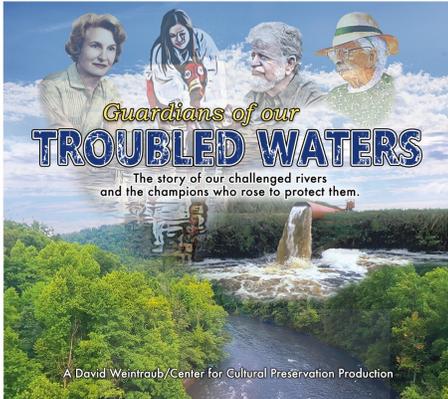


The Newport Plain Talk

Troubled Waters promotes preservation, remembers the past

Gem Lieser NPT Staff Writer -- October 24, 2019



NEWPORT—In less than 90 minutes David Weintraub captures the historical soul and cultural legacy of the region's French Broad and Pigeon Rivers.

The documentary, **Guardians of Our Troubled Waters**, follows the history of these two rivers from their roles as a life sustaining force for Native Americans and mountain families to becoming a literal cesspool.

The film dives into the unfortunate years of pollution for the Pigeon as industrial waste dumping forced environmental guardians to champion for the majestic rivers return to health.

Through multiple interviews with local environmental groups and Native Americans, Weintraub spins a picture of a magical beginning in which the rivers were regarded by the Cherokee as sacred and virginal bodies of water they called Long Man (His head begins in the mountains and feet stretch out to the oceans). A respected, honored flow that eventually becomes a site for huge baptismal services of church congregations.

The introduction of the Industrial Revolution created an economic boom for the small town of Canton, North Carolina when Champion Paper Mill erected a large factory in the early 1900's. Residents on the Tennessee side of the rivers' flow quickly see the Pigeon River go from crystal clear waters brimming with life to coffee colored sludge full of Dioxin filled fish that eventually lead to the rivers contamination and subsequent cause of multiple cancers for families living along its banks.

Activists and locals from Newport and Hartford, Tennessee as well

as Waynesville and Canton, North Carolina tell of the generational duty residents have to keep the streams and forests in their natural state.

The documentary also looks at the precious waterways of the Everglades and its fight for survival amidst an ever growing, pollutant dumping society.

Through lawsuits, headlines and literature, the heroes of the waters work hard to protect the delicate flow we know as Mother Nature.

The documentary pays powerful tribute to nature's guardians both early on and present time, who work in the trenches to sustain life for the next generations.

This work of art is ideal for the whole family including historians, classrooms and anyone that wants to learn more about the conservation and preservation of our precious waterways.

The premiere will be held at the Newport Cinema 4, Saturday, Oct. 26 at 10 a.m. Tickets to the premiere are \$5.

