



The Friends of Mountwood Park Newsletter

P O Box 2094, Parkersburg, WV 26102
Spring 2026 Issue Vol. 17, No. 2

Spring has Sprung



Photo taken by Bill Edwards.

“There is nothing as easy as denouncing. It don't take much to see that something is wrong, but it does take some eyesight to see what will put it right again.”

Will Rogers

2026 Schedule of Events

- APR 4
Easter Egg Hunt
11am, Carson Station
- MAY 2
Volcano Museum Open
- MAY 16
Youth Fishing Derby
- JULY 20-24
Adventure Camp
- SEPT 13
Woof Fest
- SEPT 25-27
Volcano Days

If you have any questions, you can contact Mountwood Park by calling (304) 679-3611. If you wish to contact Friends, visit us on Facebook.

Officers of The Friends of Mountwood Park

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



Deer at Mountwood Park.
Photo taken by Bob Brandjes.

Letter From the President

With spring just around the corner, we are preparing for a busy year. First up will be our Easter Egg Hunt on April 4, We will fill eggs this week at our meeting at the Park at 6:00. Come join us. It is fun to talk and put candy in the eggs. The more the merrier.

Our calendar so far is the Easter Egg Hunt on April 4, the Fishing Derby on May 16, then, Adventure Camp, July 20-24, and Woof fest on September 13. The big event will be Volcano Days on September 25, 26, and 27. Come help us with our events and bring your ideas for other things we can do at the Park.

The museum soon will be open on the weekends and we will need help. Think about volunteering a few hours a month to help us keep it staffed.

Hope to see you at the Park! It is a beautiful peaceful and stress-free place to visit.

Peggy Squires.



Ducks taking a break at Mountwood.
Photo by Bill Edwards.

Our Native Plants are Under Threat!

By Dawn Sturdevant

Spring is almost here! Bringing Ephemerals! Fleeting flowers like Spring Beauties, Dutchman's Breeches, Mayapples, Trillium, Bloodroot, and Larkspur. Ephemerals are vital to pollinators, because they arrive just as the pollinators are emerging from winter, needing the nutrition they provide to thrive before other plants have a chance to grow.

How detrimental would it be if ephemerals disappeared? Sadly, that is a real threat as our native plants are under attack. There are now over 700 invasive plants in West Virginia, cheating out our native species, putting them at a disadvantage, being crowded out by non-native competitors such as Garlic Mustard, Crown Vetch, and Japanese Honeysuckle that don't have natural coverpredators so they rapidly reproduce and grow unchecked robbing vital light, water, nutrients, and space from the

native plants disrupting the native ecosystem and biodiversity.

Invasive species, also known as biological pollution, contribute to climate change as well, because their leaves, seeds, and/or roots introduce chemicals that greatly impact the entire ecosystem, and rob native species of their rightful resources.

We humans are the main culprits of bringing these invaders in, often intentionally, planting in our own lawns and gardens. Unfortunately, they don't stay in our yards. But you can help the natives! Instead of a butterfly bush or



Butterfly Bush

Rose of Sharon, consider native plants like American Beautyberry, Spicebush, and Red Osier Dogwood. You will bring more native birds, butterflies, bees and other pollinators using these plants versus non-natives. Ask your garden store to provide native alternatives. There are numerous on-line nurseries who offer live native plants and seeds.

For more information check out West Virginia's Department of Natural Resources, or the US Forest Service.

Note From Editor: There are volunteer workdays at the Park focusing on the removal of invasive species. The workdays are organized by Reinhard Eisenmann. If you are interested in helping with the removal of these species so our native plants and wildlife flourish, please call Reinhard at 304-483-1554.

*"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."
Thomas Edison*



**Fawn at Mountwood.
Photo by Bill Butler.**

Ever Catch Yourself Complaining There is Nothing to do?

By Carolyn Naylor

Do you, your friends and family ever complain there is nothing to do? If you answered yes, you need to visit Mountwood Park. The Park really does have something for everybody.

If you are a dog owner, Mountwood Park is very pet friendly. Dogs are allowed on the trails, in campgrounds, and the picnic areas when on a nice 10-foot lease.



Tiger at *Paws to Play* after a game of chase the ball.

Although it is exhausting for Tiger, he knows it is

important for him to take his owner out for some exercise. Photo taken by Bob Brandjes.

