

# Tennes-Sierran

The monthly state newsletter for the Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club

Volume 45, Number 6 - November/December, 2013



## Gary Wolf and Sundog Solar at The End of Their Rope

by **Christopher Anderson**  
**Sierra Club - Middle TN Group, Conservation Vice-chair**

It has come to my attention that a dear friend and long-time proponent of solar energy in TN has decided to call it quits and move his solar installation business to Central America. Gary Wolf, of Sundog Solar, an installer since 2007, was also an original employee and first crew leader for the first full-time solar PV installation company in Tennessee. He is one of a very few certified solar installers in Tennessee to be a licensed electrical contractor, and the only electrical contractor in Tennessee to have two solar certifications. Gary established and taught a solar installer training program at the College of Applied Technology in Dickson, Tennessee. He has designed, installed and serviced more types and sizes of solar PV systems than any other solar installer in the state.

After speaking with him last night, he wrote to me, "I'm confident solar energy is inevitable. Clean, reliable, safe, free fuel from the sun is an obvious piece of our energy future. But the state of Tennessee abandoned its support with a change in administration and TVA is now undermining its own program to build a solar infrastructure here. Both the state and TVA programs have been poorly designed, mismanaged, and counter to the long-term public interest.

Less importantly, they've made Sundog Solar an unsustainable small family business. For Janie and me, our best alternative is to speed up our retirement plan to move to Central America.

The changes TVA made in its solar program for 2013 have made it impossible for a small company focused on residential systems to stay in business. TVA's new capacity limits effectively closed the annual program in April and meant Sundog Solar couldn't provide work for its crew - the only one in the state composed entirely of NABCEP entry-level certified installers, all of whom were graduates of the solar program in Dickson.

Sundog Solar was able to survive a bit longer because other solar companies lacking technical expertise hired us to install or service their systems. But to prosper in the immediate future, Tennessee solar companies will have to focus on large commercial installations and solar farms, not rooftop solar. They'll have to have a sales

force to create a backlog of work and the engineering expertise to do those huge jobs, de-emphasizing affordable residential solar and ignoring do-it-yourselfers.

**"We appreciate those who stay on to fight the continuing battles for clean energy. We still think that's what Sundog Solar called 'Barking up the right tree.'"**

It's not all doom and gloom on the solar front. Our ranking in the nation could certainly be worse. However, Germany, for one example (with multiple times our solar capacity from a fraction of our sunlight), has done so well with solar, not because of large commercial installations, but rather with incentives for so many smaller-scale home systems. TVA has the unique potential to be a national leader on renewables and all of the sustainable jobs and industry it can provide. Now, more than ever, we need to keep the pressure on all fossil fuel extraction! After seeing and smelling so many leaks and seeps around oil/gas fracking wells in our State Park and TWRA public lands on our beloved Cumberland Plateau, many of us are saying natural gas is a gang-plank, not a bridge! There is a better way!

Gary Wolf was my solar contractor for my 4.2

mW solar system that sits by Highway 100 in Bellevue. Gary was very knowledgeable and extremely easy to work with. He was flexible enough to allow me to do parts of the work myself even though that stretched the project over several more months than it would have if he had done it all. Being a general contractor myself for the past thirty years I appreciated Gary's patience. I also appreciated Gary's enthusiasm for solar energy and his eagerness to teach me as much as I wanted to learn about the subject. Gary has had a history of being a teacher and that really shows when you work with him. In fact, my project became a "teaching moment" for six students at a Dickson County solar installers school who volunteered to share three of their Sundays helping Gary and I with the installation. They were all so enamored with Gary and eager to learn what he had to say that they kept coming back to work for free. I got the benefit not only of saving money but also of being in the background and absorbing a huge amount of knowledge by "sitting" in the "back of the class."

Gary Wolf probably knows as much about solar electric installations as anyone in Tennessee and I dare say, more than many that work in the TVA solar program. To push him out of business was a huge mistake, and he will be greatly missed.

**Eric Lewis**  
**Solar Works Construction; Frack-free TN;**  
**Sierra Club member**

*(continued on page 2)*

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# Tennes-Sierran

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## ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Submission Target Date is November 25 for the January-February issue.

1. E-mail and e-mail attached files are preferred. Send to [gvanhorn26@gmail.com](mailto:gvanhorn26@gmail.com) either with embedded text messages, or attached files. Attached files are preferred. Word is preferred but Apple users may send articles in Pages.

2. Photographs should be scanned in a .jpg or a .tif file format then either attached to e-mail or mailed via U.S. Postal Service on a 3 1/2" diskette or CD RM. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like your diskette or photo prints returned.

3. Hard-copy handwritten or typewritten articles may be accepted: however, pre-approval from the Editor is required.

4. Any materials submitted via USPS mail will not be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided.

5. Concerns or complaints should be addressed to: Barbara Kelly, Communications Committee, [bk1rivers@comcast.net](mailto:bk1rivers@comcast.net).

**The opinions expressed in the Tennes-Sierran are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Tennessee Chapter, or the Sierra Club.**

**Target Date for  
January-February Issue is  
November 25, 2013.**

**All meetings and outings  
notices, articles, and  
photographs  
should be in by then.**

**Send material to  
Gene Van Horn at  
[gvanhorn26@gmail.com](mailto:gvanhorn26@gmail.com)**

## Gary Wolf and Sundog Solar at The End of Their Rope

Some snippets from Gary's blog post that appeared as a guest editorial in the Tennessean earlier this year:

"Timid' comes to mind. Or 'stifling,' which is the effect of TVA's timid solar policy."

"So for all practical purposes, TVA will allow a maximum of 17.5 MW of solar to be built this year in Tennessee and parts of six other states (so 'meager'?). Our Georgia neighbors (at least those in the smaller Georgia Power service area) will be looking at 45 MW. And that fairly glaring difference will be magnified in the next few years as the Tennessee Valley falls further behind its neighbor."

"When people ask me about solar in The Valley, I have long touted TVA's support for solar. Its production-based GPP incentive (currently \$0.09/kWh above retail rates) is a great thing for homeowners and small business owners wanting to install solar as a long-term investment. It's a great way to make solar cheaper in these early days of being a little too expensive to match dirty coal, hurtful hydro and dangerous nuclear.

When I read about feed-in-tariffs as the sliced



It's time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on dwindling oil reserves. We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power. Let your voice be heard.

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**Please notify the Editor when changes  
are needed**



# TVA is Stuck on Nuclear

By Don Safer

TVA is clinging to the shattered dream of nuclear power despite the horror being inflicted on the people of Japan by the triple melt-down at Fukushima. Nuclear spending continues despite the \$25+ billion of debt TVA has incurred from it. The delusion persists in defiance of long-standing chronic problems in TVA's nuclear construction and operations. It survives without progress in disposition of vast quantities of toxic, mutagenic radioactive waste. TVA's nuclear fantasy endures despite growing successes in solar, wind, renewables and energy efficiency. Ironically, TVA, an agency founded to promote positive change now resists it and is mired in a destructive energy paradigm.

The Tennessee Valley Authority has six operating nuclear reactors, one under construction, two with construction licenses and is moving forward with the nation's first small modular reactors. TVA wrongly believes that nuclear power is an acceptable answer to carbon pollution.

TVA's three Browns Ferry reactors near Decatur, Alabama are GE Mark 1's; the same design as the Fukushima reactors. Many experts consider this design the worst of the operating reactors in the United States. In 2011 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission gave Browns Ferry the only "Red" serious safety warning in the U.S. for numerous violations and concerns. That warning is still in place. Local citizen/activists have found increased levels of radiation and various health issues downwind of Browns Ferry (go to [www.matr.org](http://www.matr.org) for details). These reactors were designed in the 1960's and are now over 40 years old.

