



# THE 500-YEAR FOREST FOUNDATION *Newsletter*

Volume 16 ■ Number 1 ■ Summer/Fall 2013

Your donation helps protect and sustain forests that store one ton of carbon per acre annually.

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## The Wilson and Bailey Exception



Richard and Jim Wilson

The Wilson and Bailey Exception, owned by brothers Richard and Jim Wilson, has become our seventh 500-Year Forest. This beautiful forest is located on the western flank of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Augusta County, Virginia. Their mother, Gladys Wilson, placed a scenic easement, precluding any harvesting, on their

property in 1995 to preserve the public view from the Appalachian Trail.

The derivation of the name, the Wilson and Bailey Exception, is an interesting story. C. H. Wilson, grandfather of the present owners, purchased about 100 acres from National Manganese Corporation in June of 1916. In September of 1925 the Department of Agriculture purchased the surrounding land from the National Manganese Corporation for the Forest Service. Two tracts of land, that of C. H. Wilson and that of a neighbor, Rebecca E.

Bailey, were “excepted” from this transaction. The adjoining Bailey property of about 100 acres was purchased by C. H. Wilson in 1936.

Virtually the whole property, estimated at 190 acres, is covered by mature forest. There has been no logging since 1954. At that time Edward

see *Wilson and Bailey Exception*, page 5

## Meet Carolyn Phillips, our newest director



Our newest director, Carolyn Phillips, is not new to the Foundation. She and her husband, Rick Helms, have been 500-Year Forest owners since 2010. Carolyn is quick to say, however, that she sees her role on the board not so much as a forest owner advocate but as a spur to change. To that end, she has been named chair of our leadership transition committee.

Carolyn draws on her twenty years with *The Wall Street Journal* for this task. A critical element of all her assignments there was monitor-

ing the effectiveness of corporate management strategies. That translates readily into assisting the Foundation as it moves itself to a new operating structure.

Born in Crockett County, Tennessee, Carolyn studied science journalism at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, and worked as science editor for her alma mater for three years before joining the *Journal* as a reporter in Chicago. She later ran the *Journal's* Houston bureau—including airlines and global energy coverage—and its staffing and training functions as an assistant managing editor in New York. Currently, Carolyn is a part-time editor with Standard & Poor's in Charlottesville, Virginia.



Jean Kolb leads a short hike

## Forest Owners Invigorate Annual Meeting

**A**T THE FOUNDATION'S June board meeting, directors set a goal of connecting with stakeholders—forest owners, donors, volunteers and others who support forest conservation.

On October 17, during a daylong series of meetings and meals at the Baldwin Center for Preservation Development in North Garden, Virginia, that mission was accomplished.

“Our plan to bring the forest owners and the board together seems to have been a success, a substantial success according to the comments I heard,” reported director Hal Kolb. He had occasion to hear a lot as he and his wife Jean hosted directors and forest owners and special guests for hikes through their Covesville, Virginia forest—the first 500-Year Forest.

The visit to the Kolbs followed a working luncheon where forest owners Bob Gilvary, Steve Brooks and Jean Kolb respectively presented information on carbon sequestration, Japanese stilt grass fungus and the threat of invasives—a poetic and powerful overview. Foundation president Ted Harris announced a 2014 waiver of matching funds requirements for forest owners needing to kick-start invasives eradication. The initiative is made possible by a generous grant from the Ecology Wildlife Foundation. Also at the meeting, forest owners received new Member Forest signs for posting back home.

Intermittent sprinkles didn't dampen enthusiasm for the day's events. This was “a good idea,” Hal heard from one forest owner, followed by it “makes me feel

more a part of the Foundation.” And from another: “I'm glad I came.” Even before October 17, forest owners newly armed with each other's email addresses started networking, offering extremely on-point suggestions and information to one another and the board on many topics.

At the board meeting on the morning of the 17th, directors heard from the meeting planners how far-flung outreach had been. Word went out via letters, radio and newspapers in Virginia and invitations were sent to North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Arizona, Colorado and Hawaii. Many invitees who sent regrets also sent support, encouragement, ideas and new contacts.

