



Newsletter

The Friends of Mountwood Park
P.O. Box 2094, Parkersburg, WV 26102

Summer 2026 Issue Vol. 17, No. 3

Note: This newsletter contains a memorial to Steve Parker and the obituary for Connie Marie Stiles, great-great-granddaughter of William Cooper Stiles, Jr.

It's Summer Time!



Celebrate America's 250th Anniversary of Freedom!

“The paradox of democracy is that its stability is born of its openness to upheaval through elections, legislation, and social action. Disruption is built into the fabric of democracy.”

Condolezza Rice, former Secretary of State

Letter from the President

It is time to start our summer events for 026 We have Adventure Camp beginning on July 20th through the 24th. This event gives children (9 through 12) the opportunity to spend some time each morning outdoors involved in a variety of activities. We still have some openings available but you should sign your child up to attend as soon as possible. The event is limited to 20 campers.

Next up will be our Pageant and Woof Fest festival on September 13. More details will be provided later.

Then Volcano Days on September 25, 26, and 27. Be sure to visit the vendors and the museum. You won't want to miss seeing the diorama of Volcano at the museum.

If you are interested in volunteering at the museum, please contact Mike Naylor. Please contact me if you are interested in helping with other events.

Our meetings are the 2nd Thursday of each month. Check our website for the times since the times may vary.

Have a great summer and hope to see you at Mountwood Park!!

Peggy Squires, President

2026 Schedule of Events

JUNE 13

Community Collection Event
8 am until noon

JULY 20-24

Adventure Camp

SEPT 13

Woof Fest

SEPT 19

Mountwood 10-mile Challenge
Trail Race

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.

“When I figured out how to use my grill, it was quite a moment. I discovered that summer is quite a different experience when you know how to grill.”

Taylor Swift

Officers of The Friends of Mountwood Park

Peggy Squires, President

Rose Russell, Vice President

Dina Braniff, Secretary

Mike Naylor, Treasurer

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.

“If you’re not barefoot, then you’re overdressed.”

Unknown

Volcano School

Submitted By Carolyn Naylor

Note: The information below is from a report that appeared in the Volcano Lubricator on November 11, 1873. The information is from the Volcano school principal, John W. Brabham. In 1873, the style of writing was different than today. Therefore, I have taken it upon myself to make a few changes to make it easier to read.

Report of Volcano schools in Rooms No. 1 and 2 for month ending November 4, 1873.

Room No. 1: Males enrolled 20; females, 29. Total enrolled 49. Average daily attendance of males 15; females 20. Total average 35.

Room No. 2: Males enrolled 48; females 45. Total enrollment 93. Average daily attendance of males 27; females 28. Total average 55.

Total enrollment in: 142.

To the pupils generally we say, let your motto be onward and upward, and to these of Room No. 1, I say that as your teacher, thank you for the respect you have shown me since I came among you. I feel a deep interest in the future welfare of every one of you. My intentions are, God being my helper, to do all that lies in my power for the advancement of every single one of you but I don't want you to think that I can do it all.

You are all aware that the struggle in which we are engaged is one that requires all efforts, both of time and talent. We are all destined to fill some place in society and in this enlightened age of the world, it is necessary for us to keep up with the times.

Our forefathers have filled important positions in State and society. Therefore, let us aspire to be men greater than our forefathers were. If there is a way, then let me hear you say, by your actions, that you are determined to do all in your power for the advancement of yourselves, each and every one of you,

and I will do all in my power to assist you, I can learn you nothing but I will do my best to teach you.

Respectfully your teacher,
John W. Brabham, Principal

"In summer, my favorite outdoor activity is going back inside."

Unknown

Adventure Camp

By Dina Braniff

Registration is open for the Friends of Mountwood Park Adventure Camp 2026! Camp is July 20-24 from 9 AM-12 PM. Only 20 spots are available at the cost of and the cost is \$50.00 for the week.

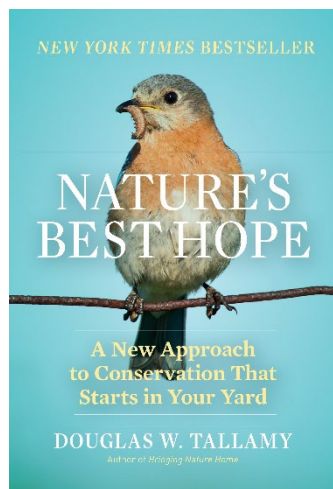
The Camp is for children 9 -13 years of age. They must be 9 by December 31, 2026, and not to have their 14th birthday before July 31, 2026. Camp will be held rain or shine and is ideal for children who love spending time outside and having fun.

