



Little Cities of the Forest Collaborative

supporting environmental education, recreation and restoration in the Little Cities microregion

News Release

The history of coal mining will be the topic at the first of three “Summer Evening Talks At The Cave” set for Saturday evening, June 28 at Historic Robinson’s Cave in New Straitsville. Campers, travelers and local citizens are invited to the first of three free programs being offered at the place that is known as the Secret Birthplace of the United Mine Workers of America labor union. The event is set from 7-8:30PM with visitors gathering and program at Dunkle Hall, located at the foot of Robinson’s Cave.

Featured speaker at Saturday’s event will be Ken Bowald, Director of the Heritage Interpretation Program at Hocking College in nearby Nelsonville. His presentation is entitled “Following The Seam,” which will feature Bowald in costume demonstrating the tools that miners have used over the years to mine coal in the Little Cities of Black Diamonds region of Athens, Hocking, Morgan and Perry Counties. Bowald’s program will be introduced by Cheryl Blosser and John Winnenberg of the Little Cities of Black Diamonds Council who will discuss the boom-to-bust Hocking Valley Coal era and the nationally significant role of Robinson’s Cave and the miners of the region in the nation’s early labor union movement. The evening’s event will close with the showing of the documentary “Devil’s Oven: The Fire In The Heart of the Little Cities of Black Diamonds.” Refreshments, books and souvenir items will be available for sale by the New Straitsville History Group during the event.

The series will feature an overview of the Wayne National Forest on Saturday evening, July 12 and the Monday Creek Watershed on Saturday evening, August 16. One target audience group for the event is the large number of campers in the Shawnee-New Straitsville area utilizing Off Road Vehicle, horseback and hiking trails in the Wayne National Forest during the summer.

The event is sponsored by the Little Cities of The Forest Collaborative, an organization that is working to promote the outdoors in the Little Cities with recreation, environmental education and stewardship activity. The Collaborative is organized by five area organizations. In addition to the Little Cities of Black Diamonds Council/Sunday Creek Associates, collaborative members are the Monday Creek Restoration Project, the Sunday Creek Watershed Group, the Wayne National Forest, and the North Country National Scenic Trail. For more information contact Collaborative Director Dana White at 740-569-4928 or drwhite51@verizon.net.

New Straitsville is located in the Wayne National Forest on State Routes 93, 216 & 595 in southern Perry County, near the Hocking-Perry County line. Robinson’s Cave is located behind the West Main Street business block.

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