David Ledbetter honored President Ted Harris for his vision in founding the organization with the presentation of an engraved walnut box and reports from each forest owner on how they first met Ted. Ted himself pointed out that he and the Kolbs met in a barn just down the road from the Baldwin Center, cementing the sense that things had come full circle. Ending the evening, Ted's wife Dale gave a crowd-pleasing sendoff.

And in the audience, a potential new 500-Year Forest owner heard it all.

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# New structure for 500-Year Forest Foundation

**D**AVID LEDBETTER SAID IT BEST: The new operating structure of The 500-Year Forest Foundation is designed to take some weight off Ted Harris' shoulders.

After several weeks of research and discussion, the leadership transition committee—Ted, David and Carolyn Phillips—emailed the proposed new format to other directors ahead of the October 17th meeting of the board where it was discussed and adopted. It divvies up the many Foundation functions handled almost solo by Ted for fifteen years among volunteer work groups led by directors.

There are seven divisions. The Forests work group, made up of David, Ted and Ches Goodall, will find and attract new forest prospects and offer continuity for current member forests. The Education/Research group builds on work already started by Hal Kolb to expand the Foundation's "forests as laboratories" role and find affiliations and grant support. Lincoln Brower will join that effort.

The Outreach work group will be the Foundation's networking engine, looking for task-sharing opportunities, joint ventures, forest prospects, potential directors and more. Forest owner Frank Biasioli joins Ches in tackling that. Steve Nash will work

with Carolyn on Communications/Marketing initiatives. Carolyn will join Kay Van Allen and Ted on Fundraising. Finance remains Ted's bailiwick, with a short list of accountants being contacted to help out. Legal will continue to fall to David and pro bono counsel Miranda Yost of Hunton Williams.

Carolyn, chair of the leadership transition committee, reassured her fellow directors that while they are to see that tasks are done, they can ask volunteers, interns, consultants, forest owners and others for help with the actual work. The Foundation is actively seeking volunteers willing to pitch in where needed. Anyone interested should contact Carolyn at [500yearforests@gmail.com](mailto:500yearforests@gmail.com).

The board meeting brought renewed enthusiasm for the Foundation's mission. Hal Kolb, already working on education, research and outreach efforts, named himself a utility infielder: "I want to work on all of these," he said of the seven work groups. Similarly, Ted Harris, while officially a member of three work groups will actually serve in an advisory capacity to all.

"It will take a while," Carolyn said, "but we, as a team, hope to absorb, continue and build upon what Ted has managed for the Foundation almost singlehandedly."

## Ledbetter named Chairman

**D**AVID LEDBETTER is the new chairman of The 500-Year Forest Foundation. He takes over the role from founder Ted



Harris, who remains president and treasurer.

"We all greatly appreciate his willingness to take this position," Ted said. "As you realize, David has been a part of the

Foundation all the way from our beginning," drawing up the Foundation's bylaws. David continues as board secretary.

"I've had a keen interest in and concern for environmental progress and conservation my entire life," David said. He wants to advance Ted's vision for the Foundation. He plans a renewed focus on getting the Foundation's message to conservation-themed meetings and conferences where new forest prospects might be found.

As chairman, David is playing a pivotal role in the Foundation's overhaul of its operating structure. Indeed, he has already helped troubleshoot creation of the new work groups that will be responsible for the organization's essential functions. He, along with Ted and new director Carolyn Phillips comprise the Foundation's leadership transition committee.

David, now Senior Counsel with Richmond law firm Hunton Williams, helped form the Foundation in 1998 as its pro bono counsel. David retired from active practice as a partner in 2010, having focused on a range of environmental law issues throughout his career.



