

*Come join us at East Meadow Creek, a train signal site in West Virginia. It is April 10 today and we are enjoying this beautiful area.*

### East Meadow Creek 2008

East Meadow Creek, West Virginia, is a spot of solitude. Parked along the tracks, Jim is searching for the perfect vantage point for pictures of passing trains while I sit in the warm confines of our little red Cavalier. Gossamer spring-green abounds all around us and explosions of forsythia dot the roadsides as not-quite-open-yet redbuds hint at their glowing future. Hot pink cherry blossoms strut their stuff and pear trees create a veil of white lace over the lawns.

Jim chats with Mr. Chicago Transplant, (He and his wife moved here from Chicago a few years ago.) the man who lives across the road. We've met him before but this time his hair, mustache, and goatee have turned pure white. He carries a gnarled walking stick, made safely skid-proof with a black rubber chair-leg protector, and is taking his early morning stroll along The New River. Mrs. Chicago Transplant is relaxing in a swing on their front porch, just "BEING" and absorbing the beauty that encircles her. Little Beagle has plopped himself directly in the middle of the road and is busy rearranging his fleas; traffic drives around him ---- obviously they are used to his daily routine.

Beside me The New River is rushing along, constructing islands of foam as it kisses numerous rocks. A flock of geese honk overhead on their way to their summer home.

Four trees have birdhouses attached and the prospective tenants are jockeying for squatters' rights. My money is on the bluebirds this year. Dandelions peek from between fresh new grass and Jim snaps a picture of one plant. We are about a mile from Interstate 64 but, through a notch in the mountains, I can see the sun glinting off cars and trucks as they whiz along in their own important life. I punch in daughter Lori's cell phone number and learn that she and her family are rocketing across South Texas on Interstate 10 in their motor home. It hits me that I can see an interstate and talk to somebody half a continent away but this New River is still flowing the same way it has for eons. It is comforting to know that, despite modern technology, the basic things in life are still the same ----- rivers still flow, birds continue to fly, the wind can gently ruffle your hair, flowers and trees repeat their age-old cycles,

and most people are still capable of love. The trick is to keep the basics but use the modern embellishments wisely.

Several westbound trains achieve their immortality on Jim's film, then it is time to wander more back roads on our way to our Hawks Nest Lodge destination.

But first we need to stop at Sandstone Visitors' Center to renew our acquaintance with Park Ranger, Kathleen Holloway, whose mom-in-law lives in Freeport, Illinois, my old stomping grounds. Such a small world! I am so very blessed!

