

Mountain Promise

Vol. 12, No. 1

The Newsletter of the Brushy Fork Institute

Summer, 2001



Food

IN APPALACHIA



Mountain Promise is published quarterly for friends and associates of Brushy Fork Institute of Berea College by Brushy Fork Institute
CPO 2164, Berea College
Berea, KY 40404
859.985.3858
859.985.3903 (FAX)
www.berea.edu/brushyfork

Peter Hille
Director

Van Gravitt
Program Associate

Donna Morgan
*Communications/
Program Associate
Editor*

Tina R. Collins
Administrative Assistant

Dr. Gordon McKinney
*Director
The Appalachian Center
of Berea College*

Lori Briscoe
*Associate Director
The Appalachian Center
of Berea College*

Mission of Brushy Fork

For more than one hundred years, Berea College has served the people of Appalachia.

The Brushy Fork Institute carries forward this commitment by working to develop strong leadership in the mountains.

Working with both existing and emerging leaders, we draw on local understanding and vision to help communities build for tomorrow.

On the cover: Pickled beets and other preserves
(photo courtesy of Mark Sohn)

APPALACHIAN FOOD

Culture, History, Diversity

by Mark Sohn

When we think of Appalachian cuisine, many dishes come to mind. Stereotypical Appalachian foods include stack cakes, shuck beans, sweet potatoes, fried apple pies, chicken and dumplings, green beans with pork and biscuits covered with sausage gravy.

Some traditional foods, such as cornbread, remain popular today, while other foods such as rhubarb gravy and bologna gravy are rarely mentioned. Appalachian families still enjoy preserved winter foods like specialty pickles and relishes from the can house and summer foods such as cushaw squash from the garden. The region also boasts street fair foods such as elephant ears and funnel cakes.

The list of special Appalachian foods could stretch to more than 400 items. From foods gathered in the wild such as morels, paw paws, venison and ramps to sophisticated wines from the viticultural regions of Lake Erie and the Kanawha River Valley, Appalachia has produced a unique food tradition influenced by the region's cultural and historical diversity.

To broaden our perspective we must move beyond the foods that Central Appalachian families prepared between 1900 and 1950 and recognize the ethnic diversity of the people who settled northern and southern Appalachia, a region stretching from New York to Mississippi. From the ancient foods of Native Americans that have laid the foundation for many traditional dishes to the all-new and inventive chef-styled restaurant foods that are emerging in today's cooking world, we should consider all Appalachian fare.

topic this issue

Food in Appalachia

Culture, History, Diversity page 2
 Pawpaws: New Cash Crop? page 6
 Chicken & Dumplings page 7
 Cam's Cornbread. page 8
 Highland Harvest. page 9
 Toolbox: Meeting Refreshments. page 13
 Of Possums & Papaws page 14
 Book Review: Fast Food Nation page 16
 Reader Feedback page 18
 Program News page 19

Pre-Columbian Food

While Europeans started colonizing North America after its “discovery” by Christopher Columbus, other people, possibly from Asia, moved into the region much earlier. These first inhabitants developed food traditions that continued largely unchanged until the Industrial Revolution.

Some 12,000 or more years ago, a nomadic people hunted, fished and gathered in the region. They ate mastodon and giant tortoise. Then, the earth warmed and the diet changed. About 10,000 years ago native Appalachians ate white-tailed deer, turkeys, squirrels and raccoons. They also enjoyed hickory nuts, black walnuts, acorns, grapes and persimmons.

The most identified native foods include corn, beans, pumpkins and squash, cultivated plants that were introduced much later than those foods gathered in the wild. For example, domesticated squash dates back about 5,000 years, while corn appeared about 1,000 years ago, and the common bean arrived about 800 years ago. These foods came to play a significant role in Native American cooking.

The method of growing beans up corn stalks was a practice of Native Americans that is still found in today’s Appalachian gardens. Corn bread is another native tradition that has evolved with our culture and tastes. The original Native American corn bread, called *suppone*, was a combination of corn meal, water, grease and salt.

The Cherokee Indians also made bean bread. In 1951, the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, located in Cherokee, North Carolina, published a 72-page book titled *Cherokee Cooklore, To Make Bread*, which focuses on this bread. The book also illustrates how the Cherokee prepared many of “our” classic mountain dishes.

For example, they cooked mush, cornbread, cornmeal dodgers, gritted bread, cornmeal gravy, flat dumplings, succotash, butter beans, leather breeches, ramps, creases, watercress and squirrel. They also used indigenous plant foods such as blackberries, huckleberries, strawberries, raspberries, elderberries, wild plums, wild cherries, crab apples, ground cherries, persimmons, field apricots, fall grapes, fox grapes, opossum grapes, dewberries and gooseberries.

As time passed, Cherokee cooking habits combined with North American and European traditions. We can still see Pre-Columbian influences on our food, in such items as cornbread, succotash and cushaw squash.



photo courtesy of Mark Sohn

Cushaw squash: Smooth-skinned, hard-shelled, and striped green and white, these winter squash are shaped like yellow crookneck summer squash but weigh from 10 to 25 pounds and ripen in the fall.

Frontier Food

During the frontier period and until the coming of railroads and industry, European settlers lived an often isolated and independent existence. To survive on the frontier, they built cabins, cooked on hearths, and hunted, planted or gathered the indigenous foods introduced to them by the native peoples. They integrated many of these new foods into old recipes from their homelands.

Reflecting the diversity of immigrants from many European countries, Appalachia during the frontier period did not have a homogeneous style of food or cooking. Today, Appalachian food does not have a linear history or a predictable shared taste. Many times, community-based cookbooks illustrate various ethnic influences on our foods.

For example, Johnstown, Pennsylvania, a coal mining and historically steel-producing town of the Appalachian Allegheny Mountains, contains a population of people from Croatia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Poland,

continued on page 4

Mark Sohn is a Pikeville College professor, occasional chef, and author of the award-winning book, *Hearty Country Cooking*, published in 1998 by St. Martin’s Press. To share a comment or ask a question send an e-mail to sohn@kymtnnet.org.

Appalachian Food (continued from page 3)

Russia, Scotland, Serbia, Slovenia and the Ukraine. In 1989, the Johnstown Area Heritage Association identified about 20 local ethnic recipes for each of these groups. The Association published a spiral-bound cookbook, [Ethnic Recipes of Johnstown](#), which reflected the ethnic influences on Appalachian food traditions.

Consider some examples. When Poles came to work in the mines and mills, they prepared pierogies, crullers and pickled herring. Russians brought sweet nut and poppy seed breakfast rolls. Italians cooked gnocchi and stromboli and Croats prepared sarma or stuffed cabbage.

Germans brought orange cookies and sauerkraut salad. Lamb soup, Greek salad and braised string beans came from Greece, and from Scotland arrived shortbread, scones and oat cakes. The pattern of ethnic diversity illustrated in Johnstown is repeated over and over throughout Appalachia.