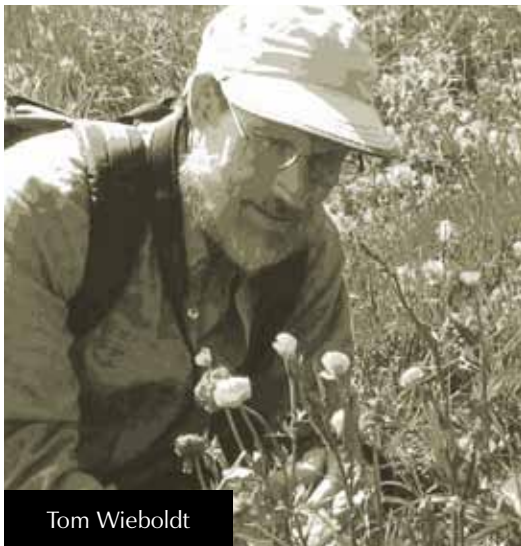
The walnut box presented to Ted Harris by David Ledbetter

# Sunshine Forest Botanical Assessment



Black-seed ricegrass; photo by Gary P. Fleming

**W**E WERE VERY FORTUNATE this summer for the services of Tom Wieboldt, the Curator of Vascular Plants at the Massey Herbarium at Virginia Tech. In doing a botanical assessment in the Sunshine 500-Year Forest, Tom spent a day in late July recording 180 herbaceous plants. He found three species rare to the area, one of which is rare in Virginia. He visited the forest again in October and plans one more visit in the spring. After the third visit, he will situate permanent plots in the forest. The plants in these plots will be recorded every ten years and



Tom Wieboldt

will reveal changes in the forest over time.

Tom's written report from the July visit details the three finds:

"The first was a three-parted violet, *Viola tripartita*, which is known in Virginia from only three places in Floyd and Montgomery counties. Second, there was a lot of Goldies fern, *Dryopteris goldiana*, in a couple of sinks. This was a new record for Montgomery County and a delight to find. It's an uncommon species in most of the mountain counties of Virginia, and this was also unusual in being in a valley location. Third was a grass called *Patis racemosa*, Black-seed ricegrass. It's also an uncommon species of the mountain counties, and is known from only one other place in the county. The property has a great variety of ferns (20 species found so far) which probably attests to a history of continuous forest cover and a good diversity of slope aspects and moisture conditions."

We are greatly pleased to have such a recognized botanical expert do this important work. His discoveries are noteworthy because there are relatively few populations of these three plants. The fact that Goldies fern was found for the first time in Montgomery County where a major university (Virginia Tech) has existed since 1872 is good evidence of that.

## The Importance of Big Trees

Big trees three or more feet in diameter accounted for nearly half the biomass measured at a Yosemite National Park study site, yet represented only one percent of the trees growing there. Andrew Larson, James Lutz, James Freund and Mark Swanson, scientists in the west reported this new finding in May of last year.

"These trees are the elites of the forest," Larson said. "Just a few individual trees per acre, especially sugar pines, store a disproportionately large amount of the carbon in this forest." As trees become very large, their ecological importance increases dramatically," Larson said. "They also become increasingly difficult to replace when lost to natural or human-caused mortality."



Washington State University's Mark Swanson pulls a tape tight around a 4-foot-wide sugar pine, one of the 34,500 live trees counted and tagged for long-term study in a Yosemite National Park study plot. Photo: University of Washington.





Jeff Smith by a massive hickory

## Wilson and Bailey Exception *continued from page 1*

Wilson, an early conservationist and the father of Richard and Jim, insisted on having the tract horse logged, leaving all trees 20 inches or more DBH (diameter at breast height).

Foundation directors Jim Murray, Hal Kolb, David Ledbetter and Lincoln Brower visited the property with Richard and Jim in March of 2012. The following is taken from the report written by Jim Murray.