TVA's other reactors, Sequoyah and Watts Bar, are Ice Condenser designs, another attempt to lower the cost of construction. The high cost of nuclear power always creates conflicts between

cost and safety. Ice condensers surround the nuclear reaction chamber with 3 million pounds of ice chips hung in tall skinny baskets. The ice is supposed to lessen the temperature and pressure of a loss of coolant accident so the containment structures were built smaller and thinner than large, dry containments. Subsequent analysis indicated a high risk of containment failure so only nine were built and the concept abandoned. TVA operates three of these and is finishing Watts Bar Unit 2. To learn more about ice condensers and using Watts Bar Unit 1 to manufacture tritium for nuclear weapons read Kenneth Bergeron's book, *Tritium on Ice*. Both Watts Bar and Sequoyah have been identified as being at risk for catastrophic flood damage from the Tennessee River.

Watts Bar is located between Knoxville and Chattanooga. Construction started in 1973. Unit 1 has been operating since 1996. Unit 2 is scheduled to come on line in 2015 – 42 years after work started. In 2007 when work resumed the cost to finish estimate was \$2.5 billion. Two years ago TVA increased that to \$4+ billion and added two years to the construction schedule. Incredibly they said the increase would not affect ratepayers. Unit 2 is being given a 40-year license. With a 20-year extension it could be operating 100 years after the



foundation was poured. Both units have been plagued with numerous construction problems.

The Sequoyah reactors are 15 miles from Chattanooga. Their 40-year licenses will expire in 2020 and 2021. TVA has asked the NRC for a 20-year extension. Concerned citizens led by the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League (BREDL) have petitioned the NRC against the extension and have requested a hearing on the matter. The request was neither granted nor denied. Efforts continue to fight the license extension.

TVA also holds two construction licenses for more relics from the past, the partially built, "zombie reactors" at Bellefonte, near Scottsboro, Alabama. These are zombies because they had been abandoned and cannibalized before the TVA Board voted to finish unit 1 in 2011. Around \$5 billion has been spent on these. It is estimated to take another \$5 billion to finish one reactor. Its latest setback was announced in June when TVA announced the layoff of 415 of the 540 workers on site.

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) are the latest hope of the nuclear industry and TVA is leading the way with a pilot project in Oak Ridge. These are really nothing new; they use the same fission process to create the same waste stream.

It is TVA's responsibility to safely decommission all of its reactors once they are shut down. TVA's decommissioning fund contains about \$1 billion. That might be enough for one reactor. Future generations will have to pay the difference.

TVA has announced another Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) process starting up soon. They seem to have predetermined that nuclear will take on an even greater role in the future, thus undermining the IRP. It is up to concerned citizens to demand that TVA give renewables and energy efficiency an unbiased evaluation. TVA should move away from dirty, destructive energy sources and toward a sustainable energy future.

## Solar Power and Electricity Providers

By Gene Van Horn

The companies that provide electricity have begun to hinder the installation of solar panels. Michael Grunwald noted this in an article entitled *Grid Politics* (*Time Magazine* July 8-15, 2013). He mentioned that during President Obama's first term solar installations increased by more than 1,000% and that solar prices have decreased 80% since 2009. The increase in solar installations on rooftops is shifting the generation of electricity from central plants to scattered homes and businesses. Increasing local electrical generation means decreasing profits and power (both political and electrical) to the companies involved. Homeowners are the winners.

How can a company such as the TVA justify new power plants if they not only sell less electricity and even have homeowners sell back electricity? Grunwald writes that California's power companies are trying to stop the ability of a homeowner to sell electricity back to the grid. They argue that non-solar customers will have to pay a higher percentage of the cost of power lines, decommissioning power plants, and so forth. The advantage to everyone, though, is that less electricity must be generated during peak power usage. This should save the power plants money.

Kiley Kroh wrote (August 22, 2013 on [thinkprogress.org/climate](http://thinkprogress.org/climate)) that Germany recently broke its monthly solar power genera-

tion record. They generated 5.1 terawatt hours of electricity from solar power. Germany typically has overcast skies and is located near 50° latitude, which is the same latitude as southern Canada. The United States could generate much more solar energy. Germany had 400 MW of solar power capacity per million people at the end of 2012, and ranks first among world countries. The United States had about 25 MW per million people and ranks twentieth.

The German government, of course, has been subsidizing the growth of solar power. This support has started to decrease as solar power installation has surpassed government projections. Support here is also decreasing. There must be immense pressure on politicians in the United States from those in the nuclear and coal industries to suppress solar electrical generation. Those industries would permanently lose money as people capture free sunlight.

The TVA was established to prevent flooding, but they now provide an enormous amount of electricity with their system of coal and nuclear power plants. Would they be pleased to lose even five percent of their electrical generating power to homeowners? My best guess is that those who make TVA's decisions want to grow and become stronger in every way. They get political pressure from the coal and nuclear industries. Besides, if their electrical generation decreases, how can they justify those bonuses?



## Election Ballot of At-Large Delegates for the Tennessee Chapter Executive Committee 2014-2015 Term

Please vote below in the election of three (3) At-Large members to the Tennessee Chapter Executive Committee, each having a two-year term of office beginning January, 2014. They will join our three other At-Large Delegates and Group Delegates in managing the fiscal, legislative, environmental, outings and other responsibilities for our Chapter.

"Paperless Subscribers" may vote as well as those receiving the Tennes-Sierran in the mail, but membership must be current; follow the directions as given below.

**Only members (as of November 1, 2014) may vote. Joint Members use the same ballot. Ballots must be postmarked by December 15, 2014.**

**Tennessee Chapter At-Large Election for 2014**  
**You may vote for four (4) candidates (listed in random order):**

	Single Member or First Joint Member	Second Joint Member
Keven Routon	_____	_____
Cliff Cockerham	_____	_____
Axel Ringe	_____	_____
Christopher Anderson	_____	_____
Charles White	_____	_____
Susan Routon	_____	_____

**Submit your Ballot:** Only current members may vote. Place your ballot in an envelope, seal, and write 'ballot' on the outside. Place that envelope in another envelope, write your Sierra membership number (found on the mailing label of your *Tennes-Sierran*) in the upper left hand corner with your name and address. If you receive your *Tennes-Sierran* electronically and need your membership number, you may contact Communications Chair Barbara Kelly at [bk1rivers@gmail.com](mailto:bk1rivers@gmail.com) (put "membership number" in the subject line) or 423-718-5009 — You will need to print off your ballot and follow the instructions above.

**Envelopes without a Sierra membership number cannot be counted. Ballots must be postmarked no later than December 15, 2014.**

**Mail your combined envelopes to:** **Barbara Allen, Elections Chair**  
**4816 Petersburg Road**  
**Knoxville, TN 37921**

### Candidate Statements: (in random order)

#### Keven Routon

Keven and his wife, Susan, and much of their extended family reside on 15 acres north of Memphis. He served in the US Navy for more than 22 years, and has continued to work for the Navy as an analyst since retiring from uniformed service (Active Duty) in 2006. He has been a member of the Chickasaw Group Executive Committee (ExCom) since 2009 and the TN Chapter ExCom since 2010. He served as the Chickasaw Group Conservation Chair in 2010 and Group Chair in 2011. He was elected Chapter Vice Chair in 2012 and is currently serving as Chapter Chair. Keven was selected by the Chapter ExCom to represent the Chapter on the Council Of Club Leaders (CCL), which serves as the primary advisory body to the Club's Board of Directors; he was recently selected by the CCL to serve on the CCL's ExCom. Keven received a BS from the University of New York; earned a MA in Human Resource Mgmt., an MBA, and an MS in Environmental Mgmt. from Webster University.