During the frontier period and beyond, people in the region helped one another with various tasks such as corn shelling, bean stringing, sorghum processing and barn raising. This practice extended to cooking. For example, fine, complex foods served at social occasions were sometimes a cooperative effort.

One example, the dried apple stack cake, has remained popular. To make a stack cake, mountain people would donate cake layers to create a stack of six to twelve spice-flavored layers. Each layer is covered with a spicy apple sauce. The sauce soaks into the cake, softening it and allowing the flavors to

mingle. This cake is delicate, highly flavored and low in fat, so it fits many of today's dietary and life-style needs. It stores well, slices thin and looks classy. (See recipe on next page.)

Industrial Period Food

The impact of industrialization on Appalachia was uneven with some communities maintaining traditional ways long into the twentieth century. While electricity reached some rural areas in the 1930s, other areas were not electrified until the 1950s or even '60s.

In some of the region, one- and two-room schools were the norm until the late 1950s, and a rural life-style was dominant. Those living in the country raised livestock, pork for meat and cows for milk, and planted gardens. By hunting and canning, Appalachian families enjoyed a more diverse diet than some other people, such as rural families of the deep South who often lived on cornmeal, fatback and molasses and sometimes suffered from pellagra, a disease associated with malnutrition.

During this period, families were large and close. Men and women divided work, and life centered around meals. In some settings, women prepared the food, served it to the men and ate later.

Today, much has changed, but families still find value in occasional family meals. Traditions continue to bring families and friends together for church and family reunions, Sunday dinners, births, graduations, weddings, retirements and funerals. Holidays such as Christmas, Easter, the Fourth of July and Labor Day weekend are occasions for home cooking and covered dish dinners.

Still today, many churchgoers enjoy dinner on the grounds, in which congregation members bring covered dishes. Long tables are laden with glass and foil-covered casseroles, Tupperware boxes of raw vegetables or deviled eggs, cake pans and pie plates. Guests form a line, wait for a blessing, visit with friends, and then pass along both sides of the tables and select their favorite foods.

Walking through the line you can load your disposable plate with pasta salads, potato salads, vegetable salads and molded salads, followed by hot vegetables, starches, pickles, breads and meats. Then, on a separate table or perhaps at the end you will find the desserts: cookies, bars, pies, cakes and candies.



photo courtesy of Mark Sohn

Shuck beans: Also called leather breeches, these beans are mature dried green beans that are soaked for 12 or more hours and cooked with salt pork or ham as seasoning. Shuck beans are prized for their concentrated flavor.

continued on page 6

DRIED APPLE STACK CAKE

INGREDIENTS

For the Apple Filling

8 cups home-dried (very dry) apples
5 1/2 cups water
1 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon cloves

For the Cake

8 1/4 cups all-purpose flour, divided	1/2 cup milk
2 teaspoons baking powder	2 eggs
2 teaspoons ground ginger	1 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg	1 cup 100% pure sweet sorghum
1/2 teaspoon allspice	1 cup unsalted butter, melted
1/2 teaspoon salt	

Yield: 24 servings



photo courtesy of Mark Sohn

STEPS

Prepare the apple filling ahead so that it will be cool when you bake the layers. In a large pot, combine the apples, water and sugar, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes. (I cook them for 10 minutes in a pressure cooker.) Stir in the cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves. Use a mixer, food processor or potato masher to break up the apples so that they are smooth like apple sauce. Measure out 8 cups. Cool.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Cut eleven 12-inch pieces of waxed paper or parchment. (I prefer parchment because the parchment does not smoke during baking, and the cake does not stick.)

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together 8 cups of the flour, the baking powder, ginger, nutmeg, allspice and salt. Make a large well or nest in the center of the flour and pour in milk, eggs, sugar and sorghum and beat until well mixed. Add the butter and continue to beat until fully mixed and smooth. Mixing with your hands, slowly incorporate the flour mixture as you would for bread. When the dough is dry enough to handle, stop adding flour—some may remain in the bowl.

Roll the dough into a log and cut it into equal-size parts—1 cup each. Roll the pieces into a ball; if they are sticky, roll them in the remaining 1/4 cup flour.

On a sheet of parchment or waxed paper, press each ball into a flat disk. Using a rolling pin, roll it out as you would a pie crust. Using extra flour as needed to keep the dough from sticking to the rolling pin, roll the dough into a flat disk a little larger than a 9-inch round cake pan. Then press the 9-inch pan into the dough so that the rim cuts the dough into a circle. Save the scraps for an eleventh layer. When you have rolled out and trimmed the layer, slide the paper and layer onto a cookie sheet. Bake for 8 minutes or until the layer is very brown on the edges and browned across the top. Repeat for each layer.

Remove the layers from the oven and place them on cooling racks or towels. When the layers are cool and you have discarded the baking papers, you are ready to stack the cake.

Assemble the cake: Place the first layer on a cake plate and spread about 3/4 cup of apple filling over the layer. Repeat this with each of the layers. Do not spread apple filling on the top layer.

Let the cake stand 6 to 12 hours at room temperature. This allows the moisture from the apple filling to soak into the layers. Refrigerate for 12 to 36 hours or freeze the cake for several months.

This recipe is from Hearty Country Cooking by Mark F. Sohn, published by St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010. Recipe reprinted with permission of the author.

Appalachian Food (continued from page 4)

Beverages follow. The specific foods within these categories represent the varied ethnic backgrounds of those present. One characteristic has remained universal—celebration occasions are a time for feasting.

Current Trends

During the last 25 years, Appalachian food has once again changed dramatically to include more commercial food and expensive restaurant foods. This food is both fast and slow, and it ranges from low cost to most expensive; it is indigenous, ethnically diverse and all-American.

Today, the fastest fast food is purchased along with gasoline at self-serve stations. These food stores sell a grand choice of drinks, snacks, candies and sandwiches. They offer fried foods such as potatoes and chicken, and of course, for the sleepy driver there is coffee, hot or cold, cappuccino or gourmet. Here, the cookies, beverages and coffee are brand-name American.

This is the food of Appalachia because it is sold here, but it is not typical of food identified with Appalachia. Packed in plastic, this food is so removed from the farm and garden that for those who grew up long ago, it yields little in the way of personal satisfaction.

Another style of food that is, again, far removed from the garden, home and ethnic roots is invented chef food. Here, chefs create dishes with foods imported from around the globe and across the country.

However, the chefs do not work in a vacuum, but rather their “invented” food is inspired by ethnic regional traditions.

Remember the bean cakes of the Cherokee Indians? Years ago, the Terrace Restaurant of Grove Park Inn in Asheville, North Carolina, offered an appetizer of fried bean cakes. Although they were based on the bean cakes of our ancestors, the Grove Park cakes differed. The beans were black, pinto and white, the cakes were tiny, and the garnishes extensive. Sour cream, chow chow, fresh fruits, raisins and chives adorned the plate. As chefs do frequently, the simple bean cake was transformed into a multi-layered complex dish with a gorgeous presentation.

