



Photo by
Heather Dent

Floods in Eastern Kentucky and Beyond

On July 28, we woke to the news of devastating floods across Eastern Kentucky. The floods killed 39 people and destroyed 1,722 homes. This is just one of the many catastrophic natural disasters from recent months across our nation and the world. Record monsoon rains in Pakistan triggered floods that took the lives of over 1,390 people. These tragic events have left us heavy hearted and mindful of climate change and its impact upon us all.

Many students at Berea College are from the impacted counties in Eastern Kentucky with family, friends, and neighbors who suffered great losses in the floods. Yet for others not from the region, the scope of the loss and the resilience of the people is hard to imagine. Lilly Rice, an Economics Major here at Berea who is from Laurel County, wrote [this accessible, informative article](#) on why the area is vulnerable to these natural disasters and how the people in these communities are rising to the occasion to take care of one another and rebuild.

Charity Gilbert, an Appalachian Studies major, is from Oneida, Kentucky, in Clay County. She has composed [this moving, personal essay](#) that shares her thoughts about the floods in her hometown. She writes, “As we got to my house, I realized that for many in our community, similar situations are just a part of life. While some did lose their homes and some their lives in some of the hollers, the food disparities and the ‘make do’ attitude was just how you lived. It is how my family has lived for all of my life.”

Appalachian Center Director Chris Green says, “This flood is yet another, more immediate instance of the long, horrible, historic stream of world-wide injustices that are now being amplified by global warming. There is much work to come, both close to home, in the state, in our nation, and across the world.”

We are glad to be doing that work together.

“We live on a fragile planet— we are all spinning around together and need to come together to save us all.”

~ Helen Lewis

Students can help with the rebuilding! CELTS will be leading day drips for students to work with the Perry County Housing Development Alliance on Saturday Sept. 17, 24, Oct. 8, and Nov. 5. For details, please see the email sent with this Gravy Infusion.

In Loving Memory of Helen Lewis



Today, we honor the [life of Helen Lewis](#) (AKA the Grandmother of Appalachian Studies), who passed away earlier this month at the age of 97. Her legacy stretches across Appalachia, from the Highlander Research and Education Center to Berea College where she served as Interim Director for the Appalachian Center from 1993 to 1995.

One can get a sense for Helen’s keen sense of humor in her 1993 response to following Loyal Jones’s footsteps: “I am having some trouble trying to figure out whether to walk slew-footed or pigeon-toed, he moved in so many directions. [...] Obviously no one can be another Loyal Jones, and I wouldn’t even try.” You can read [the full article here](#).

The same can be said for Helen. There will never be anyone quite like her. She enabled the start of Berea’s Bluegrass Ensemble and was a radical activist, fierce advocate for social justice, and a believer in love and community. No one could ever hope to fill her shoes, but we can continue the work she started, by striving to be more like her.

And coming Two Weeks from now . . .



Cancer Crisis: Kentucky Students Speak

Sept 27

**Dinner
on the Grounds**

**A dinner and a presentation to celebrate
the opening of our new LJAC Exhibit**

Free and open to the public

Dinner will be Served at 5:45

Loyal Jones Appalachian Center

Come learn about this exhibit that features photographs by **students from the Appalachian Career Training in Oncology (ACTION)**. The exhibit explores the high cancer rates in Kentucky, which has some of the highest rates in the nation. The exhibit is organized by **Nathan Vanderford** the Director of ACTION at the UK Markey Cancer Center.



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