“The principal trees are Oaks (Red, White, and Chestnut), Tulip Poplars, and Hickories of probably three species. There are some Black Locusts and Sassafras, indicating cleared land at some point. In the central part that is a large stand of White Pine, which is reproducing well. Other species noted were Red Maple, Hornbeam, and Serviceberry. Many of the trees are large and

well-grown. On both ends of the forest there are many Tulip Poplars and Oaks in the 30-40 inch (DBH) class. The champions measured were a 52-inch White Oak in the northern section and a 57-inch Red Oak in the southern section. The early spring flora of the forest floor was just beginning to come out. We noted Toothwort, Star Chickweed, Columbine, False Hellebore, and Bloodroot. A Garter Snake was out and active and we uncovered both the red-backed and lead-backed forms of the Redback Salamander.”

The Wilson and Bailey Exception makes a significant addition to our group of 500-Year Forests. Those of us at the Foundation are excited about working with Richard and Jim Wilson in the care of their forest.



## Conquering the grape vines

*by Steve Brooks*

Though they make great mast for various wildlife, wild grape vines can be overwhelming for a forest, especially a young forest. Several sections of our younger forests have been completely overgrown with wild grapes, smothering all of the leaf growth and essentially killing the trees. The result looks very much like a clear cut. This year we noticed that many of our larger trees on the upper portion of our property, in the 500-Year Forest, have also been overtaken with vines. We are attacking these vines and saving some of these older trees. One can not simply take a large lopper and cut them. They are much too big and require the use of an ax or chain saw. We have only just begun this war on the vines. It will take a continued effort for years to come.

# Thank you to our Donors

What we do is only possible with the support of the people you see on this list.  
The following gifts were received from November 1, 2012 to October 31, 2013.

## Correction

We apologize to Ann and Bob Barlow whose Fauna Fan gift was not listed in our last newsletter. Please let us know right away if through our error your name was omitted from our List of Donors.

## DONOR CATEGORIES

Fabulous Forest Friend.....	\$3,000
Carbon Conserver .....	\$1,500
Soil Saver .....	\$600
Stream Steward.....	\$300
Flora Fancier.....	\$150
Fauna Fan.....	\$60
Tree Tender.....	\$30

## Grants

For the third year in a row, **The Morningstar Foundation** favored us with a grant to be used to cover certain operating expenses. In the past this money was used to pay for our newsletter and website updating.

A substantial gift for \$6,000 was received from the **Ecology Wildlife Foundation** based in Asheville, North Carolina. This will be used this coming year to help in our ongoing program of controlling invasive plants in our forests. We are deeply grateful to these Foundations and the folks there who recognize the value of our work.

## SOIL SAVER

Audrey and David Franks  
Patricia Harrington  
Dale and Ted Harris  
Jenna and Mitch Haynie  
H. Gordon Leggett, Jr.  
Frances, John, Chris, and Stewart Russell  
*in honor of Ted Harris*  
Kay and Kent Van Allen, Jr.

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and Margaret Meriwether Gay*  
Henry Hild  
Lois Klauder  
David and Judith Ledbetter  
Madeline Miller  
*in honor of Dale and Ted Harris,  
dear friends*  
Cranston and Marilyn Williams  
*in honor of Dale and Ted Harris, cousins*  
Stanley Woodward, Jr.  
*in honor of Stanley Woodward*

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William Andrews, IV  
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Betsy Bernard  
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Mary Morris Booth  
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Lincoln Brower  
Hanna Burruss  
Louise and Frank Chut  
Howard and Julia Clark  
Kathy and Sam Coleman  
*in honor of Ted and Dale Harris*  
George Darden  
*in honor of Carol Webb Darden, wife*  
Jimmy and Trudy Davidson  
Bill and Gena Davidson  
Margaret Ann and Cap Eschenroeder  
Robert and Shirley French

Graham Gerhardt

*in honor of Thomas and  
Anne Gerhardt, parents*  
Brad and Diane Harris  
Carola Hass  
Carol Lisle  
*in memory of Suzanne Krach, friend*  
Ann and Elias Richards  
Nancy and Frank Roddey  
John and Jane Seel  
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*in memory of W. W. Winfree*  
Laura Anthony  
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*in memory of Bob Gough, friend*  
Carolyn Field  
David and Judy Frantz  
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Marion Gilbertson  
*in memory of Henry W. Gilbertson,  
husband*  
Rowland Girling  
Gale Glenn  
William Harris  
Marie and Stuart Harris  
Howard and Nancy Haysom  
David Hayworth  
Margaret Heath  
George Hettrick