Today, talented Appalachian chefs charge big bucks in cities from Pittsburgh to Charlotte, using traditions inspired by home-style cooking. In addition, they make purchases from local producers. Today, economic and social forces have come together to create a new style of Appalachian slow food. This food does not necessarily cook slowly, but rather it is created with care, served beautifully and offered in elegant settings.

Appalachian food continues to be a mix of slow home cooking, simple restaurant food, complex chef presentations and new ethnic influences. As ethnic groups arrive, the food landscape changes again. The stereotypical foods such as pure sorghum, fried greens and boiled groundhog are important, but for some Appalachians they are no more than a memory.

Pawpaw may be new Kentucky cash crop

by Bruce Schreiner

Summarized from the *Mountain Eagle*, May 9, 2001

Way down yonder in the pawpaw patch, researcher Kirk Pomper envisions a resurgence of the tender, pulpy fruit as a possible alternative crop for Kentucky's tobacco growers. Pomper, a Kentucky State University horticulturist who tends the eight-acre pawpaw orchard at the school's research farm, said the market is ripe for a pawpaw revival.

Pawpaw proponents say the fruit's potential is as vast as its diversity. Pawpaws can be munched raw. They also can be used in baked goods, ice cream, yogurts, juices, jams and many other foods.

“I think it will become a standard part of our American diet,” said Neil Peterson of Franklin, WV, a pawpaw grower and founder of the Pawpaw

Foundation. “It's not going to be like apples and oranges, but I think it will become a popular fruit item.”

The pawpaw, a native North American fruit with a tropical taste, is often likened to a combination of banana, mango and pineapples. Some varieties have a hint of melon or citrus taste.

The pawpaw is the country's largest edible tree fruit. The oblong fruit—green outside and yellow inside—is normally 3 to 6 inches long and weighs up to a pound, though the average is 6 to 8 ounces. The pawpaw is touted for its nutritional value. It is higher in some vitamins, minerals and amino acids than apples, grapes and peaches.

continued on page 19



CHICKEN & DUMPLINGS

by Sidney Saylor Farr

No one knows when chicken and dumplings were first served in Appalachia, but the dish became welcome in big city and mountain kitchens alike. Cooks varied the taste by using sherry, lemon peel, parsley or pepper. Some enriched the broth with butter, chopped giblets or boiled eggs. They made two kinds of dumplings: fluffy round balls and slick, flat dumplings.

The flat dumpling contains no baking powder and little shortening, is rolled and cut into strips like wide noodles, and cooks up firm and bumpy (but they will soften and get tender if allowed to set awhile before serving). Research indicates that fluffy round dumplings are more old-fashioned, while the flat dumpling is sophisticated. Preference for one version over another runs in families.

A favorite dish at church suppers and family reunions, chicken and dumplings, with varied side dishes, can serve as many as fifty people or as few as three or four. Many Appalachian cookbooks contain basic recipes for this dish.

Until the 1950s mountain people lived closer to pioneer times than did their city cousins. They dressed chickens and made dumplings the way mothers and grandmothers had always done, using wood burning stoves and cast-iron cookware. As I grew up in the 1940s, my mother cooked this way.

In preparation for chicken and dumplings, Mama heated a cast-iron teakettle of water on the cook stove, then caught a chicken (usually a hen). After the hen was killed—either by wringing its neck or cutting off its head—she put it in a No. 2 galvanized tub at the back door. She then brought out the boiling teakettle and poured water over the chicken. The hot water loosened the feathers, which Mama plucked and saved for pillows and feather beds. She brought the chicken inside and, removing one lid on the stove, held it over the flames to singe the pin feathers and hairs.

After washing and drying the chicken, Mama cut it into serving pieces. The chicken was cooked in a cast-iron kettle until fork tender and removed from the fire to cool. Then Mama deboned the chicken, put it back into the broth and moved the kettle onto a hot part of the stove.

When Mama made dumplings, she mixed flour, shortening, salt and baking powder (just as she did to make biscuits). She pinched off wads of dough, rolled them into balls between her hands and dropped each ball into the rich chicken broth. The dumplings cooked waxy on the outside and fluffy and tender on the inside.

My mother's dumplings were the favorite in our homes. Except for buying chicken parts at the supermarket and cooking in a stainless steel kettle, I make dumplings just as she did, cooking them in an enriched broth.

I have never made or eaten a better meal of chicken and dumplings than my mother served. She usually fixed green beans, slaw, mashed potatoes, and perhaps fried apples as side dishes. My modified version of her recipe is below.

CHICKEN AND DUMPLINGS

1 stewing hen, 3 to 4 pounds Salted water
1 1/2 cups self-rising flour 1/2 cup milk
1/4 cup shortening

Cut chicken into serving size pieces and place in a large kettle with tight-fitting lid. Cover with water that has been lightly salted to taste. Cook until chicken is tender and meat begins to fall from bones. Remove from heat to cool.

While the chicken is cooling, cut shortening into flour, until mixture is the size of small peas. Add milk and mix. Turn out on lightly floured board and knead a few times.

Remove all bones from chicken, then put the meat back into the broth. Add water (or cream) if needed to make about six cups of broth. Set kettle back on burner to get hot while you finish dumplings. Pinch off a wad of dough the size of a small egg. Roll the dough between your palms until it is a smooth round ball. Drop balls one at a time into boiling broth. Turn down heat, cover, and cook gently until dumplings are done.

Sidney Saylor Farr is the author of [More than Moonshine: Appalachian Recipes and Recollections](#) and [Table Talk: Appalachian Meals and Memories](#).

CAM'S CORNBREAD

by Peter Hille, Brushy Fork staff

Cameron Bartlett made the best cornbread I ever had. Crunchy on the outside, moist within, not sweet, but tangy—melt a little butter on it and go straight to heaven.

Cam was born the son of a railroad man in Whitesville, West Virginia. After a brief stint working in a coal mine, he decided that was NOT how he wanted to spend his life. He pursued an education and ultimately a career as a dentist. World War II intervened in the midst of that, and he helped liberate the prisoners of the Nazi concentration camp at Allach.

He practiced dentistry in rural Kentucky before moving to Lexington where he directed the clinic at UK's dentistry school. But something was missing,

and he left that life, bought a VW van, went to California, even India, looking for the answers to life's big questions.

In the end, he found his answers in the simple life at the head of a holler in Rockcastle County, Kentucky, growing a big garden, playing his piano, and cooking fantastic dinners for large gatherings of his many friends. His cornbread was always center stage.

Cameron passed away just before Christmas last year at age 79. He carried out a long and courageous battle with cancer and liver disease, and won in the end, choosing to die at home with friends and family around instead of in a hospital. His cornbread lives on!

