

Continued from page 14

Each day started around 8 a.m. in a new location with a new issue and required a certain amount of physical labor. We took water and organism samples from Decker's Creek; introduced "discouragement" around state park trails (which involved moving scary looking stumps and branches to form protective barriers around young tree saplings and organic matter – to decrease human trekking, erosion and increase foliage); identified the trees that surrounded us; and learned the names of the wildlife we were trying to protect.

We arrived back to the campsite around 5 p.m. (or much later) and enjoyed a sunset at either Coopers Rock or my beloved Seneca Rocks. Then, we had nights of discussion, dancing, jamming and campfire shenanigans. Midnight van snacking was not an uncommon occurrence. Note: if you do go, make sure you take double the amount of food you think you will need.

We went spelunking in the Sinks Gandy, talked to cows in a nearby pasture, went bouldering (no ropes just powder) and delighted in boulder jumping upstream in the Dolly Sods Wilderness Area. And there was the all-day whitewater rafting extravaganza down the Upper Yough (Youghioghenny) River.

I strongly encourage everyone to consider taking this life- and mind-changing trip. Throughout, I have to say we connected with our creator, his children, a bearded man named Jerry and the natural world that is often wrongly thought to be a

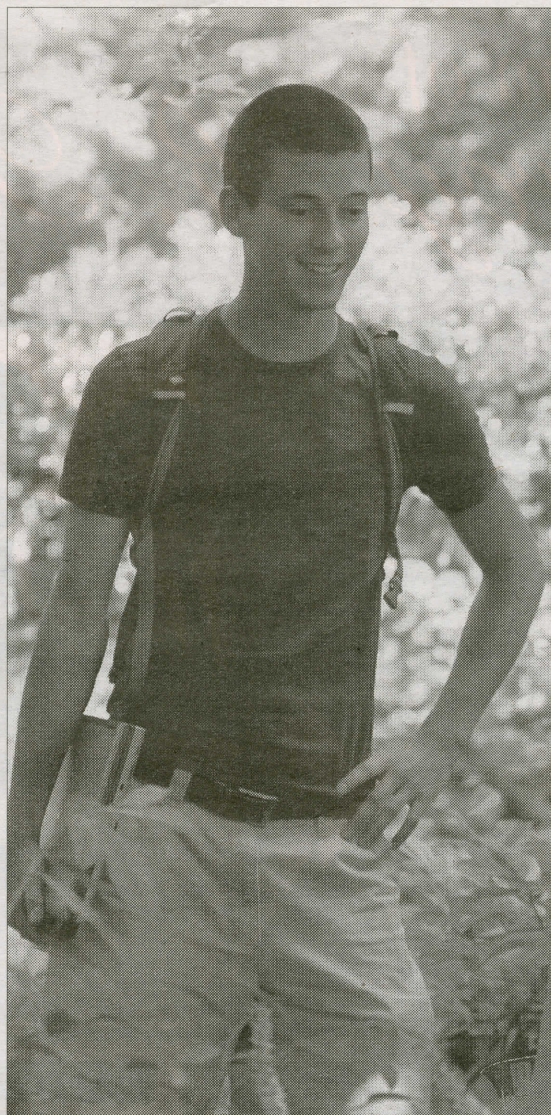
separate entity from us. As a result, I've come back full of inspiration for further involvement in protecting our earth, which cannot be refreshed with the click of a button, and to share my experience of true education outside the binding of a dead tree or screen powered by rare earth minerals.

Peace.



Photo provided by Richard Meyers

Students taking a break and enjoying the scenery



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