



The Friends of Mountwood Park Newsletter

SPRING 2025 Issue Vol. 16, No. 2

News Flash: We want to congratulate Dina Braniff on her election to secretary for Friends. We are fortunate to have Dina as a member.

Officers of The Friends of Mountwood Park

Peggy Squires, President
Rose Russell, Vice President
Dina Braniff, Secretary
Mike Naylor, Treasurer

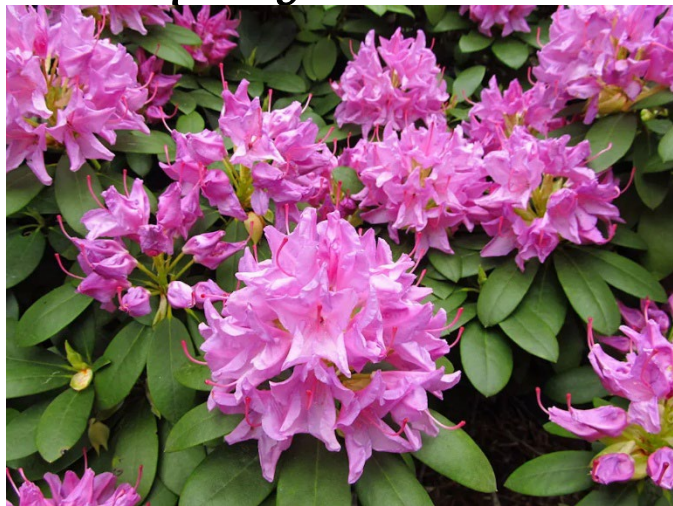
Our mailing address is:
FRIENDS OF MOUNTWOOD PARK
PO BOX 2094
PARKERSBURG, WV 26102
You can contact Mountwood Park by
calling (304) 679-3611.

Friends usually meet the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm at the Stiles Administration Building at Mountwood Park. If you are unsure about the time and place, please check our Facebook page. If you are a member and if we have your current email address, you should receive a meeting notice. If you have any questions, please call or text Peggy Squires at 304-588-9148.

“Some old fashion things like fresh air and sunshine are hard to beat.”

Laura Ingalls Wilder

Hello Spring!



“Flowers don’t worry about how they’re going to bloom. They just open up and turn toward the light and that makes them beautiful.”

Jim Carrey

Letter From the President

Spring is here and we are getting ready for our Easter Egg Hunt that will be held April 19, at 11:00 am at Mountwood Park. Children thru age 12 are eligible to participate. We will have five age groups, hundreds of eggs, and 25 Easter

baskets as prizes. Slips, five for each age group, will be in 25 eggs to designate the basket winners. There is no charge for the event. Anyone who wishes to donate toward this event, please contact the Park or a Friends member.

We have received money from the Little Kanawha RC & D to help us with Adventure Camp. We appreciate their support and help. The date of the camp will be announced soon. This is for children 9–12-year-olds. This event gives your child the opportunity to become acquainted with nature and the outdoors.

The Park also has a fishing Derby for the children. Come join us at the Park and help create memories and have fun outdoors.

Do not forget to visit the Volcano Museum at Mountwood where you will discover new displays. Our history committee and the Park have been working on the new addition and upgrades with wonderful results.

Our Friends meetings are the second Thursday of each month at the Park or in Parkersburg at a restaurant. For more information, prior to the meeting date, check our website at <https://friendsofmountwoodpark.com>. Hope to see you there.

Peggy Squires, President

"It was one of those March days when the sun shines bright and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade."

Charles Dickens

Memorial Bricks for Sale

By Carolyn Naylor

Friends of Mountwood Park are doing memorial bricks, a special way to honor



or remember your pets. We plan to use the bricks to pave the dog park entrance, creating an attractive path to the benches.

The bricks are inexpensive and will be a permanent memorial. Your brick will honor your pet and beautify the entrance at the dog park. Each brick can be customized and will be added as they are sold. More of the completed bricks are shown in the photo below.



For more information, go to our website: <https://FriendsOfMountWoodPark.com> and click on CONTACT.

“As you get older, three things happen. The first is your memory goes, and I can’t remember the other two.” Norman Wisdom

Volunteers Make Things Happen **By Carolyn Naylor**

You have probably heard quotes about what a difference volunteers make and how they work for nothing but are priceless. As evidenced by the information below, these quotes are true.

At the February 2025 Friends meeting, it was agreed that there was a need for a cabinet to display historical Volcano documents. A couple days later, Dina Braniff (secretary and volunteer), notified the museum committee members that she had located an Antique Topographical Map Drawer Unit she was

sure it would fit our needs. She sent a photo and said it weighed 300 pounds and was 60” tall X 58” wide and 19” deep. We were all excited and told her it was perfect for our needs and to make the purchase.