As you continue reading you might be surprised by all the activities available at the Park for you and your friends to enjoy.

Picnicking – Come out with your friends and family for a picnic. There are charcoal grills and picnic tables throughout the Park. You can rent a shelter or you might be able to find an empty table if you decided to picnic on impulse. There is plenty of space for children to run and play. Near the shelters you will find walking trails and biking trails. To rent a shelter call the Park at 304-679-3611.

Dog Park – Your dog will enjoy our beautiful dog park (*Paws to Play*) that is open all year. *Paws to Play* is 22,000 square feet with two separate sections—

one for small dogs and one for large dogs. It also has a double-gated entry and is surrounded by a 6-foot fence, trees for shade, and benches for you to relax.

During the summer, water is available for the dogs at the special “Fire Hydrant” watering station. If you get thirsty, don’t



worry because a water fountain is available for your use to.

There is no fee to use the dog park but a canister is by the gate if you wish to make a donation. All donations are used to help with maintenance of the dog park.

Hiking – Whether you are an enthusiastic or casual hiker, or a trail runner, Mountwood offers you several choices for a daytrip. Its standard-built trail system is open year-round and is spread out across 2,000 acres.

The trails pass through eastern hardwood forest and open areas. The stacked-loop layout of the trails allows you to choose routes from less than a mile to the entire trail, nearly 30-miles. Excellent signage makes navigating easy.

The Park occupies land that was once part of the 1800s oil-boom town of Volcano and its oil fields. On your hike, you might see an ancient pump house and agricultural machinery, old oil-storage tanks, and handcut sandstone foundations among the shaded groves.

Every season brings change in the plant and animal life in the Park. The Park will provide you solitude in a setting of natural beauty.



Artifact Found Near a Trail.
Photo by Bill Edwards.

Nature Trail – The Park currently has one nature trail that is located past the handicapped fishing dock and is part of the Taitt Trail. The trail is 0.4 miles long. Marked with interpretive signs, you can learn about the trees, plants, and animals of the area. If you want to take a break during your walk, rest on one of the trail benches and enjoy the view. At the end of the Nature Trail, you can intersect with the Mansion Trail and proceed to the Stiles Mansion site.

“Trees are our closet relatives. What trees exhale, we inhale; what we exhale, they inhale. They are half our respiratory system.”

Jaggi Vasudev, author



A Big, but Gentle and Beautiful, Black Rat Snake. Photo by Bill Butler.

Biking – The River Valley Mountain Bike Association has worked tirelessly to make the Park’s almost 30-mile hike/bike singletrack network one of the eastern United States’ most regarded and most ridden single mountain bike destinations. The trails are open year round,

The trails were meticulously designed, constructed, and are maintained by the West Virginia Mountain Bike Association.

Mountwood is home to one of the longest-running and best-attended races in the West Virginia Mountain Bike Association (www.wvmba.com) points race, the Challenge at Mountwood. Each spring, this race draws hundreds of racers from several states to test their early-season fitness on trails that rip and flow through valleys, ravines, and ridge tops over the Parks’ 50-acre lake.

If you are a hiker and worried about the bikers, you are worrying for nothing. When I have been hiking, the bikers have always been friendly and sometimes even stopped to chat.



**A Deer Resting on a hot day.
Photo by Bill Butler.**

Birdwatching – A wide variety of birds inhabit the Park, with its deep forest, hillsides, cleared meadows, and wetlands.



Blue Heron. Photo by Bill Butler.

The Mountwood Bird Club meets most Thursday mornings at 8 am at birding hot spots. For their full schedule, visit their website at:

www.brooksbirdclub.org/mountwood-birdclub.html.

Whether you are a beginner or experienced birdwatcher, you will receive a warm welcome.



**Eagle on Mountwood Lake.
Photo by Bill Edwards.**

Camping – Mountwood Family Campground offers 78 campsites suitable for tents, trailers, and recreational vehicles. The campground has 14 full hookup sites and 64 sites with electricity/water. Each site has a picnic table and fire ring.

Multiple bathhouses are located throughout the campground offering hot showers and clean restrooms. Sites are available on a daily or weekly basis. Season is from April 1 through October 31.



For more information call the campground host at 304- 588-7613 or the Park office at 304- 769- 3611.

Fishing & Boating – Mountwood Park is a great place to bring the family fishing.



