FRIENDS OF COAL
A SUCCESS STORY

Friends of Coal
Friends of Coal: a Success

As it enters its twelfth year, the Friends of Coal campaign continues to grow not only in number of supporters, but also into new states where our logo becomes a fixture both in and beyond the coalfields.

How it Started

Developed originally in West Virginia in 2001, Friends of Coal began with a comment from Beckley coal operator Warren Hylton. In a discussion about how the coal industry might rally its supporters, Hylton said, “We have lots of friends out there. If we ask, I’d bet they would help us.” The next step was the employment of Charles Ryan Associates, an integrated marketing firm located in Charleston, WV. Under the direction of the West Virginia Coal Association, a logo, website, materials, and infrastructure were created to promote and support the campaign. Its growth was exponential, as the logo became a common sight across the Mountain State.

Specific highlights of the campaign’s success in West Virginia includes the sponsorship of the Friends of Coal Bowl, which is the annual football game between Marshall University and West Virginia University (WVU), a gigantic car show in Beckley, the use of former Marshall and WVU football coaches Bobby Pruett and Don Nehlen to serve as spokespeople for the campaign, and a Friends of Coal license plate for personal vehicles that was introduced earlier this year.
Another highlight of the Friends of Coal Campaign occurred in 2007 with its move to the neighboring state of Kentucky. Similar growth was witnessed in Kentucky as the Kentucky Coal Association adopted the campaign’s logo for its use. Several successes emerged at the direction of KCA’s Public Relations committee, such as the sponsorship of the Thunder Over Louisville fireworks display and concert that coincided with the 2007 Kentucky Derby. Other events included a large Friends of Coal rally organized during the 2008 General Assembly in Frankfort to draw attention to legislation that was harmful to Kentucky’s coal production. Thousands of supporters wearing shirts and carrying banners with the Friends of Coal logo made a loud statement in Kentucky’s Capitol where the anti-coal legislation was ultimately defeated that year. “It was an impressive day for Kentucky coal,” said David Moss, KCA’s Vice President. “From politicians to the media, it was obvious there was a tremendous amount of support for our efforts and the coal miners of Kentucky.”

In the Fall of 2008, the idea of a Friends of Coal license plate was suggested by Jean Scruggs of James River Coal. After coordinating with the Kentucky Department of Transportation, 900 prepaid applications would have to be collected in order for the plate to be made by the department. Originally thought to be a daunting task, the popularity of the Friends of Coal logo proved to be more recognizable than previously thought. In less than ninety days, 900 applications were collected and submitted to the Department. By January 2009, the Friends of Coal license plate began production and, by March 2009, was made available to the public.

In three years, more than 55,000 personal vehicles display this distinctive plate, along with nearly two thousand motorcycles. At the announcement of the new license plate Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear spoke about the importance of coal to the Commonwealth’s economy. “Kentucky owes a lot to coal,” Governor Beshear said. “Coal creates over 17,000 jobs, 90-plus percent of our electricity and more than a billion dollars in direct wages. The Friends of Coal specialty plate gives drivers in the Bluegrass a chance to show their appreciation for the mineral and those who mine it.”

THE MOVE TO KENTUCKY

The Big Tent

It is important to remember that Friends of Coal was not originally designed to be a public education campaign. Its primary purpose is to gather people who work within the coal industry or related companies, family members of these workers, or individuals who feel an affinity to the coal industry or its important connection to our economy. In this way, the Friends of Coal acts as a “Big Tent”, to use a political term, to allow our supporters to work under a common banner and logo, and also be identified as supporters. For too long, the coal industry has been perceived a business run by a small group of people from out-of-state who have little connection to West Virginia or Kentucky. The success of Friends of Coal in both states negates this perception and shows the overwhelming support that was there before, but not identified. Beyond identification, Friends of Coal also creates a network of...
information that allows us to share information and opportunities with identified Friends. Using inexpensive E-mail blasts, state coal associations have invited fellow Friends to attend public hearings and rallies, such as the recent rally and US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) hearing in Frankfort, KY, on June 5, 2012. Nearly two thousand procoal supporters, many of whom were wearing Friends of Coal shirts, attended the rally and hearing afterwards, which clearly demonstrated that far greater support of our coal production over the current actions of the EPA or the anti-coal activists in attendance. To have an event more than two hours from our Eastern Coalfield was an impressive win for Kentucky’s coal industry.

THE FUTURE

Friends of Coal has tremendous growth potential. We have been contacted by other states interested in starting similar campaigns and are assisting in any way possible. While there needs to be a coordinating group, on a local level, such as a state coal association, to make certain that the campaign is professional in nature, it would be expected that the logo would be well accepted in other coal-producing states.
FRIENDS OF COAL: Logo

The Friends of Coal logo was created in 2001 by the West Virginia Coal Association to give individuals who support our industry a way to be visually identified as supporters, especially outside of the coalfields. This logo helps define those individuals who support the important work of our coal miners as well as the contribution that the coal industry makes every day to power this great nation.
FRIENDS OF COAL: Fact Card for Promoting Western Coal

With the success of Friends of Coal in the Eastern United States, the Rocky Mountain Coal Mining Institute (RMCSI) decided in late 2012 to adopt the use of the popular logo and spread the positive messages behind it across the Western United States.

RMCSI, which covers eight Western states, will use the Friends of Coal logo to develop new messages to help educate those states that may not understand the significance of coal and how it provides electricity, both for their state as well as the nation. The coal industry employs thousands of Western U.S. coal miners, but also provides livelihoods for many more workers employed in the transportation, use, or support services related to the coal industry. These employment opportunities literally power the economies of Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Montana, etc. Friends of Coal-West, managed by RMCSI, will be a new voice in the West in support of one of the United States’ most important industries - Coal.

