

Tennes-Sierran

The monthly state newsletter for the Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club

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Swimming Upstream: Working for Environmental Justice

Bunyan Bryant
University of Michigan School of Natural
Resources and Environment
Ann Arbor, Michigan



October 20, 2003

Of the 2.2 billion acres of land in the United States, the federal government owns about one third of it, most of it in the West. Over the years, this land has been exploited and the soil, air and water polluted by national and multinational corporations. The exploitation of much of our national resources is made possible by the 1872 General Mining Law, which allows companies to lease land from the federal government for mining and timbering purposes at \$2.50 an acre. For over 130 years, this law has allowed companies to exploit our national treasures at fire-sale prices, an entitlement that should have ended years ago. What we see here is not free enterprise capitalism at work, but rather a state-supported corporate welfare or federal income maintenance program to allow companies to make unprecedented profits at taxpayers' expense. Although these subsidies are huge, taxpayers have a tendency to look away or deny or rationalize such large government expenditures. Yet when it comes to families in need, we put a different spin on our story to frame it in such away that individuals are blamed for their economic predicament, even though the system of accumulation has failed to provide enough jobs for everyone who wants and needs to work. While entitlements to corporations seem to be legitimate, entitlements to families are often held to a different standard, even though the amount of resources required to keep families afloat in times of want and need is minuscule compared to corporate entitlements.

In this presentation, I focus on coal because it is the nastiest of all the fossil fuels, and the most plentiful in the U.S.. In this country, we possess 23 percent of the world's recoverable coal. At the present rate of consumption, we have enough coal in this country to last for 300 years. For instance, the Fort Union Formation of low sulfur sub-bituminous coal extends from Saskatchewan down

through the Northern Rocky Mountain region. The Northern Great Plains of Wyoming, Montana, and North Dakota on only contain vast amounts of strippable coal but a substantial amount of coal is found in the Southwest region called the Four Corners. Coal expansion in the West, where it went from 37 million typ in 1972 to 403 million typ in 1992, represents about 40 percent of U.S. total coal production (Archive/Commentary, 1993). Drags for mining coal are in some instances 20 stories high, with the capacity to hold six or seven Greyhound buses in their buckets, arrayed side by side. In operation, such drags use enough energy to supply a town of 30,000 people. Oversized trucks are used to haul away the overburden and coal, the latter being then crushed, washed and processed, to be loaded onto unit trains of one hundred boxcars that run round the clock. Trains or transmission lines transmit energy in the form of electricity or coal from the Northern Plains or Four Corners to other parts of the country to be used in coal-fired generating plants and factories. Nine hundred million tons of coal is burned each year to supply the country with electricity. More than 50% of our electricity comes from coal-fueled power plants (Turnacliiff, 2003)

With the Arab Oil Embargo of 1973, the price of oil increased to the point where it was competitive with the price of coal. Although the Arabs seized control of their oil, the oil companies still had control of the refineries and distribution. When the increase in oil prices made the cost of coal competitive, oil companies began to make their controversial move to exploit the western coal fields. Other reasons for their move westward included: 1) With coal seams as thick as 140 feet and with capital-intensive technologies like those described above, the strip mining of coal could be more efficient than working the three- to five-foot thick coal seams in the East. 2) While the strip mining in the West is more capital-intensive, the underground mining of the East was more labor-intensive and ultimately more expensive. 3) The West was not unionized, as was the East. 4) Project Independence, President Nixon's response to the Arab Oil crisis, sought to achieve energy self-sufficiency by 1980, and supported energy development in the West to do so.

We not only lease the land to mining companies for \$2.50 an acre, but we often provide another subsidy in the form of environmental cleanup. In 2000, EPA published its toxic releases report and for the third consecutive year, the mining industry headed the list. The industry released 3.34 billion pounds or 47 percent of all industrial releases. According to the employees of the U.S. Office of Surface Mining Control and Reclamation (OSM), basic safeguards against the devastating effects of coal strip mining are not being enforced. Due to mine runoff, our terrestrial and aquatic systems are being destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of acres stretching across the country from Appalachia to the Southwest deserts remain open pits, leaching acids and other toxins, while thousands of streams are now biological dead zones, posing health and safety hazards to the surrounding, largely poverty-stricken communities. In the Powder River Basin, the BLM final impact statement calls for 66,000 new coalbed methane (CBM) wells (about 14,000 have already been drilled in Wyoming, several

Continued on page 3



Appalachian Region Conservation Committee 2004 Action Plan

By Bob Morris, Chair, ARCC

At the end of August a phone conference was held with Chapter Leaders and ARCC Delegates and it was determined that it would be helpful to reinvigorate the Appalachian Regional Conservation Committee. The ARCC will bring together strengths of the member Chapters and in turn help the Chapters have greater impact on regional issues.

