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**Great Kanawha Resource  
Conservation &  
Development Council**

## Press Release

Mason County Tourism Center and Great Kanawha RC&D dedicate the two newest additions to the First West Virginia Quilt Trail.

Quilting has a whole new meaning in Mason County WV. A new economic development and tourism program has those visiting the county in “stitches”.

Point Pleasant, WV August 27, 2008: Mason County may be looking a little different along its rural country roads. At least that is the hope of the Mason County Quilt Trail Steering Committee. The committee is hoping to increase the amount of rural tourism in the area by providing a new view through the back roads with the appeal of a traditional Appalachian folk art.

The program provides Mason County residents an opportunity to receive a wooden quilt square to be constructed and painted with a quilt square block to be displayed on barns, historical properties, places of business, cultural significance or urban legends. Not only do these large (typical size is 8 feet by 8 feet) quilt square draw attention during a Sunday drive through the area, but hopefully will increase the economic opportunities for local residents.

Denny Bellamy, Mason County Tourism Director says “if people have all these tourists passing by their driveway, why not find a way to sell them something”. The Steering Committee is hoping that is just what will happen. All kinds of businesses are possible along the route, from pick your own operation, road side stands, crafts, or even Bed & Breakfast Inns. West Virginia State University Extension is also planning a series of workshops to help local residents prepare budgets and business plans to start their own businesses.

The first two Quilt Squares were placed in Mason County on June 11 at the WV Farm Museum and the Mason County Tourism Center. The next dedication ceremony is planned for August 27, 2008 and will feature two very prominent figures in the area.

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At 10:00 on August 27<sup>th</sup>, Commissioner Gus Douglass and his wife Anna Lee will unveil the first square to be displayed in the area designated in the WV Ladies Route at their farm approximately 15 miles south of Point Pleasant on Route 62 at the Douglass' farm. "This area is designated for all the ladies of WV and Appalachia that helped the family farm exist and grow in the early years and through out time. "We felt having the first Quilt Square unveiled in this area should belong to Ms. Douglass," commented Mollie Yauger, member of the Steering Committee. Everyone in the state is aware of the long record that Commissioner Douglass enjoys as Commissioner of Agriculture. Many believe it can be directly attributed to his wife by his side all these years as WV First Lady of Agriculture Anna Lee Douglass.

The second Quilt Square to be dedicated on August 27<sup>th</sup> will be at Tim-Rock Dairy north of Point Pleasant on Route 62 at 11:30. This farm is also well known in the area and plays a vital role in the agricultural community. Tim-Rock Dairy is a third generation dairy farm in the county. "In a time when many family dairies are closing their doors it is truly an honor to be able to recognize an operating dairy and to draw special attention to their farming achievements" said Jackie Byars, Coordinator Great Kanawha Resource Conservation & Development Council.

Anyone interested in attending the dedication ceremonies are welcome. If you would like more information about the Quilt Trail Program in Mason County you may contact the Great Kanawha RC&D at (304) 776-5256 ext. 111.