



For Immediate Release

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## Children's History Project Yields Book

BERKELEY SPRINGS, W.VA.— A trip to a protest comes alive when four children discover someone with a secret. That's what a group of children at Wind Dance Farm—a rural West Virginia school whose programs supplement the curricula of home school and public school students—imagined after investigating the practice of mountaintop coal removal in their state. “We just couldn't find very much on the subject aimed at children,” explained Leslie Milbourne, founder and educator at Wind Dance, “so the children decided to write something themselves.” The new children's book, *Saving Annie's Mountain* is the result.

Delving deeper into the practices of the coal industry, the children—Lillie Gill-Newton, Maryam Keeley, Nicholas Mokhiber, and Samantha Stewart—discovered that not only were mining companies blowing the tops off mountains, but nearly a century ago the US Army fought against miners in what became known as the Battle of Blair Mountain. These events became the core of their story.

“Our goal for this book is to educate young readers so that they can think for themselves,” said Stewart. The children's effort produced a sometimes-funny, often-revealing adventure for four children who leave their parents at a protest march and begin to explore a timeworn mining town. Their discoveries yield an understanding of life in coal country no classroom can provide.

“This project really made us think about what we as a species are doing to our own planet,” Mokhiber observed, “not only that, but what we are doing to ourselves.” Beautifully illustrated by O’Ryan, a professional artist, *Saving Annie's Mountain* presents a candid look at life in coal country as seen through children's eyes.

**Authors:** When they wrote *Saving Annie's Mountain*, Lillie Gill-Newton was nine years old, Maryam Keeley and Samantha Stewart were eleven, and Nicholas Mokhiber was thirteen. All were homeschooled students, taking supplemental history, writing, and science classes at Wind Dance Farm and Earth Education Center in Morgan County, West Virginia. Lillie, Maryam, and Samantha are currently completing their upper grades in public school; Nicholas is starting college.

**Illustrator:** O’Ryan is an illustrator, activist, father, box builder, circus performer, and all around nice guy. He spends his time between Buckhannon, West Virginia, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and enjoys most of it.

**Downloadable cover image** available at [www.coldrunbooks.com](http://www.coldrunbooks.com)

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