



# 500-YEAR FOREST FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

*Conserving old-growth  
forests and the  
biologically diverse  
species they nurture*

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## HONORING BARBARA LEE COFFEY AND HER LEGACY BEQUEST: FORKS OF THE TYE FOREST

Once in a great while life gives us moments of surprise that give us pause and delight. That is what happened for the 500-Year Forest Foundation on June 18, 2020, when we received an email alerting us that we had become the recipients of a bequest – an entire Forest in Nelson County, Virginia! Forks of the Tye was beloved by our bequest donor, Barbara Lee Coffey (August 29, 1952 to May 28, 2020) who had taken a walk with our founder, Ted Harris, several years ago. As I learn over and over, Ted has a way of reaching people with his passion for old growth forests, and he certainly had this effect on Ms. Coffey on that impactful day. Besides Ted, we never had the honor of meeting Barbara Lee Coffey, but we join her loved ones in celebrating her vibrant spirit and careful environmental stewardship.

According to her obituary in the Roanoke Times from July 12, 2020, Barbara Lee Coffey, of Buchanan and Nelson Counties, Virginia, “was a highly regarded piano technician and tuner, repairing and tuning pianos in Southwest Virginia and West Virginia, including pianos for Virginia Tech, Bluefield College, Radford University and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. Barbara earned a BA from Hollins University in 2009. As a gifted pianist and accordionist who played a clutch of other instruments including violin, Barbara’s musicianship graced several area bands, including Second Wynde and Jig or Not. She loved taking her camper to festivals and jamming with other appreciative musicians. She cherished the camaraderie of friends and brought her love of music to many jams. Barbara is survived by a symphony of relatives and friends. It is difficult to reflect all of her spirit; her energy and determination in every project; her love of nature and passion for conservation; her inherent love of travel and new adventures. Barbara’s passing leaves a hole in our hearts and lives.”



*Barbara Lee Coffey*

*Thank you Barbara for your love of life and nature, and for trusting the  
500-Year Forest Foundation to protect forever your forest at Forks of the Tye!*

Video at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_VLTLZzFxdQ&ab\\_channel=The500-YearForestFoundation](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VLTLZzFxdQ&ab_channel=The500-YearForestFoundation)

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## NOTES FROM GABE QUINTERO, OUR RANDOLPH COLLEGE INTERN

My name is Gabriel Quintero and I am a student at Randolph College in Lynchburg, Virginia. I have had the pleasure of working with the 500-Year Forest Foundation since September of 2020 as a college intern. I have lived in central Virginia my whole life, and have been a student at Randolph since 2017. From a young age, I have loved the outdoors, and gone hiking, camping, and biking whenever the opportunity arose. When I started going to Randolph, I took an environmental science class with Dr. Warren, and that is what focused my attention on conservation. I would love to enter a career in conservation when I graduate, and this internship has been an amazing opportunity to get my feet in the water and get a taste of how a conservation organization operates. This past semester I worked with Ms. Elfner and Dr. Karin Warren to create informational video content to upload to the Foundation’s new YouTube page. I look forward to continuing to work with the foundation this semester and summer!



## NEW AND OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS



We welcome Mary Wickham, who joined the 500-year Forest Foundation Board in January. Mary has a background in law, education, and nonprofit management. She served as the Head of St. Andrew's School and Executive Director of the Sacred Heart Center, both in Richmond. An avid hiker and nature enthusiast, Mary is a Virginia Master Naturalist with the Pocahontas Chapter and an active volunteer with the James River Park's Invasive Plant Task Force. Mary has two grown sons and lives in Richmond with her husband George. She can frequently be found "forest bathing" either in Richmond's green spaces, on property bordering the Shenandoah National Park near Syria, Va., or in Cedar Mountain, N.C.

We also want to thank Kim Biasioli, a forest conservation professional, and Peter Dutnell, a 500-Year Forest owner, for their service to our Board. Both have given generously of their time and talents and we are extremely fortunate to have both of them in our community of people who support the 500-Year Forest Foundation.