#### Cliff Cockerham

Cliff first started working on environmental issues in 1973 when the legislature appointed him to the Environmental Management Council of Central Upstate New York as an advocate for beverage container legislation and glass recycling programs. Since then he worked on a wide range of environmental education programs, conservation issues, & ecological studies at Cornell University, Georgetown University, Emory University, Brookhaven National Laboratory, and Ponape Agriculture & Trade School in Micronesia. In 1979, Cliff was an NGO observer at the UN Conference on Trade and Development in Manila. In 1980, Cliff served as convener for the DC-based NGO response to U.S. policies elaborated at the UN Conference on Energy in Nairobi. In the current year, Cliff took on the task of reviving the Chapter Environmental Justice (EJ) Committee, which he currently chairs. In April 2013 he was one of the opening speakers of EPA's National Environmental Justice Training Institute, organized the EJ workshop for APIEL (Appalachian Public Interest Environmental Law conference) in October 2013, and is currently putting together 2 more EJ sessions for national conferences in 2014.

In 2011, Sierra Club (SC) President Robin Mann received SC national's Robbie Cox Award for meaningful contributions to the progress of the Sierra Student Coalition. In 2012 this same award went to Cliff Cockerham for his work beginning in 2010 to revive TN's Environmental Education Committee, which now has a network of SC representatives on Tennessee college campuses who are poised to work with incoming freshman with serving in the Sierra Student Coalition during high school in Middle Tennessee. As Chapter Chair for Environmental Education Cliff works closely with Joy Mayfield, who chairs the MTG Environmental Education Committee, while he simultaneously serves as MTG liaison with the Sierra Student Coalition. Cliff also organized & created the Water Sentinels Student Project, which engages high school students in monitoring local water quality in TN streams and creeks. Taken together over the last 4 years, these efforts have led to: 20 scholarships for students representing TN at SC's national environmental youth leadership program; 2 TN students representing the youth perspective at the Green Jobs Conference of the Blue-Green Alliance in Atlanta; 24 TN students meeting with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack to describe their SSC environmental research & advocacy projects.

These students have gone on to recruit and engage fellow students on a wide range of environmental education, service, and research projects that have garnered media attention, impacted legislative debate, and won awards for individual student efforts. Describing one of the overarching themes of this environmental work, Cliff explained: "All our efforts for the greater good are important, but if we fail to get a handle on climate change, nothing else will matter. For that reason, I hope you'll vote for me to continue serving on the TN Chapter ExCom, advocating for & facilitating youth engagement in SC initiatives. Together we can make a difference in what tomorrow will bring, but only if we start today."

#### Axel Ringe

I would like to be re-elected to the Chapter ExCom as an at-large delegate. I have served on the ExCom continuously since 2001 and also as Conservation Vice-Chair, Wild Legacy SuperCommittee Chair, Water Quality Committee Chair, Population Committee Chair, and Biodiversity Committee Chair. I have also chaired the Chapter Litigation Committee, and consider myself to be a committed activist. I currently serve as Water Quality Committee Chair, Population Committee Chair, and Biodiversity Committee Chair. I am active in the TN Beyond Coal Campaign, and supervise our Mountain Top Removal campaign's contract organizer. I also serve as the Chapter's representative to the TN Oil & Gas Working Group, addressing fracking issues in TN. If elected, I believe I can continue to be an asset to the Tennessee Chapter.

#### Christopher Anderson

I have been hunting, fishing, exploring, enjoying and protecting the natural world around Tennessee's streams since before I could walk. I have worked on a host of conservation issues including mining, fossil fuels, integrated solid waste management and market development, regional transportation, and community garden networks to name a few. I managed the largest certified organic farm in TN, as my true passion is water (Agriculture is the #1 or 2 source of water pollution worldwide), and I have done more cleanups and rehab projects than I can remember. My travels have taken me all over this country. I've ripped lips and braved the high seas from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of Alaska, and have gathered quite a broad array of perspectives on conservation. More recently, some of the most rewarding experiences of my life have come from being a Nashville Inner City Outings Program leader. Meeting so many wonderful youngsters, many of whom have never even seen a crawdad, has made me realize how incredibly privileged I was growing up with a stream and a garden behind my house and strengthened my resolve to share those invaluable, formative experiences and help our Outings Chair see this program grow to the greatest extent possible, both within and beyond the Middle TN Group. I've thoroughly enjoyed my experiences up to this point with the Middle TN Group and TN Chapter and look forward to sharing a great deal more as a member of the Executive Committee. I am also the Chair of the Water Sentinels, MTG Conservation Vice-Chair, and have re-vitalized MTG's efforts at reaching out to other environmental groups and tabling at events.

#### Charles White

Charles White is a Tennessee native who has always been interested in leaving the world a better place than he found it. His introduction to the movement came from attending a Students for Environmental Action (SEA) meeting at MTSU in 2009. After a series of awesome events, he decided he was going to dedicate his life to this important work. He attended the 2010 Tennessee Alumni & Students for Sustainable Campuses, or TASSC, Winter Summit where, in addition to learning basic organizing skills, he discovered that people were sitting in trees next to active mine sites to halt blasting. This inspired him to attend the 2010 Mountain Justice Summer Camp in Kentucky. There he saw MTR in person, and had an amazing, inspirational experience surrounded by folks who were organizing for a better planet! The rest is history. Charles has stayed involved with Mountain Justice, SEA, and TASSC as well as beginning to work with the Sierra Club in TN. His most recent feats are achieving an Anthropology degree from MTSU and organizing the 2013 Fracktivist Conference in Knoxville, TN. Charles states one of his primary goals as coalition building based in solidarity and mutual aid in order to create long-standing, resilient connections between all aspects of the global movement for justice.

#### Susan Routon

Susan Routon joined the Sierra Club in 2008. In 2009 she participated in a Water Sentinel conference in New Orleans that focused on the Gulf of Mexico "Dead Zone" (hypoxia). Water related concerns captured her attention and she quickly became active in the Club by serving as an ExCom member (2009 to present), Treasurer, and Programs Chair of the Chickasaw Group (CKG). She routinely volunteered at events, and planned or assisted in the organizing of all Chapter meetings hosted by the CKG.

Susan has more than 35 years as a military spouse and the same experience as a full-charge bookkeeper and accountant. In addition she has served as an Executive Director for a Business Association, Events Planner, Property Manager, and eight years as a professional Naval Reservist. She also served an additional eight years as a Naval Reservist. She attended Memphis State University, William Rainey Harper College, and Old Dominion University with studies in accounting, business communication, and human resources.

Susan currently lives in Atoka and is the mother of four, three of which recently returned home to attend college. Susan also cares for her sweet mother who is battling cancer. While her attentions are drawn to many environmental causes, Susan is deeply concerned about water quality issues especially the potential for contamination of our drinking water by toxins, carcinogens and radionuclides. Susan is a very independent individual and people person who takes pride in fairness to all. Susan continues to educate herself in State and National Club procedures.

## WATAUGA GROUP EXCOM BALLOT

### Election Ballot for WATAUGA GROUP Executive Committee Candidates

Please vote for no more than four (4) members of the Watauga Group Executive Committee, each will serve a two-year term of office beginning in January, 2014. Successful candidates will join returning Watauga ExCom members in guiding our Group's activities.

	Single Member or First Joint Member	Second Joint Member
Mary Gale	_____	_____
Lyn Walker	_____	_____
Susan Rigsby	_____	_____
Sandi Cranford	_____	_____
Cindy Johnson	_____	_____

Election Ballots must be **received** by Rita Cowan no later than Monday DEC 9th.

**Mail ballots to:** Rita Cowan  
WG Election Committee  
900 Mining Town Road  
Mountain City, TN 37683

Write your Sierra Club membership number on outside envelope with your return address. Note: your number is located on the newsletter mailing label. Place the *Tennes-Sierran* newspaper ballot in a sealed envelope, within the outside envelope.

If you receive the *Tennes-Sierran* electronically and need your membership number, you may contact Chapter Communications Chair Barbara Kelly at bk1rivers@gmail.com (put "membership number" in the subject line) or 423-718-5009 — You will need to print off your ballot and follow the instructions above.