CAM'S CORNBREAD

First, you need a big iron skillet, well seasoned so it's smooth as a baby's butt and always carries a light sheen of oil. For best results, never wash your cast-iron skillet in detergent, which strips out the oil. Instead, scour it with paper towels and salt, then oil it.

Next, you need the coarsest cornmeal you can get your hands on. It's best if it has chunks as big or bigger around as a #2 pencil lead. That's what gives it the crunch! Cam would have his meal ground by a local farmer and stand there until he got the grind just right.

Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.

In a bowl, mix two cups of meal, two teaspoons of baking powder, a teaspoon of salt, and enough buttermilk to make a stiff batter—about one and a quarter cups.

Throw a spoonful of the cornmeal in the skillet, along with three or four tablespoons of oil.

Heat the skillet on the range (preferably gas) on high until the corn starts to brown up. Get that oil good and hot!

Now pour in the batter and put the skillet in the oven.

Take it out when it's brown on top—won't take long, maybe fifteen minutes give or take, depending on your oven.

If your skillet is well seasoned, you can just turn it over on a cutting board when it comes out of the oven, and the whole pone should fall right out. Enjoy!

Putting a Face **HIGHLAND HARVEST** *on Food*

by Donna Morgan, Brushy Fork Staff

The summer of 1999 marked a season of drought for eastern West Virginia. A local orchard owner picked 100 bushels of golf ball-sized nectarines—fruit stunted by the lack of rain. To reduce the possibility of disease on his trees, the farmer had to pick the nectarines, even if only to dump them. If the nectarines had been saleable as grade A fruit, the farmer would have received \$8 a bushel.

The summer of 1999 also marked the test run of a new economic development strategy in the farmer's community—Highland Harvest, a line of specialty foods produced from local crops in a community kitchen. The orchard owner approached Highland Harvest with a bushel of his presumably worthless nectarines. With the assistance of Harvey Christie (known as Chef Harv in specialty food circles), he turned his potential loss into hundreds of jars of nectarine butter. Not only was the crop saved, but the farmer saw an income of \$20 per bushel. Another benefit was the dramatic increase of the product's shelf life from being relatively short as whole fruit to 18 months as a canned product.

Adding value to produce was not a new idea to Hampshire County farmers. In fact, the owner of a nearby apple orchard already had been sending his apples to Pennsylvania to have them processed into apple butter. No one had been able to provide this service locally.

While the West Virginia University Hampshire County Extension Service and the Hampshire County Economic Development Authority had explored developing a food processing kitchen for farmers, their studies of other such "incubator kitchen" programs had been discouraging. They saw that the model of having farmers pack and market

products failed in many places. Local farmers reflected concerns about whether they would have the time (on top of caring for the fields and crops, harvesting and other duties) or the knowledge to create products from their fruits, vegetables and herbs. Questions arose regarding safety, legality and efficiency.

Interest in the community kitchen renewed when members of the Economic Development Authority and Extension Service made connections with the Lightstone Foundation, a community economic development agency that focuses on sustainable agriculture.

When the groups met at a conference, they discussed ways to make a community incubator kitchen work and decided that the answer might lie in having someone besides the farmers work in the kitchen—someone with experience in food production, preservation and marketing.

At this point Chef Harv lived and worked in Monroe County, West Virginia, where he had been looking to expand his own specialty food facilities. When the Lightstone Foundation approached him about having his company, Gourmet Central, serve as an anchoring business for Hampshire County's incubator kitchen, Chef Harv took the challenge. His experience with creating recipes and marketing products, as well as the networks he had formed during some years working with national food businesses, would be valuable assets to Highland Harvest.

Highland Harvest was born out of a partnership between Gourmet Central, the Lightstone Foundation, West Virginia University Extension, the Hampshire County Economic Development Authority and the farmers. Chef Harv credits the



continued on page 10

Highland Harvest

(continued from page 9)

How Highland Harvest works

1. You bring your produce and/or a family recipe that you would like to have mass-produced.
2. Highland Harvest staff figure out how to produce the recipe in a 30-40 gallon batch.
3. At this point you can have them perform any of the following services beyond cooking and packing the product:
 - Label the product;
 - Market the product (at the kitchen, online, in local stores, at fairs and festivals);
 - Warehouse the product;
 - Ship the product to your customers.(Each additional service raises the fee you must pay.)
4. If your 30-40 gallon batch sells successfully, you can have additional batches run as needed.

By marketing a product through Highland Harvest, the farmer owns his crop from the field to the retailer.



business' success to that collaboration. "We were putting together groups that normally might not work with one another," he notes. He continues that the groups acknowledged that everyone had an agenda, whether it was protecting the environment, educating farmers, providing economic development or just making a living. The shared goal behind Highland Harvest was to keep family farms viable.

Highland Harvest was established as a limited liability corporation (LLC), a packing business co-owned by the collaborating organizations and eight farmers. To join the LLC, each farmer committed \$500 equity in the form of fruit. Farmers received a value of \$8 per bushel for apples, peaches, pawpaws and other produce. This fruit-equity arrangement made it possible for small farmers to participate in the corporation. Working with a co-packer usually requires a cash investment of around \$4000, a possibly insurmountable obstacle for a family farm.

To help offset start-up costs, the Lightstone Foundation loaned Highland Harvest \$30,000 at zero percent interest. Farmers provided the produce and Chef Harv developed a product line of twenty items using the fruits, vegetables and herbs available to him. Primarily peaches and apples, much of the fruit used was top quality but may have had a blemish that would make it less marketable as whole fruit. Farmers who supplied fruit over and above their \$500 equity investment received \$8 payment for each additional bushel. This fruit sometimes included items such as juice apples for which farmers traditionally received around \$1.65 per bushel. Proceeds from the sale of finished products would be reinvested in the LLC.

So, with an increasing inventory of jellies, jams, salsas, sauces and other products, the next challenge for the Highland Harvest members was to find a market for their specialty items.

Marketing the Products

As a first market test, Highland Harvest introduced the specialty products in 27 Wal-Mart stores throughout the region. Chef Harv promoted the goods through interactive cooking demonstrations at the stores. He comments, "The products seemed expensive for Wal-Mart until people tried them. We strive to make a product with fewer artificial sweeteners and no preservatives—a good homemade style product with a flavor like grandma used to make."

Chef Harv believes that consumers are ready and willing to pay more for foods that give people comfort and security, provide a connection for them, and support their personal values. "The way the world is changing so fast and the way we are having problems with our food systems, not just in the United States but around the world, people are getting paranoid about their food,"

he says. He recalls growing up on a farm: "Everyone harvested and preserved foods. Even our meat came off our own farm." He continues, "Now you go to a store and pick up a package or bottle of something and you don't know where it was grown, who packaged it, whether they cared or not."