To find out more, log on to www.rmcsi.org.

- Provided more than half the electricity for 3 billion people...10 times the population of the U.S.
- Generated power equivalent to 1,340 nuclear power plants.
- Produced 23 TWh of electricity, more than gas, wind and hydro COMBINED.
- Enhanced energy security for dozens of nations across the globe.
- Provided over 40% of the power for 200 BILLION text messages and the activation of 350,000 Androids.
- Fueled about 60% of China’s industrial sector.
- Enabled the production of 2.4 MILLION metric tons of steel.
Kentucky Coal Association to host Inaugural Coal Symposium with Coal Prep International in 2013

Join KCA and Coal Prep 2013 for a full day of education, networking, and panel talk about coal pricing, regulations, and the future with coal leaders.

MONDAY, APRIL 29, 2013 | LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

The Symposium will cover topics such as:

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- Emerging Environmental Regulatory Issues in the Appalachian Coalsàns
- Long-Term Future of the Appalachian Industry
- Emerging Health and Safety Issues
- Emerging Health and Safety Issues
- New Innovative Mining Techniques for Surface & Underground Mining

Register Today!
To find out more, log on to www.kentuckycoal.com.

FRIENDS OF COAL: Series of Advertisements

Friends of Coal continues to create print advertisements in various publications to share the message about the positive impact coal brings to Kentucky. These print ads can be seen in statewide publications across Kentucky, as well as coal trade magazines.
FRIENDS OF COAL: License Plates:

The Friends of Coal License plate continues to increase numbers across the Commonwealth of Kentucky. With the purchase of this Kentucky license plate, here in Kentucky, a $10.00 donation is collected and distributed back to the Kentucky Coal Association once a year. The funds collected from the license plate are divided and split between the ongoing public education campaign for Friends of Coal and for coal-related scholarships for Kentuckians.

Items such as the oval Friends of Coal stickers given away for free are purchased with a portion of license plate funds. Whether it is a hard hat sized decal or the standard 4x6 sticker, they are distributed free to anyone requesting one (limited quantity) from anywhere in the United States. The Friends of Coal sticker is still the most popular item requested from the general public.

An added bonus from the Friends of Coal license plate has been the distribution of scholarship monies to the University of Kentucky Mining Engineering program. More than $50,000 has been donated to the Program to help Kentucky students obtain an education and pursue a career in mining. As the sale of the Friends of Coal license plates increase, so does the level of contributions to scholarships. By 2013, more than 65,000 license plates have been sold in Kentucky.
FRIENDS OF COAL: Joining with the Boy Scouts of America in Kentucky

Kentucky has two distinct coalfields, the Western Kentucky coalfield and the Eastern Kentucky coalfield. Most families within the coalfields have had some type of connection to coal. However, the two largest population centers in Kentucky are Louisville and Lexington, and are located more than two hours away from the nearest coalfield. Bringing young people from areas outside the coalfields was the main reason for creating this partnership. With vast amounts of acreage on numerous reclamation sites throughout Eastern Kentucky, Friends of Coal created the East Kentucky Coal Camporee to expose more non-coalfield residents to coal.

Started in 2011, 200 Boy Scouts have participated in a two and a half day campout where they were educated on topics such as mining engineering, geology, mine rescue, earth sciences, as well as many activities that gave them a greater understanding about coal. In 2012, 400 scouts attended, including participants from neighboring Ohio and West Virginia, continuing to help grow the event.
FRIENDS OF COAL: Partnering with the University of Kentucky

We believe that the supporters of Friends of Coal are firm believers in our coal industry. The small minority of Kentuckians who oppose coal are usually anti-fossil fuel, but tend to be adept at drawing media attention and communicating their messages. But between these two groups of supporters are a large number of Kentucky’s population who either have no opinion regarding coal or may not even be aware that we mine coal in Kentucky. Some Kentuckians do not realize how coal benefits their way of life. They are only concerned with the proverbial “light switch” working when activated each day with a simple flip of the switch or become concerned about energy issues when they see an increase on their electric bill. We believed that Kentucky had a large “middle ground” of the population that needed to be educated. It wasn’t that they were against the coal industry – They simply did not know how important coal was to their daily lives and the economy of Kentucky. This lack of knowledge was especially prevalent outside of our coalfields.

Starting in 2010, Friends of Coal started a partnership with the University of Kentucky to communicate the positives of coal in Kentucky. An advertising campaign during football games in Commonwealth Stadium included announcements that explained the connection between coal, electricity, and the lights in the stadium during night games, stressing that these lights were powered by Kentucky coal. Other marketing initiatives included specialized game day sponsorships where Friends of Coal was the central advertiser throughout the entire game. At Rupp Arena, where UK’s men’s basketball games are played, similar messaging was used with center court signage displayed for the entire arena. This signage was also visible on all television broadcasts. Friends of Coal has been successful in reaching that important “middle ground” that otherwise would have been unaware of the positive impact coal brings to Kentucky.
FRIENDS OF COAL: Palm Cards

Friends of Coal has created a series of palm cards to further spread the message about coal. We have used these palm cards to share facts about Kentucky coal mining and to publicize our highly successful Friends of Coal license plate program. Keeping timely information in the hands of supporters enables them to refute negative attacks and incorrect information from anti-coal activists. Palm cards are an inexpensive and easy way to get the message out.