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For Immediate Release

Eden Valley Enterprises is pleased to announce that the Gallia County Charitable Foundation and the Women's Fund of the Community Foundation of Lorain County have awarded grants in support of *GRANDMA GATEWOOD: AN APPALACHIAN TALE*. Emma Gatewood, who lived in Gallipolis, Ohio, was the first woman to solo thru-hike the 2,180-mile Appalachian Trail (AT) in 1955 at the age of 67 after raising 11 children and surviving domestic abuse. She is the subject of this Eden Valley project which is being done with WGTE/PBS, FilmAffects and TrueNorth Cultural Arts Center.

EMMA GATEWOOD: AN APPALACHIAN TALE will be the culmination of a multi-part project that began in 2009. With funding from the Buckeye Trail Association, the Ohio Humanities Council and the National Storytelling Network, initial research into Emma's life was completed along with the creation of a storytelling program and companion e-book, *EMMA GATEWOOD: OHIO'S LEGENDARY HIKER* by Bette Lou Higgins and Kelly

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Boyer Sagert. The storytelling program premiered at the Westlake Community Services Center in November, 2011 and was presented nine times during 2012 and several more performances are already scheduled for 2013 (for a complete schedule see: <http://edenvalleyenterprises.org/calendar.html>).

Emma Gatewood is a true Ohio folk heroine. She rose above impoverished circumstances and personal crises in order to achieve national distinction. After her record-setting hike in 1955, she went on to hike the 2,000 mile Oregon Trail from Independence, Missouri to Portland, Oregon in 1959; she hiked the Appalachian Trail twice more (the last time in 1963 when she was 75), she helped establish Ohio's Buckeye Trail (which now includes a six-mile section in Hocking Hills known as the Grandma Gatewood Trail), and, by the time she passed away, she had hiked 10,000 miles!

This gift from the Women's Fund and the Gallia County Charitable Foundation will help in the final phases of this project which include completion of the PBS documentary and a first-person character program. We are grateful to these foundations for their support and look forward to sharing this inspiring story before it is forgotten to history.

To find out more about the project visit our website at

<http://edenvalleyenterprises.org/progdesc/gatewood/gtwdinf.htm>

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