Related to marketing is the fact that food serves as a community gathering tool in so many cultures. Chef Harv comments that people desire a connection with the people that produce their food. He notes that Highland Harvest renews a sense of community. Chef Harv regards Highland Harvest's efforts as "putting a face on people's food." He says, "Our products give a sense of where the food [was grown], who produced it, how it came to you."

People can quite literally see where and how Highland Harvest products are made. The packing facility offers factory tours to busloads of people, including 4-H Clubs and high school students. Last year, more than 10,000 people visited the facility. For health and safety reasons, visitors can't go into the kitchens, but they can view the cooking and packing processes through special windows that look into the production areas. And, of course, no one goes away without a chance to sample products. Chef Harv notes that these tours serve as a primary marketing tool.

Chef Harv expects proximity to the Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, DC markets to be a benefit to Highland Harvest. He says, "We only need five percent of the Baltimore/DC marketplace to consume every piece of fruit that is grown in the eastern WV panhandle region. If we can do that, we would be very successful."

Benefits to the Community

Of course, a primary benefit of Highland Harvest is maintaining the viability of family farms. Farmers are economically strengthened and in turn they spend at local businesses. By marketing a product through Highland Harvest, the farmer owns his crop from the field to the retailer. Chef Harv says this is different than the typical farm model: "In most situations, 80 percent of the profit is made after the produce leaves the farm."

The community has benefited in other ways. "This is not a typical project for economic development," says Chef Harv. Unlike industrial

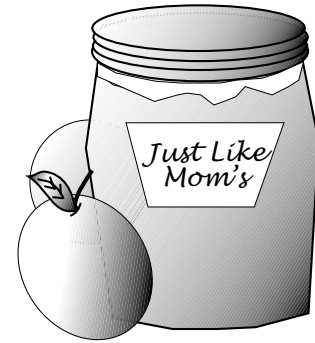
recruitment and other forms of development, promoting agriculture has allowed Hampshire County to keep both its farms and its tourism activities. Highland Harvest has also created some real jobs.

The business employs 12 people during slow times of the year and 25 people during peak production times and Christmas. From packaging the foods to creating the labels and marketing the product, the circle of employment influence continues to grow. Chef Harv estimates that employing one person creates up to two other jobs in the county.

So You Want to Start A Kitchen: Some Advice

You won't find a manual for how to operate a community kitchen, and if you did, instructions would probably have to be different for each community. In a business primarily focused on custom-made foods, you can expect to make some mistakes, cautions Chef Harv. However, you can avoid some mistakes by learning from people with experience in the specialty foods business. Thus comes Chef Harv's primary advice: "Don't reinvent the wheel."

continued on page 12



"The farmer buys retail, sells wholesale, and pays the freight both ways."

—Gary Shanholtz, Hampshire County orchard owner in PBS's *Our Food, Our Future*, which features Highland Harvest. Check your local listings for when this program will be aired.

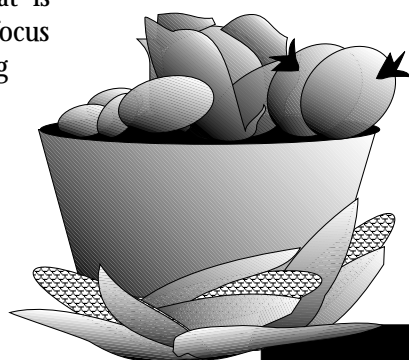
Highland Harvest (continued from page 11)

Central to not reinventing the wheel lies collaborating with existing organizations and businesses. By taking advantage of existing facilities, you save the energy and effort you would put into acquiring a facility and equipment. Pooling resources with a business or organization that is already equipped means you can focus your energy on marketing. Having a facility for farmers to use immediately also provides instant assistance to those with farms in the most need of value-added products.

If a local facility is not available, Chef Harv advises finding someone who is already producing a specialty food and creating incentive for them to collaborate on building a facility. Such an arrangement might help cover start-up and operation costs by providing an anchoring business (like Gourmet Central is to Highland Harvest). You can benefit from the anchoring company's production and experience with such factors as equipment maintenance, recipe development and health inspections.

Chef Harv also suggests not expecting the farmers to work in the kitchen. Many of them work daylight to dark and some have off-the-farm jobs to make ends meet. He also suggests marketing the kitchen's services beyond the farmer to people who might be interested in bottling up family recipes for their own use.

Specialty food production is not an easy business. Chef Harv notes, "Eighty percent of specialty food businesses fail in the first five years. Only five percent survive past ten years." Having a variety of products can help a business survive. The various jams, jellies, salsas, dressings, sauces, snack mixes, corn meal mixes, and fish batter mix offered by Highland Harvest cater to different tastes. The company constantly adds new products. The trick is finding a balance between what and how much to have in inventory and how much of a particular item will sell.



For more information, contact:
Gourmet Central
Attention: Chef Harv
47 Industrial Park Road
Romney, WV 26757
304.822.6047
chef_harv@yahoo.com

You can see
Highland Harvest's products at:
www.hccountrystore.com
or
www.wvgourmetfoods.com.

FRIED GREEN TOMATOES

4 to 6 green tomatoes, sliced 1/4-inch thick
salt and pepper flour for dusting
2 eggs, beaten cornmeal or bread crumbs
bacon grease or vegetable oil

Salt and pepper the tomato slices; dust lightly with flour. Dip slices in beaten egg, letting excess drip off, then coat well with meal or crumbs. Fry in hot grease or oil until browned, turning gently (about 3 minutes each side). Keep warm in a low 200° to 250° oven if frying in batches.

--from southernfood.about.com



toolbox

SERVING REFRESHMENTS AT A MEETING

If you feed them, they will come. Providing food at a meeting or other event can promote attendance and provide a welcoming atmosphere. If you've been asked to prepare refreshments for a meeting or workshop, here are some factors to consider.

WHAT TO SERVE

Simplicity is the key to preparing foods that can be enjoyed by a variety of people. Consider people's dietary restrictions, and offer a variety of refreshments that are low-fat, sugar-free, caffeinated and decaffeinated. Here are some tried and true suggestions from Brushy Fork experiences:

MORNING REFRESHMENTS

Coffee, with and without caffeine
Hot water for regular tea and herb tea
Donuts and pastries
Fruit
Bagels
Yogurt

AFTERNOON REFRESHMENTS

Sodas, with and without caffeine; diet and regular
Cookies, offer a variety for different tastes
Vegetables and dip
Soft pretzels and mustard
Bottled water
Coffee, with and without caffeine

HOW MUCH TO SERVE

The required amount of food depends on the age of the people you are serving and the time of day. An older crowd tends to eat less. For example, senior citizens will eat less than a high school football team. If you are serving food when people are likely to be hungry, for example after work or close to a mealtime, allow more per person.

The rule of thumb for small appetizers (such as cut fruit or vegetables or small cookies) is 5 to 6 pieces per person. Larger items such as the fruit, pretzels and yogurt mentioned above require as few as 1 piece per person.

