

 **ADVENTURES**  
ON THE GORGE  
*Leading the world outdoors*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE





Jo-Beth Stamm guides on the New and Gauley Rivers when she is not a flight nurse.



Jayann Jones is a schoolteacher and river guide..

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Photos Available

## Adventures on the Gorge to Offer Virtual Adventure Forums

FAYETTEVILLE, W. Va., Jan. 7, 2021 - Southern West Virginia's [Adventures on the Gorge](#) (AOTG), located on the rim of America's newest national park - the [New River Gorge National Park & Preserve](#) - is offering a series of [adventure forums](#) starting January 8, 2021.

These online webinars will cover pertinent adventure travel topics such as the commercial whitewater industry, diversity in the outdoors and local dining options. The first topic will be "Women of Whitewater" at 7 p.m. January 8 followed by "The Fayetteville Food Scene" January 22.

The first forum will feature four women with extensive whitewater experience working as guides for AOTG and other area outfitters:

- Schoolteacher Hillarie Jones began guiding in the 1970s and is likely the second woman to ever guide a whitewater raft in West Virginia.
- Joy Marr started guiding in West Virginia in 1977. She went on to guide internationally and even had a short stint as a river ranger in the New River Gorge. Joy owns a hostel in the area and is the proprietor of Gourmet on the Gorge, specializing in catering and cooking education.
- Jayann Jones has been guiding actively for 26 years for a number of companies, including Songer Whitewater and Adventures on the Gorge starting in 2012. Jayann - no relation to Hillarie - is also a schoolteacher.
- Jo-Beth Stamm is a flight nurse who was a full-time guide for 13 years before scaling back to a part-time role. She has worked for Adventures on the Gorge since 2012.

The webinars are free to join and will be conducted on the Zoom platform. Participants can register online by going to [adventuresonthegorge.com/adventure-forum/](https://adventuresonthegorge.com/adventure-forum/). The company will notify those on its email newsletter list of future forums. To be added to this list, register at [adventuresonthegorge.com/](https://adventuresonthegorge.com/).

"As the state's largest outfitter and the result of the merger of multiple industry pioneers, we have seen this industry grow from infancy to maturity," said Roger Wilson, CEO of Adventures on the Gorge. "Between our staff, alumni and friends, we have a deep bench of experienced adventurers who are willing to share their insights and stories."

### History of AOTG

The origins of whitewater rafting in West Virginia can be traced back to the mid-1960s when college-aged adventurers took Army surplus rafts and taught themselves how to navigate the New River. The nearby Gauley River offered even more challenges with plenty of rapids, and it was not unusual to see a dedicated group pulling out of the river to scout the rapids and determine the best routes in which to navigate them.

Early trips were conducted for fun with friends and family. As the word got out, however, opportunities to turn a profit by selling river trips emerged, and a fledgling industry was born.

In the late 1970s a group of friends from Cincinnati discovered West Virginia rafting and set about turning their passion into a livelihood. Before long, the friends were part of a growing industry of rafting outfitters located near the town of Fayetteville. These companies expanded their offerings to include campgrounds and cabins as well as foodservice facilities.

In 2007 the owners of Class VI, Rivermen and Mountain River Tours merged their operations, named the new entity Adventures on the Gorge (AOTG) and embarked upon aggressive expansion plans. The new company purchased the assets of Songer Whitewater shortly after the merger.

Today Adventures on the Gorge features an array of accommodations and restaurants as well as numerous adventure experiences including whitewater rafting on two of the country's most spectacular rivers, ziplining, an aerial adventure park, Bridge Walk, kayaking, mountain biking, stand up paddleboarding hiking, caving and rock climbing. The resort also features a variety of retail clothing, gift and gear shops.

In 2017 the company opened the [Lookout Post](#) rustic small-group conference center.

Named one of the top six adventure resorts in the country by [U.S. News & World Report](#), Adventures on the Gorge is located on more than 250 acres along the rim of the majestic New River Gorge.

Travelers can find out more about Adventures on the Gorge [online](#), by calling 1-855-379-8738, or connecting on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Google+](#), [TripAdvisor](#), [YouTube](#), and [Vimeo](#) and signing up for AOTG [e-newsletter](#). #AdventuresOnTheGorge  
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**Video:**

[Scenic spring summer](#)  
[Scenic fall winter](#)  
[Rafting](#)  
[Adventures on the Gorge](#)  
[New River Gorge Bridge](#)

**Photos:**

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