



*Merry Christmas
and Happy New
Year!*

It's hard to believe that another year has gone by here in central Appalachia. However, as I look back, it will be a year to remember. Although our Foundation is new, we have actually been at work since January 2014 to get to this point. In January we established our base in Virginia and applied with the IRS for our tax exempt status.



In late August of this year we received our 501(C)(3) from the IRS and began to piece together our plans for what was left of this year and develop a direction for 2015. To say that we have lofty goals would be an understatement. However, I'm of the firm belief that either you dream big or don't dream at all. Appalachia touches thirteen states. Within five years we want a presence in each of those states and maximize our efficiency and impact in each as we operate as good stewards with the hard earned money that is donated to us for our mission.

At the core of what we do, for what most organizations do for that matter, is the family. Helping families and helping neighbors. Helping communities. It's at this time of year that we put

our attention squarely on our families as we gather around the table at Thanksgiving and prepare for Christmas. It's a time when we visit with family members we may not have seen any other time of the year. We brave the weather and the traffic for days of shopping or we climb onto the roof to hang lights and decorate our yards. However you spend your holiday celebrating the meaning of Christmas we want to take this moment to wish everyone a safe and happy season. Thanks for being a part of our family here at the F.A.A. Merry Christmas!

J.C. Schweingrouber, President/Director

FAA News and Updates

This month will mark the end of our fiscal year, although we just got started after receiving our tax exempt status. That gives us a lot to look forward to in 2015 as we jumpstart our fundraising program and work toward our goal of providing vocational grants as a part of our Coalfield Assistance Program.

This month we will be solidifying contacts across the region in regards to offering the grants and providing those to qualified candidates later in the Spring of 2015. We are currently in contact with several of vocational training centers and Community Colleges.

In December the FAA will be registered in Kentucky. We are headquartered in Southwest Virginia. Being registered in Kentucky will allow us to bring our mission to another part of Central Appalachia where our CAP program and focus on arts and culture will be greatly utilized. In the

coming year we will extend our reach into Tennessee, West Virginia and Ohio where we have waiting volunteers looking forward to helping us expand our reach.

SupportAppalachia.org

The FAA website, www.supportappalachia.org, will be available by mid-December. We are putting the final touches on the site and will be adding significant content in the coming weeks and months.

On it you will find information about our Coalfield Assistance Program, our efforts to develop a comprehensive online encyclopedia (of sorts) of our Appalachian history, environment and promotion of our countless artists that add to our unique and exceptional culture. You will also find information about our mission, vision, and values as well as the various ways to donate and help build a long term legacy in our communities. For now, your tax deductible donation can be made payable to Foundation For Appalachian Advancement and mailed to:

Foundation For Appalachian Advancement, P.O. Box 397, Richlands, VA 24641.

Artist of the Month

Jake Lawson of Gate City, Virginia, has lived a very interesting life as he's chased his dream of being an actor. Jake, a former public school teacher and basketball coach in Gate City, left our region for L.A. over nine years ago to pursue an acting career.

"You have to have that never say die attitude," he says. "Life in this business is tough. You have to keep improving and believing in yourself. And now, finally, after nine years I'm seeing good results from the hard work I put into it. You have to have family and friends to lean on through the tough times. They get you through them."

Jake still spends a lot of time back in Appalachia with his friends and family while he travels for the

acting jobs that come his way. He reflects on the courage that it took to leave behind a steady job, a predictable income with health benefits to chase the dream that had been a part of him his entire life. "This was just what I was supposed to do," he says. "Thank God for all those old jobs and struggles. That was my path to travel. You have to enjoy the journey."



Jake recently signed with a top talent agency in the Southeast. He also played a major role in recently released *Field of Lost Shoes*, a story set back in the era of slavery. He also has a part in *Solace*, starring Anthony Hopkins and Colin Farrell that is due out in 2015.

For a complete list of Jake's work you can visit his IMDB page at:

http://www.imdb.com/name/nm2743448/?ref=sr_1

Congratulations on your successes, Jake. We look forward to highlighting more of our great Appalachian artists in the months and years to come.

*The photo on page 1 of the snowy mountains was provided by Linda Haas of Scott County, Virginia.