HOW TO SERVE

Provide plates, napkins, spoons and forks, cups, party picks, serving containers, tablecloths, and other utensils necessary for serving and eating the refreshments. If people have to balance plates on their laps, offer spill-proof, small foods that are easy to handle. Also remember condiments such as creamer and sugar and salt.

HOW TO BE SAFE

Keep hot foods at 140 degrees or above and serve them promptly. If you can't serve foods quickly, use heating appliances such as crock pots, a steam table or chafing dishes.

Keep cold foods at 40 degrees or below. Use ice, coolers or a refrigerator and serve cold foods promptly.

ONE LAST NOTE (FOR THE ENVIRONMENT)

To decrease the environmental impact of your activity, avoid using styrofoam and provide containers for recycling aluminum cans and for composting leftovers. Providing a name-labeled mug for each participant to use all day is a good way to avoid using disposable cups.



OF POSSUMS & PAPAWS

By Joel Davis

Possum doesn't taste like chicken—no, sir. It tastes neither fowl nor foul. And like everything else that has ended up on my Papaw's table over the years—from squirrel to bull testicles—I have eaten possum several times. The secret to dining with my maternal grandfather is to chew quickly, swallow fast, and only then, ask what it was you just ate.

Now, my reputation as a ravenous possum eater is probably undeserved, stemming as it does from certain apocryphal tales of my childhood: family myths telling of epic dinners at Papaw's house during which I gobbled portions of our nation's most identifiable marsupial between chants of "more possum, Papaw, more possum!"

Still, truth be known, I have smacked my lips several times since upon a meal of our much maligned *Didelphis marsupialis*. After discussing these meals with Papaw, I have come to realize that these days, a lowly possum will likelier end up as a speed bump on our public highways than as an entrée on the tables of our well-fed populace. "People don't hardly eat 'em no more," Papaw says. "I don't know of anyone around here that still eats 'em."

Papaw still eats them, though—eats them and enjoys them, too. "They're all good," he says. "I'd rather have a possum than a groundhog." The thought of all the poor people who never have—and probably never will—eat a possum dinner inexplicably saddens me, and so, on this lukewarm autumn day, I have undertaken the task of writing a guide for those who wish to partake of the plethora of possums to be found in our fair land.

The first step on the journey to a meal of possum is the most profound one. This step involves catching a possum. Now, there are two schools of thought on how to catch a possum. One approach is to cruise the back roads of your neighborhood at night in the comfort of your car until you glimpse your prey scuttling across the road and either run

The secret to dining with my maternal grandfather is to chew quickly, swallow fast, and only then, ask what it was you just ate.

over him or jump out and chase the rascal down. If you choose the latter option, take a tire iron with you. Of course, while hunting possums from your car is convenient, it probably isn't legal—and it lacks a certain panache.

The traditional way to catch a possum is to take to the woods with your hunting dog some moonlit night during possum season, which extends from November to February in Tennessee. Possums love the taste of a ripe persimmon. So the best time and place to catch a possum is in a persimmon tree after the fruit has ripened, which is usually around the first frost. "Yeah-boy," Papaw says, "Coons like the persimmons too."

When I asked Papaw about persimmons, he drove me up the hill on his farm, and we gathered some prematurely ripe persimmons from under a lonely tree. Afterwards, while driving over to his brother Joe's farm to look for a possum to catch, I tried a persimmon or two and was struck by the distinct mellowness of the fruit. The texture of the pulp was soft and smooth against my tongue and the roof of my mouth.

At any rate, after you've located a possum in a persimmon, or in any other tree, the question is, "what now?"

"You just climb the tree and shake 'em out," Papaw says. "They're out on a limb, so just shake it so they'll turn loose. I'd have to shoot one out now, though, 'cause I can't climb."

"I can climb," I say, remembering family myths of my half-squirrel heritage. Later that day I found myself teetering along the limbs of a hollow tree. Papaw had caught possums out of it before so it seemed like a good place to check. No possums. On the way out, we did harvest a dozen golf balls that were hidden in the undergrowth like the eggs of some half-crazed fowl.

If you have better luck at finding a possum, Papaw advocates catching the critter alive in order to fatten it up. So leave your gun at home, grab a stick, and take your courage. Despite the impressive dental hardware that the average possum possesses, it is a relatively meek and slow opponent. Just don't underestimate it, and remember to grab it by the tail or back legs. Grabbing a possum by the snout is not considered prudent.

After capturing your future supper, the next step is to put the animals in a clean cage and feed them well, says my Mamaw. "We put them up in a cage for about six weeks and feed them food like we eat," she says. "They'll eat milk and bread and vegetables—they love vegetables. We feed them up like that for a while, and then we kill them."

But how to kill a possum? The next few steps are not for the squeamish. To kill the possum humanely, Papaw suggests laying a stick across the animal's neck, standing on both ends of the stick, and picking it up by the hind legs. This will break its neck and minimize the suffering.

To dress the possum, immerse it in very hot but not boiling water for one minute. Afterwards, scrape the skin with a dull knife to remove the hair. Be careful not to cut the skin.

Next, slit the carcass from neck to hind legs with a sharp knife and remove its innards (this should prove to be the most popular step so far). Wash the possum thoroughly inside and out with hot water and remove the head and tail. Cover it with cold water mixed with a cup of salt, and let it stand overnight. The next day, throw out the salt water and rinse the possum in boiling water.

After cleaning the possum, the most basic recipe is to fill a pan half full of water, place the possum in it, and cover it. Then parboil the possum by heating the pan at high on top of the stove. After the water begins boiling, turn the temperature down and continue parboiling it for one hour: the time varies slightly with the size of the animal. When the meat begins falling apart, the possum is ready for the next step. Place the possum in a roasting pan and surround it with peeled sweet potatoes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Bake the critter at about 350 degrees until it's brown, then pepper and salt it.

At this point, the novice possum-eater must make peace with his or her gustatory expectations. No matter how fervently the eater might wish otherwise, friend possum's dark and greasy meat does *not* resemble chicken or pork in taste or texture. It tastes like possum. According to my decidedly undereducated palette, it resembles pot roast—a greasy, slightly stringy, and benignly gamey pot roast. As to what to serve with the possum, you can eat it with pinto beans or green beans or potatoes, Mamaw says.

In the end, while possum is much maligned, it can still provide a tasty meal and, at least for me, a possum dinner is the stuff of which fond memories are made. So take a chance. Go find a persimmon tree some moonlit night and settle yourself down to wait for our old friend, the possum.

"Of Possums & Papaws" by Joel Davis first appeared in *Now & Then* magazine, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Spring 1998). © Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, 1998. Used with permission.