Since fishing is not just a warm weather sport, you can fish year-round.

In the picture below is Josh Murray heading out across the Park lake for some ice fishing.



Photo taken by Josh's father Gary Murray.

The 50-acre lake is stocked with trout during the winter months by the Division of Natural Resources (DNR). The lake

also has catfish, large-mouth bass, crappie, carp, sun fish, baitfish, muskie, and crayfish.



Photo taken by Josh Murray.

A West Virginia fishing license is required and a trout stamp will be necessary for trout fishing.



Blue Heron on the frozen Lake. Photo taken by Josh Murray.

I heard the fishermen had to stay alert or they would lose their catch to the heron. It was not ashamed to obtain lunch by thievery.



Here is another picture of our Blue Heron on the lake. Photo taken by Josh Murray.

Mountwood Concession Stand – If you find yourself getting hungry, stop by the Marina Concession Stand for a tasty treat. They also have hamburgers and hot dogs cooked on a gas grill. This is also the place to rent a kayak or canoe.

ATV Park – Thousands of riders have



come from all around the state and country to ride the ATV trails through the scenic hills of

West Virginia.

The trails are located on Park property on the north side of US Route 50, adjacent to the campground. All 20-miles of trails are marked, not only for direction, but for degree of difficulty.

There is a large overlook and rest area on one of the ridges that offers a spectacular

view. This tract of land is approximately 600 acres and is set away from the main area of the Park.

Volcano Museum – Visit the Park's Volcano Museum where volunteers are available to share the rich history of Volcano, an oil boom town. It is open May 1 thru October 31 on Saturday and Sunday. It is free to the public but donations are always appreciated. Last year there were 1,923 visitors to the museum.



Lake House – Mountwood Park has a beautiful lakeside house with two units available for lodging. This pristine lakeside house is located along the shore of the Lake.

Each unit has one

bedroom with a queen size bed. Linens



and blankets are provided. The living room has a couch and two rocking chairs. Each unit also has a kitchen, with modern appliances, that is equipped with cooking utensils and dishes. Each unit has a bath with built in shower/tub units.

If you are interested in renting a unit or have any questions, contact the Park at 304-679-3611.

Disc Golf – Come try your luck at the Park’s beautiful 18-hole disc golf course. The course is designed around the tree lines and meadows at Mountwood. Test your skills with a couple rounds with friends. You can play for free, but you need to bring your own discs.

Primitive Cabins – If you have ever wanted to go camping but not in a tent, then try one of the Park’s Primitive Cabins located in the



Mountwood Family Campground. Each cabin comes equipped with electric, two sets of bunk beds, ceiling fan/light, and a table with four chairs. Each cabin has a fire ring and a charcoal grill. The cabins are located near the bathhouse and ATV trail head. For more information, please contact the Park at 304-679-3611.

Archery Range – Mountwood Park’s Archery Range is open seven days a week during daylight hours. The range is free of charge and is open to all ages and skill levels. Guests under the age of 18 will need to be accompanied by an adult 21 years of age or older.



Some of its’ features are a concrete shooting pad with benches and tables for your equipment, and 10, 20, 30, and 40-yard targets. There are crossbow benches at the 20 and 40 yards but you will need to bring your own chair. Only field tips are permitted on the range.

Hope you visit Mountwood Park soon and make new memories that will last a lifetime.

“If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will escape a hundred days of sorrow.” Chinese Proverb

“Whatever is begun in anger, ends in shame.”

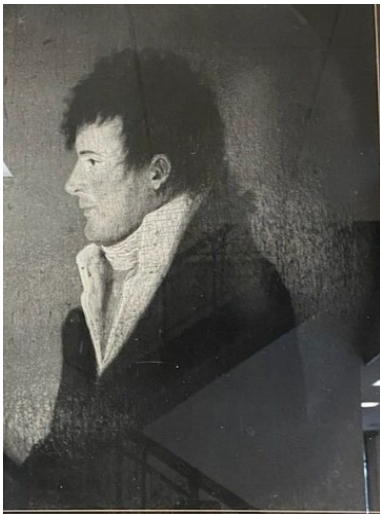
Benjamin Franklin

We want to thank Rick Modesitt for sharing information concerning Virginia Governor James Wood, Jr., the man Wood County was named for. Rick obtained a copy of the **only** known photo of Governor Wood from the Virginia Division of History. Rick presented framed copies to the Wood County Commission, the Oil & Gas Museum, and the Blennerhassett Museum.