Election Committee counts valid ballots and notifies candidates, WG ExCom, and other interested parties of election results on Tuesday DEC 10th 2013.

## CHEROKEE GROUP EXCOM BALLOT

### Election Ballot for CHEROKEE GROUP Executive Committee Candidates

Please vote below for the election of five (5) members of the Cherokee Group Executive Committee, each having a two-year term of office beginning in January, 2014. They will join our other ExCom Members in guiding our Group's activities.

Your ballot must be postmarked no later than Saturday, December 14, 2013 to be valid. Only current members may vote. Joint members use the same ballot.

<b>Cherokee Group (Vote for no more than 4)</b>	Single Member or First Joint Member	Second Joint Member
Emily Marr Davis	_____	_____
Alice Demetreon	_____	_____
Barbara Hurst	_____	_____
Davis Mounger	_____	_____

**Submit your Ballot:** Only current members may vote. Place your ballot in an envelope, seal, and write "ballot" on the outside. Place that envelope in another envelope, write your Sierra membership number (found on the mailing label of your *Tennes-Sierran*) in the upper left hand corner with your name and address. If you receive your *Tennes-Sierran* electronically and need your membership number, you may contact Barbara Kelly at bk1rivers@gmail.com — You will need to print off your ballot and follow the instructions above.

**Envelopes without a Sierra membership number cannot be counted.  
Ballots must be postmarked by Saturday, December 14, 2014.**

**Mail ballots to:** Barbara Kelly, Elections Committee  
3524 Pinellas Lane  
Chattanooga, TN 37412

### Candidate Biographies:

#### Emily Marr Davis

Emily has been a Sierra member for several years now, since moving back to Chattanooga after finishing her master's degree in outdoor education. A lover of nature and an outdoor enthusiast since her childhood, she's been an active biker, paddler, backpacker and hiker, most recently serving as our Outings Chair and our Group Chair. A special education teacher and an urban homesteader, she and her husband Phil just became new parents with the birth of their first child, a son.

#### Alice Demetreon

Alice and her husband live in Whitwell when they aren't out exploring trails and adventures across Tennessee. Her main environmental concern is Fracking. She was one of the chief organizers of the 2013 Fractivist Conference in Knoxville. She has helped the Cherokee Group become more visible in recent campaigns such as protesting the Tar Sands XL Pipeline and Moving TVA Beyond Coal.

#### Barbara Hurst

Barbara is a speech therapist. She's a native of England, and has travelled widely through 50+ countries, lived in 5, and been settled here in Chattanooga for many years. She loves to hike. She's been a Cherokee Group member for many years, and helped reestablish the current Group; she is serving as Group Treasurer. She and her husband Bill thoroughly enjoy hosting the Group's annual Holiday Party!

#### Davis Mounger

Davis is a Hamilton County science teacher, currently teaching chemistry. His one son has just left the nest for college. He moved to Chattanooga from the Mississippi Delta, bringing his interest in forestry protection to the Cherokee Forest, where he continues to monitor timber sales and the regulation and protection of our National Forest. He serves as our Conservation Chair, and is very active on the Chapter's National Forest/Wilderness Committee.

# CHICKASAW GROUP EX COM BALLOT (WEST TN)

Election Ballot for Chickasaw Group ExCom Members, 2014-2015  
(listed in random order)  
Only members of the Group may vote in this election.

**Chickasaw Group**  
(Vote for no more than 4)

**Single Member or  
First Joint Member**

**Second Joint  
Member**

Keven Routon

\_\_\_\_\_

Mark Plumlee

\_\_\_\_\_

Susan Routon

\_\_\_\_\_

Dallas Holland

\_\_\_\_\_

To submit Your Ballot: To assure privacy, place your ballot in a plain unmarked envelope, then place in another envelope. Your return address must include your Sierra membership number. Your membership number is found on the mailing label, but if you receive your newsletter electronically and need your membership number, contact the group Membership Chair, Keith Hoover at hooverkw@yahoo.com. Print off your ballot and follow the instructions above.

**Envelopes without a Sierra membership number cannot be counted. Your ballot must be received by December 15, 2013.**

**Mail ballots to:** ATTN: Election Committee  
Chickasaw Group, Sierra Club  
P.O. Box 111094  
Memphis, TN 38111

## Candidate Biographies: (listed in random order)

### Keven Routon

Keven has been a member of the Chickasaw Group Executive Committee (ExCom) since 2009 and the TN Chapter ExCom since 2010. He served as the Chickasaw Group Conservation Chair in 2010 and Group Chair in 2011. He was elected Chapter Vice Chair in 2012 and is currently serving as Chapter Chair. Keven was selected by the Chapter ExCom to represent the Chapter on the Council of Club Leaders (CCL), which serves as the primary advisory body to the Club's Board of Directors. He was recently nominated and then selected by the CCL to serve on the CCL's ExCom.

### Mark Plumlee

Mark helped start the environmental club at White Station during freshman year in the fall of '91. Mark started the recycle program at the Mason YMCA, and served for 2 years on their board of directors. Mark works as an advertising account representative at the Memphis Flyer, our progressive weekly. Mark currently serves on the Chickasaw Group ExCom, and as our tabling coordinator. He is an avid paddler and outings instigator.

### Susan Routon

Susan joined the Sierra Club in 2008. Water-related concerns captured her attention and she quickly became active in the Club by serving as an ExCom member (2009 to present), Treasurer, and Programs Chair of the Chickasaw Group (CKG.) She routinely volunteers at events, and assisted in the organizing of all Chapter meetings hosted by the CKG. Susan currently lives in Atoka and is the mother of four; three of which recently returned home to attend college. While her attentions are drawn to many environmental causes, Susan is deeply concerned about water quality and radioactive waste issues, especially the growing potential for contamination of our drinking water by toxins, carcinogens and radionuclides.

### Dallas Holland

Dallas Holland grew up in Northwest AL traversing the TN River, Bankhead National Forest and the woods and banks of the Shoals Area. She got her first real taste of activism when she moved to Seattle for a summer at age 21 to canvas for WashPIRG and protest drilling in the Alaskan Wildlife refuge. Dallas studied Biology, Earth Sciences, and Chemistry at the University of North AL. Her conservation and research work have included native plant community restoration and rare plant species protection, butterfly population surveying, nitrogen deposition from air pollution, E. coli genetics work for public health, and more. Dallas moved to Memphis in 2007 to work at the Memphis Botanic Gardens and study GIS. Her current volunteer work focuses on uniting and preserving existing communities through environmental stewardship, self-empowerment, and urban sustainable agriculture. Dallas despises racism, overt-consumerism, and litterbugs. She loves food, freedom, and fresh air.

# SIERRA CLUB

*Wilderness Calendar  
2014*



**Sierra Club Wall and Engagement  
Calendars can be purchased  
through:**

**HBG Group, Allan Miller**  
**almiller@discexchange.com or**  
**at 865-577-6226**

**Chickasaw Group, Ed Jones**  
**901-374-0582 or**  
**edshouse35@comcast.net**

**Middle TN Group, Lynette King**  
**615-414-3955 or**  
**dawnlynetting@gmail.com**

**Calendars will still be available at the  
Sierra Club Winter Retreat at Cedars of  
Lebanon State Park in January.**



# HARVEY BROOME GROUP ELECTION BALLOT

Election Ballot for HARVEY BROOME GROUP Executive Committee Candidates - 2014-2015 term  
Please vote for five (5) candidates

Harvey Broome Group	Single Member or First Joint Member	Second Joint Member
Allan Miller	_____	_____
Jim Gray	_____	_____
Mac Post	_____	_____
Axel Ringe	_____	_____
Ron Shrieves	_____	_____

Only current members may vote. Please put your ballot in an envelope and seal. Place that in another envelope, on which you write your membership number (found on the mailing label of the *Tennes-Sierran* or your membership card) and your name and return address, and mail by close of business on December 30, 2013. If you receive the *Tennes-Sierran* electronically and need your membership number, you may contact David Reister at dreister@bellsouth.net (put "membership number" in the subject line.) You will need to print off your ballot and follow the instructions above.