Next Issue: Crafts as Economic Development

Send us your stories or ideas about economic development around the crafts industry. *Mountain Promise* is published quarterly. Our fall issue deadline is August 31, 2001. To contact us:

Mountain Promise
Donna Morgan, editor
Brushy Fork Institute
CPO 2164, Berea College
Berea, KY 40404

Phone: 859.985.3860
Fax: 859.985.3903
E-mail: donna_morgan@berea.edu
Web: www.berea.edu/brushyfork

Fast Food Nation

The Dark Side of the All-American Meal

By Eric Schlosser, 2001, Houghton Mifflin Company

Reviewed by Lori Briscoe, Associate Director of the Berea College Appalachian Center

When we think of Appalachia, our small towns and larger cities, our most rugged high mountains and sweet rolling pastures, many of us immediately visualize their beauty and those characteristics of uniqueness that make our region a distinct part of the greater whole. When we think of regional food

we think of soup beans and cornbread, turnip greens and pickled beets, stack cake and sweet potato pie.

That is not to assert that we have been left apart from the trappings of modern society. It is just that the miles of strip-malls, the uniformity of modern development and industry and the clones of fast food franchises don't strike first in our mind's connection with the region. It is the geographic and cultural distinctions that we associate in the identification of place, any place, anywhere.

Yet, the United States and an ever-growing portion of the shrinking world share the design of human development, of modern mass global culture. From Appalachia to Bolivia folks bear witness to the voracious appetite of "progress." Nothing epitomizes popular culture like fast food, and nothing has so transformed the American landscape or the American diet.

In his brilliant new book Fast Food Nation: the Dark Side of the All-American Meal, Eric Schlosser uncovers and delivers a comprehensive look inside the fast food industry and its influence on nearly every facet of life. We are not just talking cholesterol and artificial additives here.

What is the connection between the diminishment of labor standards, the disappearance of the small farm, the spread of E. Coli, the plague of national obesity and the homogenization of the American landscape? The fast food industry. Who is the most recognized figure by children across the world? Ronald McDonald. Schlosser has woven his

Americans spend more money on fast food than on higher education, personal computers, computer software or new cars...

years of research and investigation of the fast food industry into a 270-page documentary as thrilling, chilling, and quick as any Grisham fiction.

Schlosser begins his book with the life stories of the industry's pioneers. Coming from poor backgrounds, these entrepreneurs were striving to live the capitalist dream of earned

fortune and notoriety in the prosperous times following World War II. Their efforts led to the transformation of our relationship with food. We got it our way.

Now Mr. Schlosser uncovers some stultifying facts:

- On any given day in the U.S. about 1/4 of the adult population visits a fast food restaurant;
- One out of 8 workers in the U.S has at some point been employed at McDonalds, the largest purchaser of beef, pork and potatoes;
- Americans spend more money on fast food than on higher education, personal computers, computer software or new cars...more than on movies, books, magazines, newspapers, videos, and recorded music combined;
- Americans spent \$6 billion on fast food in 1970 and \$110 billion in 2000;
- The rate of cumulative trauma injuries in the meatpacking industries is 35 times higher than the national average in industry;
- The Food and Drug Administration does not require flavor companies to disclose the ingredients in their additives so long as all the chemicals are considered GRAS (Generally Regarded as Safe);
- "Natural" and "Artificial" flavors are now manufactured at the same chemical plants;
- Approximately 30% of public high schools in the U.S. offer branded fast food;

- There are roughly 3.5 million fast food workers in the U.S., the largest group of minimum wage earners in the country;
- The waste products from poultry plants, including sawdust and newspaper used as litter, are being fed to feedlot cattle;
- Current FDA regulations allow dead pigs and dead horses to be rendered into cattle feed along with dead poultry.

The fast food chains stand atop a huge food-industrial complex that has gained control of American agriculture. The fast food industry has permeated the safety net of government protections for the public welfare. Agribusinesses that raise single crops like potatoes or run feedlots for tens of thousands of cows, hogs or chickens have displaced small farms. The meatpacking industry employs thousands of often illegal immigrants at minimum wage to do the most dangerous jobs (once only practiced by a well-paid and highly skilled workforce).

And what's more, fast food propaganda informs marketing campaigns directed at children through playgrounds, toys, charities, movies, magazines, amusement parks, television, the internet and most recently through direct advertising in schools. School children's buses, hallways and playing fields, once free from the signs of free-enterprise, now target students as loyal customers who identify brand names like Coke and Taco Bell as life essentials.

Through savvy contracts with town or county school systems, corporations agree to donate a certain amount of sales of their products to financially strapped schools in exchange for the location of banners, advertising and even soda machines and fast food vending inside the schools themselves. Is this a new kind of corporate culture?

Just when your stomach has begun to untie its knots, Schlosser keeps digging, going further. The quality of fast food is actually very poor due to the artificial manner in which it is produced and delivered from farm to factory to franchise. To keep

customers coming back for more, taste and aroma are manufactured in chemical plants off the New Jersey turnpike.

And then there is the information on how the lobbyists for the industry have successfully fought living wage legislation and labor standards requiring better safety and working conditions for the millions employed in fast food restaurants, processing plants, and akin industries directly tied to fast food.

What Schlosser uncovers is horrifying—as it should be. His lessons are crucial: the real price never appears on the menu, and you really are what you eat.

More importantly, his book leads to deeper questions about what and how we consume and the far-reaching consequences (ecologically, socially, economically) of our choices. It requires a

[this] book leads to deeper questions about what and how we consume and the far-reaching consequences (ecologically, socially, economically) of our choices. . .

questioning of the values of the capitalist industrial model of progress that has led us here, that has undermined true democracy, true individuality, honest education and the inherent beauty in diversity.

Faster isn't always better. Ask Mom and Pop.

Convenience right now may lead to a host of consequences whose solutions may take generations to unfold. Our countering actions require everything from involvement in legislative change to the simple refusal to eat fast food.

In this *Mountain Promise* issue is a host of stories and recipes on Appalachian food. The food that has been sown, grown, reared and cooked by the hands of our families and neighbors and become a part of our collective regional culture.

In the warm summer months when the bounty of the earth grants us nourishing food to place on our table, serve up some ramps and potatoes, some sliced cucumbers and onions with vinegar, cornbread and a slice of watermelon. Pack the leftovers for lunch. Warm up the cornbread with molasses for breakfast. Read a little Eric Schlosser under the shade tree for inspiration. We can have it our way and Burger King ain't got nothing to do with it.

READER FEEDBACK

We welcome your feedback on this and future issues.

WINTER 2001 ISSUE: HOUSING

Kentucky Housing Corporation Provides Housing Services

In response to the housing issue, Kentucky Housing Corporation sent a description of its Appalachian programs.

Since 1972, Kentucky Housing has offered low-interest mortgage loans, homeownership education and counseling, rental housing production financing and rental assistance. The Appalachian Housing Program serves Kentucky's 49 Appalachian counties, 40 of which are considered distressed because of their high unemployment and poverty rates.