Adventure Camp gives participants a new outdoor experience each day. Some of the activities are:

- Building a bird feeder with the guidance of Bob Zellny.
- Tyler County Search and Rescue will hold demonstrations showing the skills dogs possess to find lost humans.

- The Appalachian Herpetological Society will discuss reptiles and amphibians as well as leading searches to find them.
- Fishing is always a favorite camp activity.
- Campers will also study entomology, bees, butterflies and pollinators.
- The Mountain State Sportsmen’s Association will lead campers in Archery exercises.
- They will also learn about conservation and showing respect for our natural resources while having outdoor fun!

Each camper will be given the New York Times Bestseller book “Nature’s Best Hope” by author Douglas W. Tallamy.



Registration Forms for Adventure Camp 2026 are available on the Friends of Mountwood Park website: friendsofmountwoodpark.com/events.

If you prefer, you can get a form at the Mountwood Park Administration Office or at the Volcano Museum at Mountwood Park.

Please complete and return the registration form, along with your \$50 check made payable to The Friends of Mountwood Park, to:

The Friends of Mountwood Park
P.O. Box 2094
Parkersburg, WV 26102

“It’s a sure sign of summer if the chair gets up when you do.”

Walter Winchell

Visitors to Museum

By Carolyn Naylor



We were pleased to have Linwood Lowden and his daughter Susannah stop by the museum along with their Maine relatives. It is always a pleasure to visit with Linwood because he is so knowledgeable about Volcano and its’ citizens.

Linwood is the author of the book *White Oak, West Virginia Alias Volcano*. He and his daughter are members of Friends and big supporters of the Volcano museum.

“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.”

Albert Einstein

Steve Parker, Silent Partner RIP **By Mike Naylor**

Steve Parker a major contributor to the success of the Volcano Museum has passed away.

I have known Steve for 19+ years and consider him to be one of the nicest and sharpest people I have ever known – a true friend!

Ironically, I have only had about five face-to-face conversations with Steve as most of our communications have been via telephone. Steve’s diligent research at the WVU Regional Library produced results exceeding my wildest dreams.

I received regular packages from Steve and it was like finding buried treasure; except I didn’t have to dig for it!

I first met Steve and his mother, Lucy, at Mountwood Park in 2007. Lucy lived at Volcano and told the story of going to a party at Thornhill as a young girl.

I cannot include a picture of Steve, so to honor him, I decided to post a picture of his parents at Thornhill.



James and Lucy Parker

“Many public-school children seem to know only two dates—1492 and 4th of July; and as a rule, they don’t know what happened on either occasion.”

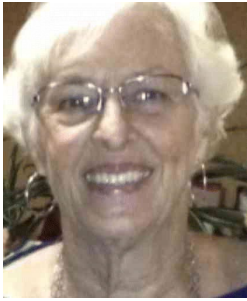
Mark Twain.

Constance (Connie) Stiles

We were sorry to hear of the passing of Connie Stiles, the great-great-

granddaughter of William Cooper Stiles, Jr., the father of Volcano. Below is Connie's obituary.

Constance (Connie) Marie Stiles, born February 9, 1944, in Parkersburg, West Virginia, passed away peacefully on March 20, 2026, in Naples, Florida. She was the daughter of the late Albert Magill Stiles and Helen Marie Showalter.



Connie is survived by her loving sister, Anne Stiles, and her brother, Albert Stiles. She was a devoted mother to her son, Tucker Taylor, her daughter, Tammy Chambers, and a proud grandmother to Carson and Chelsey Chambers.

As a passionate educator, Connie graduated from Parkersburg High School in 1962. She went on to earn her bachelor's degree from Marshall University in 1966, followed by a Master's degree in Educational Leadership in 1970. Her commitment to education shaped a meaningful career spanning many years, during which she served as both a teacher and an assistant principal.

Upon retirement she moved to Naples, Florida to help raise her grandchildren, and to volunteer at local schools, which brought her immense joy.

Connie will be remembered for her dedication to education and her deep love for her family. Her influence extended far beyond the classroom, leaving a lasting impression on colleagues, students, and all who knew her.

“What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal.”

Albert Pine

2026 Challenge at Mountwood

By Vince Nedeff

The 2026 Challenge at Mountwood was a tremendous success, drawing riders from across the region for one of West Virginia's premier mountain biking events.

On April 26, 2026, 146 racers from West Virginia, Ohio, Maryland, and Pennsylvania converged on Mountwood Park for the 31st annual Challenge at Mountwood. The event remains the largest cross-country mountain bike race in the state and serves as the crown jewel of the West Virginia Mountain Bike Association (WVMBA) cross-country race series.

This year also marked the return of the dual-points format, allowing racers to earn standings points in both the WVMBA series and the Ohio Mountain Bike Championship (OMBC). Known for its demanding yet rewarding course, the Challenge continues to attract riders

seeking one of the region's most unique racing experiences.