## Fifty pound Hen of the Woods, *Grifola frondosa*, found by Maxine Kenny and Steve Brooks

This polypore mushroom grows in clusters at the base of trees, especially oaks. Other English names for the mushroom are ram's head and sheep's head. The Japanese name for the mushroom is maitake, which means "dancing mushroom". Throughout Italian American communities in the northeastern United States, it is commonly known as the signorina mushroom.



Jack and Scott Hughes  
Clay and Sally Lou Hundley  
Jerome Johnson

Margaret and Tom Keller  
Frances and Al Kemper

Joan Jones  
Susan Lapis  
Richard Latteral

Anna Lawson  
Richard B. Leary, Jr.

*in memory of Sarah D. Leary and  
Richard B. Leary, daughter and son*

Jim and Shirley Lynde  
Michael and Catherine Madden

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Peter and Leslie Mehring

J. Horst Meyer  
*in honor of Richard White, former  
Director of Duke Gardens*

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John O'Keefe

Bill and Karen Painter  
*in memory of Buddy Stalling*

Matt and Mary Raine Paxton, Jr.  
V. and Anne Pittman, II

Greg and Becky Porter  
Danny and Sherry Pugh  
*in honor of children and their spouses*

Toni Rini  
*in honor of Gail Rini, my mom*

Elizabeth Roberts  
Herb and Charlotte Saltzman  
*in honor of Ted Harris*

Frank and Dudley Sargent  
Dan and Ana Schepens

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Steve Brooks and Maxine Kenny  
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*in memory of Kal Cohen, husband*

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Elena Ellis  
*in memory of James J. Auld, Jr., friend*

Doris Flandorffer

Ethel Foote  
Dorothea Fuller

Liz Galloway  
*in honor of Toni Rini, Nan and Steve  
Vessels, friends, and Susan Spencer,  
cousin*

Gene and Laura Goley  
Anne Henderson

John Henry, Jr.  
Roth Herringer

Helen Hester  
*in memory of Albert S. Hester, brother*

Yuille and Sandy Holt  
Nancy Hudson

Chris and Helen Hutter  
*in honor of Dale and Ted Harris*

Chuck and Ann King  
Theodora Kramer

Arnold and Zena Lerman  
Megan Maloney

*in memory of my grandparents*  
Joan Maloof

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Stephen and Popie Martin

Walter and Polly Mehring  
*in honor of Peter Mehring, brother/  
brother-in-law*

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Dick and Dorothy Niles

A. E. "Jake" Paulson  
Rufus and Barbara Phillips

Mary Sadler  
James Shelton

Ella Jean Shore  
Alexia Smith

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Matt and Tiffany Tompkins

Stuart Turille  
Jeter Watson

Jane While  
*in honor of Bill Chambers, friend*



# 500-YEAR FOREST

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### *You can help.*

For more information or to contribute, volunteer or recommend a forest, call (919) 489-4778 or email [oldgrowth500@yahoo.com](mailto:oldgrowth500@yahoo.com).

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## *President's Letter*



Ted Harris

Much that is significant has happened since our last newsletter. We have added another forest. It is owned by the two Wilson brothers, Richard and Jim. This is our first forest in the Shenandoah Valley.

We all recognize that change is inevitable, especially as we age. Last month I celebrated my 85th birthday. Our challenge is to make a leadership change while remaining an all volunteer organization. To facilitate this change, we have elected David Ledbetter our Chairman. David has been involved with our organization all the way from its beginning.

In another significant move, Carolyn Phillips, our newest board member, is heading up the Transition Committee to effect the changes needed. Her exuberance, her status as a forest owner and her experience working at the *Wall Street Journal* are all pluses.

I am excited and pleased with the leadership being taken within our Foundation. This is a special time for us. We are favored also by your continued support.