## LIFE ABUNDANT IN A 500-YEAR FOREST! NEWS FROM KOLB FOREST BY JEAN KOLB

With 67.94 inches of rain in 2020, all plants, from ground-hugging Pussy-toes to high-reaching tulip trees, were well watered. April's ten inches spread yellow-flowered violets and white-flowered Starry Chickweed across a hollow, and added, among them, clumps of Spring Coralroot orchid. In May, up on the mountainside, when Laurel was in full bloom among the trees, hundreds of pink Wild Geranium flowers were opening down near the house in our deer-proof fenced area. As June got underway, a big 48-inch-dbh northern red oak with an expanding crown commandeered more canopy, while, in the understory, beech trees added height and extended their branches horizontally, quietly disregarding the shade of taller trees. Back when the forest's green leaves were just beginning to unfold, a Louisiana waterthrush arrived to claim a steep-bank nest site along a rain-replenished stream. In July, hummingbirds visited the Turk's-caps' showy orange lilies, and large bees scrambled over the pale blue flowers clustered along a stem of *Campanula americana* (Tall Bellflower). Shiny black, miniscule flies arrived on the maroon flowers of a *Matelea obliqua* (Climbing Milkvine) and pressed their heads down to the central "cups" of wet, glistening nectar. That vine produced seven spiny seed pods; a much later-blooming vine, where I saw no flies on its more numerous flowers, produced none. In 2020, fungi flourished with more shapes and colors than usual, although one, in early June showed its presence by the lifeless bodies of large millipedes (*Apheloria virginiensis*, I assume) curled over dead twigs or stems sometimes a foot above the leaf litter they normally inhabit. They were infected by a fungus (likely *Arthropogon myriapodina*) that made them climb upward and die, giving fungus spores inside them a chance for wider dispersal by wind. While pulling stilt grass, I came across nine within an area the size of a large room. Of course, stilt grass took advantage of the rains. But in August, Leif Riddervold's crew from the Virginia Forestry and Wildlife Group sprayed stilt grass where it was trying to make a comeback, as well as its more recent explosions on slopes. Some wavy-leaf basket grass plants—no big patches yet—also got spray. Abundant rain is, alas, an equal opportunity provider for the invaders as well as the natives. Did rain reduce the insect population? Yellow jackets were scarce all summer; paper wasps disappeared. An eight-foot-tall Joe-Pye Weed with multiple stems and masses of flowers attracted few butterflies, and a thick growth of Yellow Jewelweed in bloom did not lure its normal late-summer swarms of small bees. Many sassafras trees came down this year, finishing their role in reforesting our property after the Great Depression shut down farm and orchard activity (its extent shown on a 1935 topo map). Numerous oval holes in sassafras



trunks indicate that their misfortune has been useful to pileated woodpeckers. Tulip trees, major players in the forest's return, are, however, doing well, with more every year reaching or exceeding 36 inches in diameter. Ash trees, except for those we had treated, are dying. Today's "Global Economy" is no friend of North American trees and plants who lack natural enemies against killer imported species.

*The Kolb Forest became a 500-Year Forest in 2004. We are grateful to the Kolbs for their vision and generosity!*

## DONATIONS - JANUARY 1, 2020, TO DECEMBER 31, 2020

Thank you to our Donors! What we do is only possible with the support of the people you see on this list. Fabulous Forest Friend gifts start at \$3,000 and/or an entire 500-Year Forest. Carbon Conserver gifts start at \$1,500. Soil Saver gifts start at \$600, Stream Steward at \$300, Flora Fancier at \$150, Fauna Fan at \$60 and Tree Tender at \$30.