Then came the surprise--it was in South Carolina. We were still excited but wondered how would get it to West Virginia. Not to worry! Dina called the seller to tell him we were interested in his cabinet but what options did we have to get it to the Park. Another problem solved when he said we could have it shipped.

Next, we were concerned about getting it moved inside the museum once it was delivered. We were fortunate to have Park Director Jeremy Cross, Bill Edwards, Maintenance Supervisor, and employee Loren Sillaman standing by listening to our concerns. They said we were not to worry because they would be responsible for moving it inside.



(L to R) Bill Edwards, Loren Sillaman, and Jeremy Cross

You probably noticed from the above picture that little signs had been glued on the front of the drawers. This meant our work was not finished. We did not need to worry because three of our members and active volunteers, Rose Russell, Dina Braniff, and Bill Butler said they would try to remove the glue.



Bill Butler



Rose Russell



Front to Back) Dina, Loren, and Mike Naylor

They came to the museum carrying several items, including a hair dryer, ready to go to work. Like volunteers tend to do, they also brought their smiles.

The next picture shows what they were able to accomplish. No more glue!



The only thing left to do is some work on the top. Mike Naylor, Friends treasurer and the tallest member, volunteered to take this task on.

Our volunteers really are priceless! They had other things they could have been doing. Because they care about the Volcano museum and keeping the history of Volcano alive, they made the decision to come to the Park to work on the cabinet. They did all this for free!

“Believe you can and you are half way there.”

Theodore Roosevelt

My Bucket List for Volcano

By Mike Naylor

For nearly 20 years, I have been intrigued by Volcano, West Virginia. It has not always been fun, or rewarding, but I never gave up. Friendships with Brownie Amick, Linwood Lowden, Steve Parker and Cheslyn Jonas boosted my morale when darkness hovered.

My wife Carolyn, a transplanted “Buckeye,” moved from being a passive observer to a very active participant in the quest to stitch together the story of this little town that had passed into obscurity.

Three things that I dreamed of achieving were: creating a Volcano video, having a Volcano diorama, and finding the elusive hand-drawn map of Volcano.

A video catches the attention of the public more so than a picture or a document. Last year Augustine McKenna of the Greater Parkersburg CVB did an excellent job creating a video for us. I believe Ken Burns would appreciate her work.

Something we talked about excitedly was getting a hand-drawn map we had heard existed. We realized that we were just “blowing smoke” because we did not know where it was.

We all were in for a wonderful surprise. Just one week before Volcano Days last year, Jeremy Cross received a call from Michael Sponhour of Cleveland, Ohio to ask if the Park wanted a hand-drawn map his family had. They wanted to donate it to the museum. It was delivered and hung in the museum on the first day of Volcano Days.

We tried to get my next dream off the ground about 10 years ago, but the idea fizzled. However, thanks to the generosity of Antero Corporation this dream will become a reality. We are witnessing the construction of a Volcano diorama by Jimmie Bee and Doug Unsold.

Be sure to visit Mountwood Park because wonderful things are happening and you do not want to miss out.

"The only way to do great work is to love what you do."
Steve Jobs

John L. Showalter, Volcano Oil Producer

By Carolyn Naylor

John Lineweaver Showalter, born in Harrisburg, Virginia in 1845, was an oil producer in Volcano.

His wife Alice (Lavelle) Showalter was born in Mayo County, Ireland. John and Alice had six children, all born in Volcano. Their children were:

1. **William Lee Showalter**, born on February 24, 1873. He was 55 years old when he died at Parkersburg in November 1928. At the time of his death, he was living at 1048-1/2 Market Street in Parkersburg;
2. **Mary Ellen Showalter** was born on June 3, 1874. She was 50 years old when she died of a heart attack at her home at 636 Liberty Street.
3. **John Adam Showalter**, was born on August 18, 1876. He was a 76-year-old widower when he died at St. Joseph's Hospital in June 1953. He made his home at 1009 – 7th Street;
4. **Rosa A. Showalter** was born about 1879;
5. **James Franklin Showalter**, born in July 1882. Like his father, he made his living as an oil producer.