Mail by close of business on December 20, 2013 to: **David Reister**  
10366 Rather Road  
Knoxville, TN 37931

## Candidate Statements:

### Jim Gray

I grew up in the Adirondack Mountains and have spent most of my life surrounded by the wonders of nature and believe that defending those resources is both an economic and a spiritual necessity. I work as an editor for Springer Publications, specifically as an associate on the "Energy and Energy Analysis" Briefs series. I am a biophysical economist which is something like a resource economist, except that we realize that resources are limited and need to be conserved / preserved. We are not of the mind – like some economists – who think their job is to "put the correct price on resources" so that they can be sold off to the highest bidders. In my rather extensive personal library there are probably at least two or three hundred environmental and resource volumes.

I've also spent most of my adult life involved in Democratic politics on both the electoral side and the lobbying side. In fact I was Chair of the Knox County Democratic Party for three years. It's my firm belief that the only way anything gets done is through either legislation or litigation. I see those two as the way forward for the Sierra Club and its values.

### Allan Miller

I am a graduate of the University of Tennessee and a resident of Knoxville. I have been a member of Sierra Club since 2000 and I am active in the Harvey Broome Group (HBG). I am co-founder and co-owner of the "Disk Exchange," now in its 26th year, which sells new and used CD'S and DVD's. My priorities for HBG include increasing the number of HBG members and improving the financial strength of the HBG. I am also interested in increasing the involvement of our members in HBG activities and environmental issues within the HBG boundaries. I believe that enlarging and activating the membership and strengthening our finances will position the HBG to be more influential in making our views known on environmental and other related issues that are important to us.

### Mac Post

I became a Sierra Club member while a graduate student in Ecology at the University of Tennessee about 32 years ago, and have recently become a lifetime Sierra Club member. The Harvey Broome Group has been an important voice in East Tennessee for wilderness protection, environmentally sound land-use, environmental protection regulations, and promotion of education and enjoyment of natural resources especially wilderness. I am currently serving as the Program Chair for the Harvey Broome Group.

### Axel Ringe

I have been a member of the Sierra Club for 17 years, have served on the Harvey Broome Group ExCom since 2001, and have served as Group Chair for many years. My particular passions are water quality, surface coal mining, forests, and biodiversity, and I actively advocate for those issues. I am currently serving as an At-Large Delegate on the TN Chapter ExCom, chair of the Wildlife Legacy Super-Committee, the Water Quality Committee and the Biodiversity committee. The HBG needs to build up its cadre of active, committed members who will undertake the advocacy and organizational challenges that lie before us.

### Ron Shrieves

I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1988 and of the Nature Conservancy since 2000. I have been involved in outings since joining the Club, a member of the HBG Executive Committee and served as HBG Outings Chair for the past seven years. I am used to committee work, and to working in a team setting, and feel that I can contribute to the critical work of the executive committee. I also feel obligated to contribute in a meaningful way to the environmental goals that the Sierra Club has articulated so well.



Some of the gang from the Tennessee Chapter Fall 2013 Retreat at Pickett State Park. Saturday morning hike with State Naturalist Randy Hedgepath. Photo by Lynette King.

# MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP ExCOM BALLOT

## Middle Tennessee Group Ballot

You may vote for five (listed in random order):

Middle TN Group	Single Member or First Joint Member	Second Joint Member
Chris Lunghino	_____	_____
Craig Jervis	_____	_____
Penny Brooks	_____	_____
Joy Mayfield	_____	_____
Christopher Anderson	_____	_____

**Submit your Ballot:** Only current members may vote. Place your ballot in an envelope, seal, and write "ballot" on the outside. Place that envelope in another envelope, write your Sierra membership number (found on the mailing label of your Tennes-Sierran) in the upper left hand corner with your name and address. If you receive the Tennes-Sierran electronically and need your membership number, you may contact Betsy Garber at garberb@hotmail.com or (615) 370-9454 — You will need to print off your ballot and follow the instructions above.

**Envelopes without a Sierra membership number cannot be counted.  
Mail by close of business on December 6, 2013.**

**Mail to: Betsy Garber  
1327 Otter Creek Road  
Nashville, TN 37215**

## Candidate Statements: (In Random Order)

### Christopher Anderson

I have been hunting, fishing, exploring, enjoying and protecting the natural world around Tennessee's streams since before I could walk. I have worked on a host of conservation issues including mining, fossil fuels, integrated solid waste management and market development, regional transportation, and community garden networks to name a few. More recently, some of the most rewarding experiences of my life have come from being a Nashville Inner City Outings Program leader, which has strengthened my resolve to share invaluable, formative outdoor experiences and help our Outings Chair see this program grow to the greatest extent possible. [Note: Christopher is also the Chair of the Water Sentinels, MTG Conservation Vice-Chair, and has re-vitalized MTG's efforts at reaching out to other environmental groups and tabling at events.]

### Chris Ann Lunghino

Chris is the Founder and Executive Director of Community Sustainability USA, Inc., a non-profit corporation dedicated to creating a culture that is committed to sustainability. Recently, as a contract organizer for the Sierra Club, she created and implemented a strategic campaign plan to influence the Tennessee Valley Authority to invest in energy efficiency rather than emission control upgrades at its Gallatin Fossil Plant. Previously, Chris ran a Canadian community sustainability initiative, provided independent consulting services to for-profit and non-profit corporations, and worked as a transactional attorney at a major law firm. She has served on numerous environmental and education non-profit boards and currently is a member of the Board of Directors of the Clean Air Partnership of Middle Tennessee. She holds a J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center, a M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning from University of California Irvine, and a B.A. in political science from Boston College. [Note: We were all impressed with and grateful for the work Chris did in organizing the People's Public Hearing on the Gallatin Coal Plant.]

### Craig Jervis

Craig has taken on our outings program (initiating a meet-up page), while also chairing the Nashville Inner City Outings Group. His energy (and wife Marcia's) are infectious, and both programs have grown under his leadership. His knowledge of reptiles and other critters and plants insure that his outings are always interesting and fun. His specialty is water outings (with watermelon breaks), he has motivated several of our outings leaders to obtain water safety training, and you won't regret paddling the Harpeth with him. He and Marcia have also graciously allowed our group to hold its business/local issues meetings at their restaurant, The Mad Platter.

### Penny Brooks

Penny has a long history of Political and legislative activity at both the statewide and group level. She has also consistently helped our Group with the less prestigious tasks of working the recycling center, tabling, and giving educational presentations at kid-centered environmental events. Penny's depth of knowledge on the environmental issues, legislature, and political possibilities, have always been a great resource, and we are ecstatic that she has agreed to run for a position on the MTG executive committee.

### Joy Mayfield

I've been a member of the Sierra Club most of my adult life. I became active locally 15 years ago when asked to volunteer at the Elysian Fields recycling center. My Sierra Club responsibilities currently include being education chair for MTG, volunteering at the recycling site, serving as Outreach Coordinator and Vice-Chair for Inner City Outings (ICO) and answering the State Sierra Club office phone. I am interested in organic gardening and the slow food movement, sustainable living, expansion of green spaces, reforesting the planet, protecting our forests from logging and getting children outside where they can experience the restorative effects of the natural world. [Note: Joy is also an outings leader who is a master naturalist, and a master historic story-teller on her amazing hikes.]

## Progress Report from the Water Quality, Biodiversity, and Population Committees Axel Ringe, Chair

### Biodiversity Committee

Efforts this past quarter were focused on keeping sandhill cranes out of hunter's gunsights. Working in partnership with TN Ornithological Society and others, we reached out to a wide spectrum of TN citizens to oppose the TN Fish & Wildlife Commission's expressed bias in favor of hunting and the TWRA's proposal for a hunting season. We were only partially successful in that there will be a hunting season, but it will be a 3-year experimental season limited to the lower SE corner of the state, only one month long, and hunting will be suspended during the annual sandhill crane festival.

