

Measure the words - their pattern and texture. Sew them together & share with friends. The spiritual seeker, the spontaneous soulmate. A workaholic social worker, a Goodwill girl. An artist aching for justice in the world. Activist. Protester. A flowery, flowing trillium dancer. Pushing people beyond the superficial - through tears, pain, caring & laughter. Living life on the edge. Peggy's textures, colors and threads weaving communities.

Donations in memory of Peggy Rossi can be sent to REACHH-FRN, 411 Temple St., Hinton, WV 25951

State & Public Lost Top Social Worker

Samuel A. Hickman, Charleston Gazette July 29, 2005

West Virginia lost an excellent social worker and consummate advocate for families when Margaret A. "Peggy" Rossi, MSW, drowned recently during a trip to South America. That Peggy died while trying to save a family friend is indicative of her selflessness and commitment.

Peggy was named West Virginia's Social Worker of the Year in 2002 in recognition of her work in the areas of domestic violence, coordinated services to families, and public policies that support and protect all West Virginians. As co-chair of our Legislative Committee, Peggy applied her expertise and knowledge to craft policy statements on domestic violence, Temporary Assistance to Needy

SALS Journal

Families [TANF], welfare reform, access to health care, child welfare services, Medicaid, Family Resource Networks, the Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families, social work regulation, and many other important issues. These statements shaped the efforts of our organization in its dealings with the West Virginia Legislature, the administration, and in rule making, and led to such successes as enhanced funding for Family Resource Networks, recognition of education as an acceptable work alternative under TANF, and most recently, funding to dramatically increase the salaries of Child Protective Service Workers and Supervisors, enhancing the state's ability to hire and keep competent professionals to serve and protect our most vulnerable citizens.

Peggy's devotion to her profession and the National Association of Social Workers didn't stop there. She encouraged public school students to consider careers in social work at many career fairs, organized local professional meetings in a five-county region of Southern West Virginia, was elected to and served on our Board of Directors on multiple occasions, implemented an annual Social Work Lobby Day for members and students, volunteered wherever she could be helpful, and more.

As executive director of the NASW, W.Va. Chapter, for 20 years, I can truly say that Peggy Rossi was a "dream member;" the kind we can usually only hope for, and that only comes along once in a great while. Personally, I will miss Peggy's smiling face, her warm hugs, her true professionalism, her expert and sincere counsel, and her spunk. All of us at the National Association of Social Workers, West Virginia Chapter, will miss this dear human being greatly, as will all of West Virginia. Peggy was an inspiration to us all, and her memory and many significant works will continue to inspire.

Samuel A. Hickman is executive director of the National Association of Social Workers, West Virginia Chapter.

Southern Appalachian Labor School - Who We Are

**SALS Community Center: 800-515-1349,
304-779-2772, or 779-2280**

AmeriCorps/WVU-Tech: 304-442-3042

Construction Coordinator: 304-469-9721

John David, Director - 304-442-3157

WEB: www.sals.info

George Hensley, Jr	YouthBuild Trainer
Jimmy Adkins	YouthBuild Trainer
Tom McClung	YouthBuild Trainer
Terry Black	YouthBuild Trainer
Bonita Johnson	Office Assistant
Marie Settle	Case Worker
Heath Forren	Youth Advisor/RESA

Board Officers

Helen M. Powell	Chair
Marcus Wilkes	Vice Chair
Kathryn South*	Secretary ksouth@citynet.net
Sister Clara Lill	Treasurer
John David*	Director jdavid@citynet.net

Project Staff

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Debbie Spurlock	Housing Specialist/Share
Vickie Mullins	Housing Specialist/VISTA Sup.
Artie Mullins*	Volunteer/Building Coordinator Youth Advisor
Ron Yellets	Youth Build Trainer
Dave Shaver	YouthBuild Trainer/Supervisor

21st Century 'Accent Education' After School Program:

Charlene Newkirk	Site Coordinator
Terri Harlin	Project Coordinator
Benitez Jackson	Project Director
Lisa Manley	AmeriCorps/VISTA
Iris Adkins	AmeriCorps/VISTA
Lisa King	AmeriCorps/VISTA
Jessica Williams	AmeriCorps/VISTA
Debbie Ferri	Teacher
Lisa Keffer	Teacher

New River/Beards Fork Health Clinic Project

Marie Settle, CNA

Dr. Dan Doyle, M.D.

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

LeeAnn Gore & Mary Lynn Flint

Energy Express

Jason Crouch

Bookkeeping Team

Valarie Cowley, Ruth Lanham

Tom Bass, Brenda Winter

* Indicates members of the SALS Leadership Team



Yes, in these difficult times I understand the importance of an organization like the Southern Appalachian Labor School. Enclosed is my contribution to keep your essential work on track and moving forward..

Contributions to SALS are Tax deductible: Mail to SALS POB 127, Kincaid, WV 25119

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