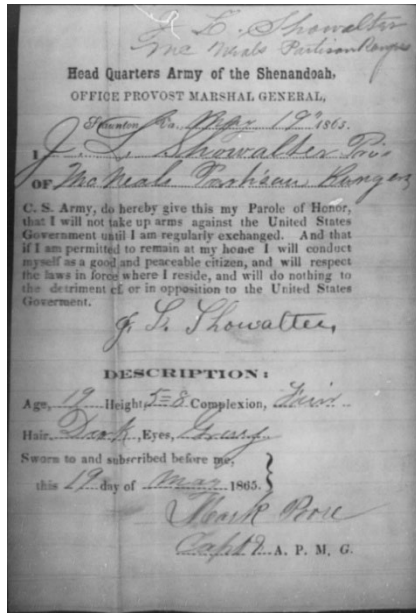
He was only 60 years old when he died of a heart attack on May 5, 1942 at his 315 – 10th Street home. James was buried at Mt. Carmel Cemetery, and

6. **Sophia Grace Showalter**, born May 15, 1886.

John Lineweaver Showalter enlisted in the Confederate Army. He was a member of the famous McNeill's Rangers. According to Wikipedia, McNeill's Rangers was an independent military force commissioned by the Confederate Congress. It was a guerilla force that operated in the western counties of Virginia and West Virginia.

Parkersburg Sentinel, June 2, 1908

"Mr. Showalter was one of 11 men from the Rangers who bravely rode into Cumberland and captured Generals Crook and Kelly and took them to the mountains. They accomplished this while Cumberland and the adjacent territory was teeming with several thousand Federal soldiers. It was a memorable event in the War but was only one of the exciting episodes in which the Rangers and John took part."



Parkersburg Sentinel, June 2, 1908
LATE J. L. SHOWALTER WAS
HERO OF ROMANTIC
ADVENTURE DURING THE WAR

"It is not generally known that John L. Showalter, whose death occurred a few days ago at his home in Volcano, figured in one of the most daring and exciting episodes during the civil war.

Mr. Showalter and one of his brothers, both very young, enlisted into service with the Confederate States of America. They were members of the famous McNeill's Rangers."

Obituary of John Lineweaver Showalter (*Confederate Veteran Magazine, November 1908*)

"John Lineweaver Showalter died on May 28, 1908, at his home, at Volcano, W. Va. of valvular heart trouble after several weeks' illness. The deceased was a gallant Confederate soldier, who at an early age enlisted in McNeill's' Partisan

Rangers, and participated in many of the noted exploits of that famous organization. He was born near Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, Va., December 8, 1845. A widow and six children, together with a host of admiring friends, mourn their loss".

(What is valvular heart disease?

Valvular heart disease is when any valve in the heart has damage or is diseased.)

Parkersburg Sentinel, May 29, 1908
THE FUNERAL OF J. L.
SHOWALTER

"The death of J. L. Showalter, brief mention of which was made in Thursday's Sentinel, was learned with deep regret by the many friends of the family in this city. Mr. Showalter had been a resident of Volcano for forty years and had been prominently identified with the oil interests of that section in all the years he resided there, both as a contractor and a producer. He was an upright and remarkable citizen, respected by all who knew him.

Mr. Showalter is survived by his wife and the following children, John, William and Frank Showalter, Mrs. Calvin Ayers of Cairo and Misses Mary and Grace Showalter, all of whom are well known in this city and have the sympathy of their many friends in their bereavement. James Showalter of this city and W. B. Showalter of Wheeling are brothers of the deceased.

The funeral will occur on Saturday morning at 10:30 o'clock and the services will be conducted at Eatons. Quite a number of the friends in the city will attend the funeral."

I really wish I had a photograph of Mr. Showalter and his family to share with you. Unfortunately, we have none. If you can help us with this situation, please let us know.

Do Things that Make You Forget to Look at Your Phone.

Mountwood Park Events

April 19

Mountwood Park Easter Egg Hunt
(Friends of Mountwood Park)
11 am at Carson Station Shelter

April 27

Challenge at Mountwood Bike Race
(RVMB) -- Carson Station Shelter
9 am – 3 pm

May 3

Volcano Museum Opens
Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm -4 pm

May 17

Moon Over Mountwood Fishing Festival
12 noon – 8 pm

Adventure Camp (Friends of Mountwood Park) – Date to be Announced

For questions, contact Peggy Squires at 304-588-9148.

September 14

Woof Fest (Friends of Mountwood Park)

Mountwood Marina

12 noon – 4 pm

For questions, contact Peggy Squires at 304-588-9148.

September 20

Mountwood 10-Mile Challenge Trail Race

September 26 -28

Volcano Days

Mountwood Park Meetings

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Wood County Parks and Recreation

Board (Mountwood Park) meet on the 3rd Monday of each month, 6 pm, at the Stiles Administration Building.

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Contributors: Carolyn Naylor, Mike Naylor, and Peggy Squires

Proof Reader: Rose Russell

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