### Population Committee

The Population Reference Bureau's World Population Data Sheet for 2013 is now available for download:

<http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2013/2013-world-population-data-sheet/data-sheet.aspx>, or <http://tinyurl.com/o222jat>

### Water Quality Committee

It's been a busy quarter:

MTR

• Submitted comments on the proposed Coal Creek surface mine in Anderson County.

• Testified at public hearing and submitted comments on proposed Sterling & Strays surface mine in Claiborne County. Preparing for comments on two other surface coal mines in Claiborne County, Cooper Ridge and Clearfork. The three mines combined will cover about 3,000 acres if permitted.

• Identified several potential targets for Clean Water Act lawsuits, including a coal preparation plant, a deep mine, and a quarry.

• Achieved a settlement agreement with National Coal Co. that they would cease surface mining in TN; pay \$52K to TN Parks & Greenways Foundation for land protection; complete reclamation at Zeb Mtn.; and treat Zeb Mtn. discharges for selenium.

• Testified and submitted comments to OSM on Turner surface mine in Cumberland County. Also submitted Notice of Intent to Sue Hillsborough Coal Co. for CWA violations at discharges from Turner mine.

• Fracking

A success story! In partnership with TCWP, TCWN, SOCM, TN LWV, SELC, UT students and faculty, and committed individuals, we buried the UT proposal to frack their Cumberland Research Forest for natural gas. The proposal was disguised as a research project,

but we were able to demonstrate it was all about the money. Probably because of our public opposition and turning over of rocks, UT was unable to find an industry partner for the project.

Also, thanks to several energetic and dedicated Sierra Club members, we put on a successful "Fracktivist Conference" at UT September 13-15. About 100 people attended and/or presented, coming from as far away as Australia.

### Blue Ridge Paper Plant

The permit appeal of the NPDES permit continues. The appeal is currently under a stay while NC and EPA complete their review of Blue Ridge's color perception study of the Pigeon River. The stay expires 1/31/14.

### Coal Ash

We are working with the community in Campbell County to defeat a proposed coal ash landfill. The effort is focused on getting the county commission to adopt the Jackson Law, which will give the county to authority to deny the landfill. At this time, it appears the chances are good the county commission will adopt the law and say no to the landfill. A great example of community organizing by our MTR organizer, Bonnie Swinford.



# Meetings

**The public is very welcome at ALL Sierra Club Meetings and Activities! All members traveling across the state should feel free to drop in and attend another Group's meetings. You will find yourself among friends and learning something interesting.**

## **CHEROKEE GROUP (Chattanooga)**

**Strategy Meetings: Nov. 11 and Dec. 9 (Board Meeting) 2nd Monday, 6:30 P.M.** Our Strategy Meeting are held downtown, at Second Presbyterian Church, located at the corner of E. 7th Street and Pine, 700 Pine Street - parking is free in their Pine Street lot, across the street from the church, next to the old Blue Cross (orange) building. All members of the Group and interested people are welcome -- this is where and when we plan our actions! Come add your ideas and share your concerns. To place an item on the agenda, contact Secretary Barbara Kelly at 423-718-5009 or bk1rivers@comcast.net, preferably a week before our meeting.

**November Program: 4th Monday, November 25, 7:00 P.M. at Outdoor Chattanooga, Coolidge Park, 200 River Street, Chattanooga. Topic: Mountain Top Removal, with speaker J.W. Randolph.** JW is the Tennessee Director of Appalachian Voices. He continues to work and build grassroots support to protect and promote Tennessee's mountains and a clean energy future for Tennessee. His efforts in the 2012 legislative campaign for the Scenic Vistas bill helped bring it to the state Senate, making it the first mountaintop removal ever heard on the floor of the Legislature! He will bring us up to date on the current work to prevent mountain-top removal coal mining. Bring your friends along!

**The public is very welcome and healthy snacks are served.** Bring something along to share if you'd like. Parking is free along the sidewalks in Coolidge Park and in the driveway/parking lot of the building, or paid parking in the Theatre lot. Invite your friends!! Be sure to let them know we're meeting now on the Northshore.

**NOTE: We do not hold a Program Meeting in December. We do hold our annual Holiday New Year Get-Together!**

**January 5: After Holiday New Year Get-Together, 5 P.M. at the home of Bill and Barbara Hurst, Signal Mountain! YOU are invited to gather for our annual covered dish party at Bill and Barbara's just after the new year begins.** Bring a covered dish to share, and a friend or two you'd like to introduce to environmental concerns. We'll have fun, socialize and talk about our ideas for the next year's conservation campaigns. Call Barbara for directions -- 423-886-9503; it's best to get directions from her, the GPS services are incorrect and will steer you far away to a non-existent road and you'll miss dinner! (It is easy to get to, unless you try to use your GPS device.)

## **CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)**

**TUESDAY, Nov 5, 6:30 P.M. Executive Committee Strategy Meeting. Contact Sue A. Williams for location information.** A strategy meeting that is open to all members. To place an item on the agenda -- or for current location -- contact Chairperson Sue A. Williams at (901)

274-0524 or z4cmv@juno.com at least five days before the meeting.

**SAT. Nov 9, 9:30 A.M., 2400 Union Ave. 38112, inside Lindenwood Christian Church.**

The annual Environmental Justice Conference. For more information or to register for lunch, contact Rita Harris at rita.harris@sierraclub.org or 901-324-7757.

**TUESDAY, Dec 10, 6:30 P.M. Executive Committee Strategy Meeting.** Contact Sue A Williams for location information. A strategy meeting that is open to all members. To place an item on the agenda -- or for current location -- contact Chairperson Sue A. Williams at (901) 274-0524 or z4cmv@juno.com at least five days before the meeting.

**Friday, Dec 13, 7 P.M. until 9:30 P.M., HOLIDAY PARTY** in place of Dec program meeting, at Burch, Porter & Johnson Law Offices, 130 N Court Ave., Memphis TN. 38103. On street parking is free at meters in the evening and parking lot behind building (enter from Jefferson). Please bring an appetizer or dessert with serving utensil. This party is for members and invited guests only. Beverages provided by Chickasaw Group with a donation. Join us for our annual awards event and celebration! For more information contact Sue A. Williams at 901 274-0524.

## **HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)**

**November 12, 7:00 P.M., Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, Knoxville: The Role of Zoos in Conservation** Presentation by Steve McGaffin, Assistant Curator of Education and Citizen Science Coordinator, Knoxville Zoo

Zoos have existed for millennia, but their purpose has changed. We'll explore the mission and conservation programs of modern zoos and where we may be heading in the future. Steve McGaffin is the Assistant Curator of Education and Citizen Science Coordinator. He has worked in outdoor/environmental education for over 24 years and has been at Knoxville Zoo for 18 years.

**December 10, 7:00 P.M., Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, Knoxville: HBG Holiday Photograph Show.** Everyone is invited for an evening of fun, food, and sharing. Bring a USB flash drive with some pictures from your favorite trips of the year to share. For more information contact Mac Post mpost3116@aol.com

## **MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)**

**Thursday, November 14, 7:00 P.M. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center** The word "galapagos" means "saddles" in Spanish, and the tortoises in some of the islands in the Galapagos have shells that reminded early explorers of saddles. In May of this year, Bill Terry, Adelle Wood and Meg Robertson traveled on a 48-passenger National Geographic expedition to the Galapagos and saw these tortoises, domed tortoises, penguins, sea lions (in abundance!), blue-footed and red-footed boobies, fur seals, frigate birds, green sea turtles, waved albatrosses and much more as they hiked, snorkeled, and kayaked on and around several of the islands. Each expedition to the Galapagos, which is an Ecuadorian national park, must include naturalist guides who

accompany small groups to each island and on each activity. The naturalists live in the Galapagos and are a wealth of knowledge about the natural history, geology, and unique animals of the islands, and many are photography instructors as well.