A highlight of the Cat 1 Pro/Expert course is the spectacular Boot Bridge Trail, a black-diamond section that winds twice through the rugged watershed surrounding the lake. Featuring massive rock formations, technical terrain, and cave-like overhangs, the trail offers a one-of-a-kind challenge rarely found elsewhere in Appalachian racing.

As always, the volunteer trail stewards of the River Valley Mountain Bike Association had the trail system in exceptional condition. Volunteers logged more than 300 hours of trail work during the early months of 2026 alone. On average, the group contributes nearly 1,000 volunteer hours annually to maintain and improve the Mountwood trail system, helping preserve its reputation as one of the premier mountain biking destinations on the East Coast.

This year's race proved to be especially fast. Joey Riddle of Elkins, West Virginia, completed the Expert Course in an impressive 1:50:58. The top female finisher, Haley Ellison of Charleston, crossed the finish line in 2:16:00. Both riders received \$100 cash prizes along with custom Challenge at Mountwood winner's mugs designed by local artisan Jennifer Eisenmann, a frequent exhibitor at the Mountwood Market.

Beyond the competition itself, the event also provides a significant economic boost to the region. According to a recent study by the West Virginia University Extension Service, visiting racers spend an average of \$416 in the local community during their stay, underscoring the growing impact of outdoor recreation and cycling tourism in the Mid-Ohio Valley.

"The bicycle's is the only chain that sets you free."

Vincenzo de Felice

Wood County Community Solid Waste Authority Community Collection Event

When: June 13th, 8 am until noon

Where: Mountwood Park, 1014 Volcano Road, Walker, West Virginia

Items to be collected:

- Paint
- Tires, off the rim (10 tire limit). Must have West Virginia ID. NO BUSINESSES.
- Scrap Metal (awning, swing sets, bikes, bed frames). No televisions, computers, or medication.
- Gently used clothes, unopened medical supplies, and gently used medical equipment.

If you have any questions, please call (304) 424-1873.

“Don’t listen to the person who has the answers; listen to the person who has the questions.”

Albert Einstein

Easter Egg Hunt at Mountwood was a Success

By Carolyn Naylor

Our annual Easter egg hunt held on



Saturday, April 4, was very successful. According to Jeremy Cross, Mountwood’s Park Director, between 300 and 400 children participated this year.

It was a good feeling to see

children and their parents, enjoying the Park and creating a good family memory. Although volunteers spent hours filling approximately 5,000 eggs and 15 Easter baskets, the event was over in about 5 minutes. Fifteen children went home with an Easter basket. A special thank you to Peggy Jamison who provided 10 of those Easter baskets!

We want to thank all volunteers who showed up to stuff the eggs and then helped with the event on Saturday.

Thank you Jeremy Cross, Tina Hescht, Carol Koontz, Iris McCartney, Junior McCartney, Carolyn Naylor, Mike Naylor, Peggy Squires, and Bob Zellny. We also have to thank the residents and employees at the Colonial House and Harmony Ridge and the staff at Mountwood Park.

We also appreciate and thank all the volunteers who showed up Saturday to put the eggs out and jumped in to help whenever they saw there was something to do. Thank you, Wendy Williams and the Woof Fest Royalty, Gretchen Hill, Lew Hill, Jeff Richards, Donna Richards, and Rose Russell.

With out your help, this event could not have happened!

“Easter is the only time it’s perfectly safe to put all of your eggs in one basket.”

Evan Esar

Planting Native Plants Means Less Work & Better Results

By Dawn Sturdevant

Save time, energy, water, and get better results planting natives - since they evolved in our local environment they thrive in local soil, the amount of rain and sun, and they benefit other native species.

Avoid

English Ivy
Purple Loosestrife
Japanese Boxberry
Butterfly Bush
Burning Bush
Norway Maple
Japanese Honeysuckle
Russian Olive
Tree of Heaven
Yellow Iris

Plant Instead

Virginia Creeper
Blazing Star Liatris
Ninebark
New England Aster
Red Chokeberry
Sugar Maple
Coral Honeysuckle
Serviceberry
Eastern Redbud
Black - Eyed Susans, Phlox, or Bee Balm



Blazing Star Liatris

Once they are established, perennials mean even less work. Planting native grasses, shrubs around your air conditioning unit can save energy, as well as planting native deciduous trees on south and/or west sides of your home. Planting more native plants means less lawn to mow as well! It's a win for everyone!

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Contributors: Dina Braniff, Carolyn Naylor, Mike Naylor, Vince Nedeff, Peggy Squires and Dawn Sturdevant
Proof Reader: Mike Naylor

**PLEASE SHARE THIS
NEWSLETTER WITH A FRIEND.**