

BLUE RIDGE LIVING

New documentary looks at river preservation

By Robert Moore
Times News Staff Writer

When David Weintraub approaches a documentary subject, it usually comes from a place close to the heart. He also finds he's been processing the subject long before production begins.

"Usually it's always something that's been in my head before filming begins," he said. "The films arise from something I'm passionate about. I find I've been working on the film and didn't realize it."

"Guardians of Our Troubled Waters" is the award-winning Weintraub's newest film, examining the extraordinary things that regular people have done to protect southern rivers and streams.

The film is produced through The Center for Cultural Preservation, WNC's History and Documentary Film Center, and is its sixth feature film.

"Guardians of Our Troubled Waters" will have its world premieres on June 20 at 7 p.m. at Blue Ridge Community College's Thomas Auditorium, on June 22 at 7:30 p.m. at the NC Arboretum and June 23 7:30 p.m. at White Horse Black Mountain. Tickets are \$15 and advance reservations are recommended by registering online at www.saveculture.org or calling the Center at 828-692-8062.

Music will open each pro-



Filmmaker David Weintraub interviews Jim Stokely at Wilma Dykeman's house. [PROVIDED PHOTO]

Want to go?

What: 'Guardians of Our Troubled Waters' screenings
When/Where: 7 p.m. June 20 (Blue Ridge Community College's Thomas Auditorium); 7:30 p.m. June 22 (NC Arboretum), 7:30 p.m. June 23 (White Horse Black Mountain)
Tickets: \$15
Info: www.saveculture.org or 828-692-8062

Weintraub.

"I grew up in a big city. You know you had gotten near the water because you could

it's like dying and going to heaven. I wanted to be part of the efforts to protect the water."

Weintraub joined what is now MountainTrue and was trained to be a Green River watershed coordinator. Weintraub is now the executive director of The Center for Cultural Preservation

The film looks at the stories of those who stood up against the destruction fighting against toxic pollution from factories, draining of wetlands and the damming of tributaries that would have forced

quote from Wilma Dykeman, author of the book "The French Broad," who said "Just as rivers belong to no one, they belong to everyone."

"That's where (the film) came from, caring about the rivers and streams (and) realizing how valuable it is to live in a place, how easily it is to take it for granted," he said. "I've been living this film."

Weintraub noted it was hard to say there was one thing for viewers to take from the film.

"It's really difficult to distill it in one thing," he said,

RIVER

From Page D1

waterways don't conform to the clichés that people expect.

"Today, when we think of the protection of natural resources, we tend to categorize things as a 'bunch of tree huggers,'" he said, adding it goes back through history.

"The Cherokee saw every body of water as sacred. They considered their occupation as stewards of the river," Weintraub said. "When the settlers got here, they had a similar relationship."

This would go on to include Baptist settlers and occupants, as well as farmers, who depended on the water.

"River baptisms were a key part of life for those who lived here," Weintraub said. "In the Industrial Age, it was farmers who stood up to them (paper mills and other pollutants). Rivers were the lifeblood of the community."

Weintraub said the film focuses on Western North Carolina, East Tennessee and South Florida. It also looks at those who stood up against those hurting the rivers, including Dykeman, Marjory

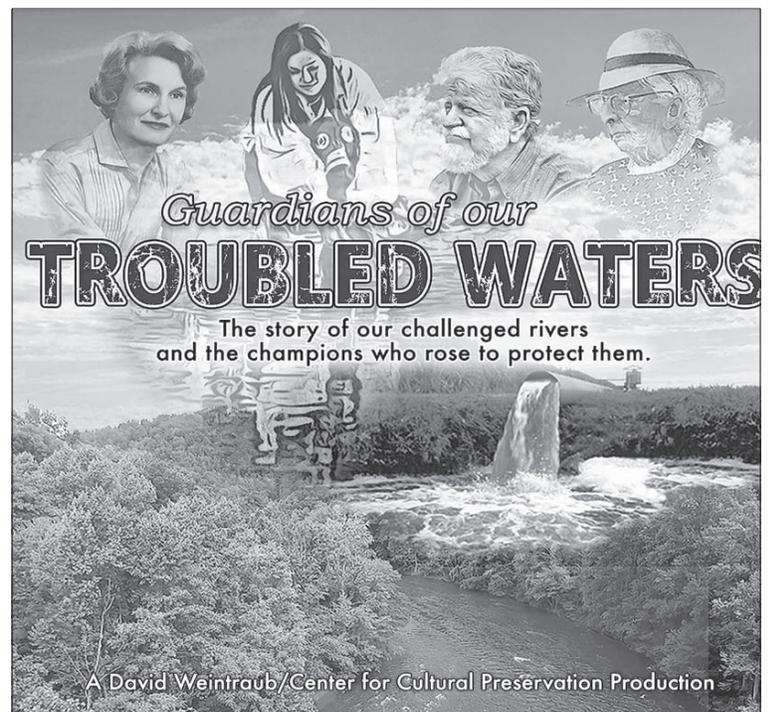
Stoneman Douglas, and the protectors of the Pigeon River, the Dead Pigeon River Council and others.

"One of the messages I learned was the amazing diversity of people who realized how valuable these waters were," he said.

The film is a collaboration with the Eastern Band of Cherokee, Wilma Dykeman Legacy Foundation, MountainTrue, Conserving Carolina, Haywood Waterways Association, Friends of the Everglades and Clean Water Expected in East Tennessee. Major sponsors include the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, the Community Foundation of Henderson County, the McClure Education Foundation, the Pigeon River Fund, Gaia Herbs and Prestige Subaru with additional support from Headwaters Outfitters and Mast General Store.

The Center for Cultural Preservation is a cultural nonprofit organization dedicated to working for mountain heritage continuity through oral history, documentary film, education and public programs, and is located at 711B S. Grove St., Hendersonville.

For more information on the Center, call 828-692-8062 or visit www.saveculture.org.



The DVD cover for "Guardians of our Troubled Waters."