Colonel James Wood, Jr.

By Rick Modesitt

Colonel James Wood, Jr. was born in Frederick County, Virginia on January 28, 1741. His father James Wood Sr. was the founder of Winchester, Virginia and held important county military and judicial positions and fought with George Washington in the Ohio River area in 1754.



James Wood, Jr. followed in the footsteps of his distinguished father and in February 1760 was appointed Deputy Clerk of the County Court and elected Clerk of the Vestry of Frederick Parish and from 1766 to 1775 he was the county representative to the Virginia House of Burgesses. During this time, he married Jane Moncure, but the marriage bore no children. He was commissioned a Captain of Virginia Troops by Lord Dunmore in 1774 and fought in the successful Battle of Point Pleasant in the Ohio Valley which led to peace with the Indians.

In 1776 James Wood, Jr. was appointed Lieutenant Colonel of Frederick County Militia and in February 1777 he was appointed Commander (Colonel) of the 12th Virginia Continental Line which moved north to join George Washington in the spring. He and his men endured some of the heaviest fighting at the Battles of Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth, and Fort Mifflin. He was personally commended by General George Washington for his bravery, a rare accolade from the American Commander-In-Chief. Following further combat along the New Jersey shore, Colonel Wood, thinking the British Carlisle Commission might bring an end to the war, applied to resign his commission, which was rejected by General Washington who viewed Wood too valuable and gallant an officer to lose. The Continental Army was reorganized in late 1778 and he was placed in command of the 8th Virginia Regiment, which held remnants of the 12th Virginia Regiment.

During November and December 1779, the 3,500+ British and German prisoners of war captured at the Battle of Saratoga in October 1777, were moved from Cambridge, Massachusetts down through Connecticut and Pennsylvania to Albemarle, Virginia on the outskirts of Charlottesville. Known as the Convention Army these prisoners presented a huge security and logistical challenge for Colonel Wood who was named Commissary (Quartermaster) and then Commander of these POWs. Despite severe resource shortages Colonel Wood managed to treat these enemy soldiers with compassion and dignity.

In February 1781 Colonel Wood was ordered to move the POWs from Albemarle on short notice to Winchester, Virginia by the Governor of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson, because of the possibility that Brigadier General Benedict Arnold, attacking up the James River, and General Cornwallis, moving into southern Virginia, might liberate the Convention Army POWs. The POWs spent four months in Winchester before being divided into smaller groups and spread throughout the towns of the area. He continued in that capacity until it was dissolved in January 1783, when he was promoted a brigadier of state troops.

After the War, Wood supported the Federal Constitution and as a member of Virginia's Electoral College cast his vote for General Washington as our Nation's first president. Having served as a member of the Executive Council of Virginia since 1784 he was elected Governor of Virginia and served from 1796 to 1799 and served as the President of the Society of Cincinnati from 1802 until his death in 1813. He was buried with full military honors in Richmond in St. John's churchyard.

Colonel James Wood II distinguished himself by valor in battle, honor, and integrity in managing the largest group of enemy prisoners held by the Americans, and excellence and dedication in serving the citizens of Virginia. We the members of the Winchester Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution are humbled and honored to have him as our chapter namesake.

This Biography was edited by Compatriot Paul Chase, a member in good standing of the Colonel James Wood II Chapter.



This vintage post card was given to the Volcano museum by Tina Rager. It was originally sent to Lottie Lee. Lottie and her husband

Marion's home had formerly been the rectory for the Catholic church at Volcano.

Friends of Mountwood Park

Meetings are usually the 2nd Thursday of each month at 1 pm at the Stiles Administration Building. 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 or cell phone number, you should receive a meeting notice. If you have any questions, call Peggy Squires at 304-588-9148.

"Don't worry about the world ending today. It's already tomorrow in Australia."

Charles Schultz, cartoonist

Editor: Carolyn Naylor
Contributors: Rick Modesitt, Carolyn Naylor, and Peggy Squires, and Dawn Sturdevant,
Proof Reader: Rose Russell

Wildlife photographs were provided by Bob Brandjes, Bill Butler, Bill Edwards, Gary Murray, and Josh Murray. Thank you!



**Fawn at Mountwood.
Photograph taken by Bill Butler.**

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With Your Friends.**