We invite you to a program by Bill, who will show some of his slides and some of Meg's, in an armchair adventure cruise.

Free and open to the public.

**THERE IS NO PROGRAM IN DECEMBER.**

**Saturday, December 21 from 6:00 to 9:00 P.M. COME ONE, COME ALL to MTG's annual holiday potluck feast.** This year it will be held at 4260 Jamesborough Place, Nashville 37215 (near Lone Oak Rd. & Granny White Pike, across from John Trotwood Moore Middle School). Bring a dish to share and your beverage.

Questions? Contact Suzanne at (615) 202-2255 or at svzp@aol.com.

## **STRATEGY MEETINGS:**

**November 19, 6:30 P.M. Please note the change from second to third Tuesday.**

Everyone is welcome at this local issues and business meeting. Meetings are usually held at the Mad Platter Restaurant, 1239 Sixth Ave. North, Nashville 37208 (near the Nashville Farmer's Market), but there may be times we meet elsewhere. *If you are not a regular attendee*, please contact Betsy at 668-1977 or garberb@hotmail.com. Come a bit early because we start the meeting at 6:30. The Mad Platter is not open on Tuesday evenings, so be sure to eat before you come or bring something with you. We look forward to seeing you.

**December 17, 6:30 P.M. Please note the venue and the change from second to third Tuesday** Everyone is welcome at this local issues and business meeting which will be held at the Sierra Club office, 3340 Perimeter Hill Drive, Nashville 37211 (near I-24 and Harding place). Use the door to the left of the front doors. Call Betsy at 668-1977 to let her know that you are coming, and to get in if the door is locked. Come a bit early because we start the meeting at 6:30. We look forward to seeing you.

## **WATAUGA GROUP (Northeastern TN)**

**PROGRAM MEETINGS: Every second Tuesday at 7 P.M.** Please contact Gloria Griffith at gla4797@earthlink.net or 423-727-4797 for more information.

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# Outings

## CHEROKEE GROUP (Chattanooga)

**Emily Marr Davis is our Outings Chair, and point-person for outings information for our Group.** Our activities are always open to the public and to members of the Club from across our state! Outings are planned to take in the interests and skill levels of the participants. For more information, contact Emily at [emily.marr.davis@gmail.com](mailto:emily.marr.davis@gmail.com). Please check our Facebook page, Cherokee Sierra, for the latest on our outings.

## HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

**10 Nov (Sat). Canoe/Kayak Float, French Broad River.** This go-with-the-current float covers 15 miles from just below Douglas Dam to the Seven Islands public access point on the French Broad. Though far from pristine, this river does have some interesting sights and a bit of wildlife (and some not-so-wild life). It's an interesting case study in the ecology of a "recovering" river. There may be some shoal water, but no whitewater. Basic canoe/kayak skills are required. Adverse wind conditions are another possible "hazard." Sorry but we cannot provide boats, so you will have to contact a local outfitter and make your own arrangements for boats, paddles, and pfd's. One-way drive: 40 miles. Pre-register with Ron Shrieves at 922-3518 or [ronaldshrieves@comcast.net](mailto:ronaldshrieves@comcast.net) (e-mail preferred).

**16 Nov (Sat). Day Hike, Honey Creek,**

**Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.** This is a rather difficult 5.6 mile loop trail. Originally, it was one of the ten Bowater Pocket Wilderness Areas and is now one of two state natural areas located within the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. The trail is very rugged and requires crossing a number of small creeks, climbing a series of ladders up and down the bluff, scrambling through boulders, and hiking up the Honey Creek drainage. The trail includes a number of waterfalls, a spectacular rockhouse, and one of the best views from an overlook 250 feet above the South Fork of the Cumberland River. Quite simply it is one of the best trails on the Cumberland Plateau. The hike is difficult and requires about 5 to 7 hours to complete depending on how much time is spent enjoying the trail. Rated moderate to difficult. The driving distance is about 75 miles from West Knoxville. Preregister with BJ and Bob Perlack: [perlack@aol.com](mailto:perlack@aol.com); 229-5027.

**7 Dec (Sat). Dayhike, White Rocks and Sand Cave, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park.** Two outstanding natural rock formations await hikers in the north end of this Park: White Rocks and the Sand Cave. We'll take a loop route that takes us to the fabulous overlook at White Rocks, where we'll have great vistas into both Kentucky and Virginia. We then follow the Ridge trail to a side trail into Sand Cave, a huge rock house with a sandy floor, where we'll relax and have lunch. The return to our vehicles

## Ten Essentials for Hiking



Sierra Club outings offer a variety of wilderness and near-wilderness experiences. It is important to realize that while all trips are guided by a leader, it is ultimately the responsibility of the individual to operate in a safe manner. To this end, the following is a list of essential items which should be modified according to the particular type of outing. These are:

1. Adequate map
2. First aid kit
3. Compass
4. Rain gear
5. Extra clothing (it is a good idea to always have a wool hat)
6. Matches
7. Knife
8. Flashlight
9. Extra food, water
10. The tenth essential: You decide what is the most important thing to bring!

will be via the Ewing Trail. Distance about 8.5 miles, rated moderate. One-way drive: 75 miles. Pre-register with Ron Shrieves at 922-3518 or [ronaldshrieves@comcast.net](mailto:ronaldshrieves@comcast.net) (e-mail preferred).

**14 Dec (Sat). Take-a-Hike, Biodiversity tour (Old-Growth Cove Hardwood), Albright Grove, GSMNP.** Not many low elevation cove hardwood forests remain. Albright Grove is a special place where tulip poplars, Frazier magnolias, silverbells and maples have grown into giants. For the hike to this unique place we will use the Maddron Bald Trail to Albright Grove Loop trail and then return. For those that are interested we will study tree identification in winter. Total distance is 6.9 miles and rated moderate. One-way drive: 60 miles. Preregister with Mac Post at 865-806-0980 or [mpost3116@aol.com](mailto:mpost3116@aol.com) (e-mail preferred).

## Advance Notice

### Chapter Retreat January 24-26 @ Cedars of Lebanon State Park

Get the date on your calendars now for our Winter Retreat at Cedars of Lebanon, just north of Murfreesboro, TN.

Along with training to boost activism in our Groups, there'll be time to relax close to nature and in the company of good friends, old and new. The schedule of activities is in development, and will be posted in the January 2014 *Tennes-Sierran*. The Chapter ExCom will hold its meeting on Sunday morning.

Eight miles of hiking trails meander through the "cedar" forests and glades; fox, deer, squirrel, rabbits and turkey are frequently spotted along the trails. The terrain is Karst topography, characterized by sinkholes, springs, caves, disappearing springs and underground drainage. The State Park is 900 acres, while the State Forest is 8,100 acres. The sections of the park built by the W.P.A. recently received national recognition when they were added to the National Register of Historic places, and a section of the Forest with its cedar glades has been designated as a federally protected natural area.

Prices are low, with bunk house accommodations, at the Group Lodge. Early Bird fees, which cover 2 breakfasts, Saturday dinner and lodging are just \$40/person. However there's a 1/2 off discount if it is your first time, and children 15 and under are free. Scholarships are also available.

For advanced notice of the activities, contact Barbara Hurst, and you may also register with her: [barbaraduckhurst@hotmail.com](mailto:barbaraduckhurst@hotmail.com). Payment will be accepted when you check in at the Group Lodge. For registration after January 17, the fee goes up to \$50/person. The Cherokee Group, Chattanooga, is hosting the event.