Appalachian Housing Program Director Tom Carew said Kentucky Housing allocates site development grants and loans through funds provided by the Appalachian Regional Commission. Kentucky Housing staff also provides technical assistance to organizations seeking to serve Appalachia.

"We are continually reaching out to the lending community, affordable housing advocates and private and public home builders in Appalachia, encouraging them to provide low-cost housing for their residents," Carew explained. "We try to explain how...this can be profitable while being a public service and a positive social and economic benefit to the communities in question."

Kentucky Housing Chief Executive Officer F. Lynn Luallen points out that the organization strives to help all Kentuckians become viable candidates for homeownership. The 27 programs available to clients include the Yes You Can...Own a Home Program and Homeownership Counseling.

In an ongoing effort to address and overcome the obstacles to affordable housing production in Appalachia, Kentucky Housing will host the first Appalachian Housing Summit at the Mountain Arts Center in Prestonsburg during the summer of 2001. Representatives from the four central Appalachian states—Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia—will participate in the summit.

Habitat for Humanity Missing from Housing Issue

An e-mail from Brushy Fork Associate Joe T. Rowe pointed out one glaring omission from our winter 2001 issue on housing: Habitat for Humanity. Habitat has indeed done much important work in the region and deserves appropriate recognition.

Thanks for the reminder, Joe!

SPRING 2001 ISSUE: ENERGY

Measuring Amps and Volts: Different in a Car and a House

Associate Pete Peterson from Summers County, West Virginia, responded to the article "Electric Car Provides a Cleaner, Quieter Ride" that appeared in our spring 2001 issue. He pointed out the writer's error in saying the energy used by the car is similar to that used by a house. Pete wrote:

"It's a good energy issue, but with such a broad subject a few errors are bound to creep in....

Did you ever get a bill from the electric company based on the amps you used? Of course not. The bill is for an amount derived from the energy used (watts or kilowatts) times the time, giving you a figure in KWH, or kilowatt hours. Amps are just a measure of electrons passing a point, used to pick the size wire you need. Your home has

200 amp wiring capacity, probably calculated for about 240 volts at the entrance. The car, depending on the motor, is probably measuring at 24 or 12 volts. It would not be until the car meter reads 1000 amps or 2000 amps (depending on voltage) that it equals the house energy flow.

Beware also [of the] figure of 75% less pollution. I strongly doubt you could document that figure with our region's high ash/sulfur coal. Sorry!

It's an interesting time, with lots of backyard mechanics doing car conversions to natural gas, electricity, etc. Shades of the Model T. And soon, I hope, we'll be doing it in space. A wonderful time to be alive."

Thanks for the feedback, Pete!

East Kentucky Leadership Network Students Attend East Kentucky Leadership Conference



Bobby Garrit Murphy of Jackson County, KY, and Janis Cambell of Letcher County, KY (pictured above with Governor Paul Patton) were among the high school students who attended the East Kentucky Leadership Conference.

The young people attended sessions with regional leaders. Each student received a certificate of recognition to mark the completion of the East Kentucky Leadership Network's Youth Leadership Program.

Brushy Fork Receives Two Grants

In June, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation awarded Brushy Fork Institute \$45,000 to support work in West Virginia. The grant will fund the Leadership Development Program, distribution of *Mountain Promise* to West Virginia readers, Brushy Fork's work with the West Virginia Community Collaborative and other programs.

Based in Pittsburgh, the Benedum Foundation was established in 1944 by West Virginia natives Michael and Sarah Benedum as a memorial to their only child, Claude, who died while serving in the first World War. The Foundation awards grants in areas of education, health and human services, community development and the arts.

The Wayne and Ida Bowman Foundation awarded Brushy Fork \$12,000 to support leadership development work in the mountains. The Bowman Foundation, based in Louisville, KY, was founded by Mr. and Mrs. Bowman to help charities fulfill their missions and to help students with college expenses.

Brushy Fork is grateful to these funders.

Pawpaws (continued from page 6)

Pomper said a fruit and vegetable supplier to Wal-Mart contacted him about the availability of pawpaws, and Ocean Spray expressed interest in a drink blending pawpaws and cranberries. He noted that large-scale sales are held back by a lack of growers. For now, the pawpaw is a niche crop, sold mainly to farmers markets, restaurants and specialty stores.

In Kentucky, three commercial pawpaw orchards have been planted, but only one is mature enough to produce fruit. It takes about seven years for a pawpaw seedling to produce fruit, and about four years for a grafted tree. Once mature, a tree can produce up to 30 pounds of pawpaws for the late-summer or fall harvest. Nearly 300 trees can be planted per acre and each tree will remain productive for 20 years.

Pomper suggests the pawpaw could join vegetables, berries and grapes as an alternative crop for tobacco farmers, with orchards springing up on small plots once used for tobacco. However, farmers

shouldn't expect the same financial returns. "It's definitely not a replacement for tobacco, but pawpaws may be one of the dozen crops that will help alleviate that problem," Pomper said.

ANNUAL CAMPAIGN DONORS

Brushy Fork Institute would like to express our sincere appreciation to the following donors to our 2000 Annual Campaign:

John Cleveland	John Manchester
Doyle Gaines	Robert Menefee
Robert E. Hille	Tommy Mullins
Carol Lamm	Charollette and John Sweet
Paul Lovett	

THANK YOU!

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR 2001 LEADERSHIP CYCLE

Recruiting is underway for the 2001 cycle of the Brushy Fork Leadership Development Program, which begins on September 13-15, 2001. The following counties will participate:

**Floyd County, Kentucky
Powell County, Kentucky
Mingo County, West Virginia
Wood County, West Virginia**

A team of Berea College students, faculty and staff will also join the program.

To recommend a participant from one of the counties, please contact Van Gravitt at 859.985.3861 or e-mail him at van_gravitt@berea.edu.

Get an application online! You may download an application from Brushy Fork's web site at www.berea.edu/brushyfork.

Applications will be taken up until the workshop, and participants will be selected as space is available.

**Brushy Fork Institute
Berea College CPO 2164
Berea, KY 40404
859.985.3858
www.berea.edu/brushyfork**

27th Annual CELEBRATION OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC

**October 26-28, 2001
Berea College, Berea, Kentucky**

FEATURED PERFORMERS

Art Stamper
The Haywood County Ramblers
The Dowden Sisters
Sparky Rucker
The Last Old Man
Ed Cabell
Ginny Hawker
Tricia Kilby and Donavon Cain
Ora Watson, Mary Greene, and
Cecil Geganis

**Symposium: Alan Jabbour
"Fiddle Tunes of the
Old Frontier"**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

LORI BRISCOE, APPALACHIAN CENTER
BEREA COLLEGE, BERE A, KY 40404
859.985.3140 LORI_BRISCOE@BEREA.EDU

**Nonprofit Org.
Third Class
U.S. Postage
PAID
Berea, KY
40403
Permit #19**



Printed on recycled paper