## FABULOUS FOREST FRIEND

Anonymous  
Barbara Lee Coffey  
Frank Gill  
Virginia Land Conservation  
Foundation Stewardship Fund

## CARBON CONSERVER

Hullie Moore

## SOIL SAVER

Betty Besal  
Richard Busofsky  
Dale and Ted Harris  
David and Judith Ledbetter  
H. Gordon Leggett  
Jeffrey Smith,  
*given in honor of Jason Gray*

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McChesney and Nancy Goodall  
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to their Longleaf Pine Farm in NC*  
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*given in memory of Richard Royer*  
Neal Sumerlin  
Hudnall and Betty Byrne Ware  
Karin Warren  
Jane White\*

*\*Donations given  
in honor of  
Ted and  
Dale Harris*



*Ted Harris*

We want to thank each and every one of you: Donors, Forest Owners, Board Members, and Volunteers! The 500-Year Forest Foundation could not exist without YOU! We hope you will consider supporting us and honoring our mission of working in partnership with forest owners to help ensure that future old-growth forests exist for clean air and water, for habitat and for intrinsic value!

**Donate online at: [www.500yearforest.org/get-involved/donate/](http://www.500yearforest.org/get-involved/donate/)**

If you have given to us in the past, thank you, and we hope you will give again! If you are new to our mailing list, we hope you will see fit to donate for the good of old growth forests! THANK YOU!

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**500-YEAR FOREST**  
 FOUNDATION  
 WWW.500YEARFOREST.ORG

P.O. Box 1272  
 Charlottesville, VA 22902

The 500-Year Forest Foundation was incorporated in 1997 as a 501 (c)(3) and we assist forest owners (9 to date, 2000+ acres) who generously commit to fully and permanently protect Virginia forests of mature future old growth trees.



*“The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness.” – John Muir*

The 500-Year Forest Foundation,  
 a nonprofit organization,  
 works in partnership with  
 private forest owners to produce  
 future old-growth forests.

**YOU CAN HELP**

For more information or  
 to contribute, volunteer  
 or recommend a forest...

Visit:

[www.500yearforest.org](http://www.500yearforest.org)

Email:

[500yearforests@gmail.com](mailto:500yearforests@gmail.com)

Call:

(804) 401-7379

**OUR FOUNDER’S VISION: THE 500-YEAR FOREST REMOTE SENSING BIRD**

By Ted Harris, September 2020

In the future our forest owners may have access to technological advancements hardly imaginable today. This could be made possible with the use of drones and software written for our forests.

What are drones doing now for commercial forests, pine plantations mostly? They are mapping the forest, locating forest gaps, monitoring forest health, measuring canopy height, and aiding in forest management.

Mapping the forest and monitoring the forest health certainly are valuable tools for the 500-Year Forest Foundation. Fortunately for us an MIT graduate student, Andrew Barry, is working with a team that is creating a drone which he calls the Bird with the goal of navigating its way through a forest like a bird. It is a research project at the Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL). The Bird is outfitted with two stereo cameras that function like eyes and can see a distance of thirty-five feet. It is programmed in such a way to fly through the openings in the forest adroitly dodging trees, their limbs, and other obstacles (<https://news.mit.edu/2012/new-aircraft-capable-of-fast-accurate-and-repeatable-flight>).

For some of our forest owners, invasive problems will be their focus at the outset. Being able to identify the location of the female Ailanthus trees would be a start in developing a control plan to rid the forest of this invasive tree. Our Bird would be a very helpful tool to attract future 500-Year Forest owners to our Foundation. Will the use of technology happen as it has been presented here? Perhaps there will be a variety of drones designated for specific jobs. But I feel sure there will be great opportunities for technological help for our forests. It is important for us as human beings to imagine what is possible next, and with technology such as research being conducted at CSAIL, we can continue to strive for better forest management for ourselves and for all creatures.

**LEAVE A FOREST LEGACY WITH PLANNED GIVING**

At the 500-Year Forest Foundation we are extremely grateful to all who give! Please consider making a charitable gift through estate planning. Old growth forests will benefit greatly from your generosity!

Please contact us at [500yearforests@gmail.com](mailto:500yearforests@gmail.com) to find out more.