# Hike to Celebrate the Knoxville Urban Wilderness

By Mac Post, Ronald Shrieves, and Axel Ringe

On National Public Lands Day, September 28, the Harvey Broome Group in partnership with the Smoky Mountain Hiking Club and the Appalachian Mountain Bike Club led a group of 25 enthusiastic hikers on a 7-mile trek through a section of the Knoxville Urban Wilderness. Urban wilderness might seem like an oxymoron but many cities are rediscovering the wildlands that still remain within their borders and preserving significant pieces for recreational activities including hiking, mountain biking, paddling, bird watching, nature photography, and other non-consumptive activities as well as for watershed protection and associated environmental benefits of clean water, air, and wildlife diversity.

Knoxville's South Urban Loop is a 12.5-mile system of connected trails forming a large loop with numerous spur trails totaling over 40 miles of trails. The Loop is located entirely within the city limits of Knoxville and was made possible by a combination of city-owned properties and conservation easements on privately owned properties. The Loop is the product of collaboration among Legacy Parks



Enthusiastic group at the start of our hike.

Foundation, private donors, city and county agencies, and non-profit groups including the Harvey Broome Group, but most importantly the Appalachian Mountain Bike Club whose members built nearly all the trails.

The planned Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) James White Parkway Extension project would have bisected this loop in 2 places and wiped out several of the con-

necting trails. In a stunning turn of events, a very significant addition to the Wilderness in the form of a 100-acre tract donated by the Wood family and located directly in the path of the proposed highway, resulted in Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero requesting that the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization drop the James White Parkway Extension from its list of priorities. As a consequence TDOT announced that work on the Project will cease.

The Loop strings together a necklace of properties, some of which are ecological "gems" with maturing second-growth hardwood forests. Other properties are in various stages of transition, with a mixture of second- or third-growth forests vying with exotic and invasive plant species, and a few of which are in very early stages of recovery from decades of abuses. The contrasts among these elements of the Loop provide a lesson on the caring for our remaining urban "wilderness" spaces, and hiking this loop will make conservationists of many folks who had not given such wildland preservation much thought.

## Tennessee Draws the Line

by Christopher Anderson and Lynette King

On September 21st, over 200 Draw the Line events took place across the country to protest the Tar Sands and Keystone XL during a National Day of Action. There were 3 events held in TN. The Middle TN Group demonstrated in Nashville with over 70 attendees, while the Cherokee Group braved the rain in Chattanooga. At UTK, Students Promoting Environmental Action in Knoxville (SPEAK), held a rally at the school, where they led a successful fossil fuel divestment campaign last year.



At the end of the march in Nashville. No Tar Sands! Not by pipeline, nor rail, nor road, nor sea!



Cherokee Group braving the rain to Draw the Line on Keystone XL!



Checking out what we think is the largest tree in the Knoxville Urban Wilderness, and unofficially named "The Victor Ash(e)" in honor of a past mayor who promoted parks and greenways.



*This letter is a good example of Sierra Club members working with others to derail plans to mine coal.*

TENNESSEE CLEAN WATER NETWORK  
P.O. Box 1521  
Knoxville, TN 37901  
September 12, 2013

William Winters  
Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement  
710 Locust Street, Second Floor  
Knoxville, TN 37902

RE: Crossville Coal, Inc. Turner Surface Mine - SMCRA Permit 3189

Dear Mr. Winters:

I am writing on behalf of the Tennessee Clean Water Network, Sierra Club, Defenders of Wildlife, National Parks Conservation Association, Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning, Southern Environmental Law Center, and Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment (collectively, the "Commenters") to express our concerns about the pending renewal of SMCRA Permit 3189 for the Turner Surface Mine and our objections to the possibility of extending mining operations below the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area.

#### I. Pending Renewal of SMCRA Permit 3189

The Turner Surface Mine has a long record of noncompliance with permit conditions, including both SMCRA and Clean Water Act violations. Of particular concern, the National Park Service has identified the area as a long-term or permanent source of acid mine waters and has further expressed concerns about the combined environmental impacts of heavily faulted strata and high sulfur coal. If the mining operations had not already been conducted, such impacts would be a basis for permit denial under Section 510(b)(2) because it is far from clear that reclamation required by SMCRA can be accomplished.

At this late stage of mining operations, however, Commenters request that any permit renewal allow for reclamation activities only and ensure the completion of comprehensive reclamation to fully address acid mine drainage ("AMD") and other issues at the site. Full reclamation of this mine site is particularly urgent to protect the unique ecological values of the adjacent Catoosa Wildlife Management Area ("WMA") and the Obed Wild & Scenic River ("WSR"). Any renewed permit should not allow new mining and must prohibit any additional disturbance of the Whitwell Shale unless the applicant implements a toxic material handling plan demonstrated to be effective at preventing AMD. 30 U.S.C. § 1265(b)(1)(O)(A).

Moreover, because proper reclamation is likely to cost substantially more than originally anticipated, OSM should increase the amount of the reclamation bond. 30 U.S.C. § 1259(e) ("The amount of the bond or deposit required and the terms of each acceptance of the applicant's bond **shall** be adjusted by the regulatory authority from time to time ... where the cost of future reclamation changes.") (emphasis added).

#### II. Mining Under the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area

**Commenters are very concerned that Crossville Coal has filed a notice of intent to explore coal resources, has obtained permission from the State to do so, and has already conducted some exploration to determine the extent of reserves of metallurgical coal below the Catoosa WMA.**

Based on its public statements, Crossville Coal proposes to extract this metallurgical grade coal from the Sewanee seam, which lies within the Whitworth shale.

Commenters oppose any proposal to mine coal from beneath the Catoosa WMA. Exploitation of natural resources is not an appropriate use of our public lands, particularly those that have been set aside for the protection of wildlife. The leasing of mineral rights on state land is a new policy that would set a dangerous precedent for other lands statewide. Moreover, such uses are also unwarranted here given the close proximity of the Obed WSR, which provides critical habitat for the threatened spotfin chub and the endangered purple bean mussel.

Mining of the Sewanee seam through the Whitwell shale has left a legacy of AMD at mine sites along the Cumberland Plateau from Crossville to Chattanooga. There is no reason to believe that any mining company could successfully exploit this seam without causing further damage to this environmentally-sensitive area, much less a company with such a poor compliance record.

SMCRA permitting for any future expansion of the mine below the Catoosa WMA should be subject to public notice and comment. Such an expansion would constitute "extensions to the area covered by the permit" beyond "incidental boundary revisions," thus triggering a requirement for a new permit application. 30 C.P.R. § 774.13(d). At a bare minimum, such a proposal would constitute a significant revision of the existing permit, requiring public notice and comment. 30 C.P.R. § 774.13(c). As with any SMCRA permit, the applicant would have to affirmatively demonstrate "that reclamation as required by the Act and the regulatory program can be accomplished." *Id.* Given the past history of AMD damage, this requirement should serve as a bar to any future expansion of mining operations below the Catoosa WMA.

We appreciate your consideration of these comments and thank you for holding the informal conference today. We request that OSM provide notice of any future permitting actions at this mine via electronic mail to each of the undersigned. Please do not hesitate to call me at 865-522-7007x102 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
Stephanie D. Matheny, Attorney  
stephanie@tcwn.org

### Moving?



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Axel Ringe Sierra Club onyxfarm@bellsouth.net  
Jane Davenport Defenders of Wildlife jdavenport@defenders.org  
Don Barger National Parks Conservation Association dbarger@npca.org  
Sandra Goss Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning sandra@sandrakgoss.com  
Anne Davis Southern Environmental Law Center adavis@selctn.org  
Parker Laubach Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment parker@socm.org

cc: Jonathan Burr, TDEC, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation  
Ed Carter, Tennessee Wildlife Resource Commission  
Dr. Sandra Dudley, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation  
J. Nicklas Holt, U.S. Department of the Interior  
Mary Jennings, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Kip Tyler, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Sierra Club-Middle TN Group  
**Tennes-Sierran**  
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