In a caucus at the Council of Club Leaders and a later conference call, we have determined that we would focus on energy issues for 2004. This is in keeping with SC national goals of hitting hard on issues where the Bush Administration is weak and vulnerable, and offering visionary solutions. Our premise is that if the public is informed regarding these issues, they will take action to insure that we will get improved governmental stewardship of the environment. 2004 is a critical year for us to have the public informed and involved in the environment.

The ARCC plan is to build an American Independence Energy Policy Alternative (AIEPA) that will contrast with the Bush Corporate Energy Policy. We will put together an Energy Policy Roadshow Kit that will consist of modules that Chapters will use to put on events. Various modules that have been proposed include: damage caused by dirty fossil fuels and alternatives to them; conservation measures that can be taken by government agencies, businesses and every citizen to reduce power demand; reduction of vehicle emissions; tax incentives and penalties to promote reduced and clean energy use; increased funding of rail projects; responsible management of the national electrical grid; nuclear power; use of best practices in building to increase energy efficiency.

The AIEPA will show how we can reduce our reliance on use of dirty foreign fossil fuels, and accelerate the development of clean energy sources, practices and industries. This will make America more energy independent and position our industries for the inevitable decline of fossil fuels in the future.

Here is an example of the kinds of contrasts the Kit could include. The Bush Corporate Energy Policy has created a tax loophole that gives deductions of up to \$100,000 for the purchase of Hummers and other SUV's over 6,000 lbs. These are the worst gas hogs and polluters. The AIEPA can advocate increased public funding support for rail, as the least polluting, most energy efficient, and most cost-effective transportation option per passenger mile. This is just one possible idea. Our members will have many more and better ones.

The keys to making this plan happen is to for you, our concerned members, to volunteer to work on the different modules. There are lots of resources on energy issues out there, including other volunteers, Sierra Club staff, other non-profit organizations and government agencies. You don't have to be an expert on the issue (although some of you are), you just have to be interested in it and willing to help pull together the information that is out there and plug it into the AIEPA. Both Sierra Club staff members and other volunteers (like me!) will be eager to help you find resources and put what you find into the final Energy Policy Roadshow Kit.

If you are interested in contributing your time, information, expertise or funding to help us get the public to demand an American Independence Energy Policy Alternative to the Bush Corporate Energy Policy, please contact me. Bob Morris, Chair, ARCC, at the number or address below. With your support, we can do better!

Bob Morris Chair,
Appalachian Regional Conservation Committee
Mssbobm@earthlink.net
Phone or fax: 202-548-8255

Tennes-Sierran

The monthly newsletter of the
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Submission DEADLINE is the 5th of the month preceding the new month's issue.

1. Email and email attached files are preferred. Send to TennesSierran@aol.com either with embedded text messages, or attached files in PC-based formats. Mac users should embed text in body of an email message only.
2. Photographs should be scanned in a .jpg or .tif file format, whenever possible, then either attached to email or mailed via US Postal Service (USPS) on a 3 1/2 diskette or CD Rom. 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 can not be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided.

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.

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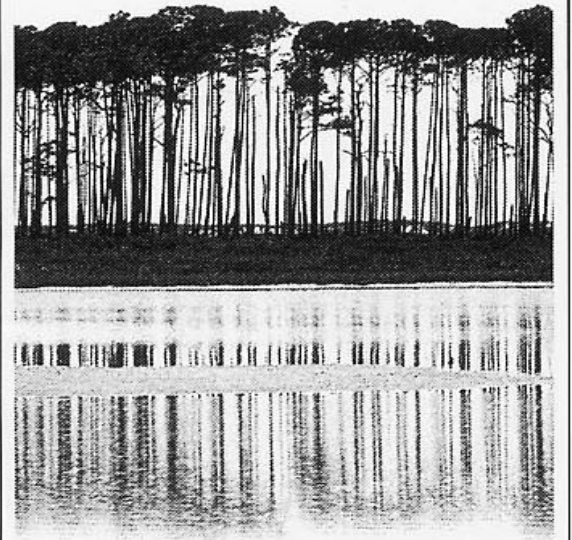
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Like Ansel Adams before him, the work of Donald Muir Bradburn is intensely honest, reflecting the passion of his childhood memories of the Mississippi Barrier Islands, which his photography helped save. For millions of people, the Sierra Club turns that same passion for nature into something just as moving—successful protection of our natural treasures. Insure tomorrow is filled with scenes that inspire. Join us. You'll be in good company.

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Swimming Upstream:

Working for Environmental Justice

By Bunyan Bryant

Continued from page 1

hundred in Montana), 26,000 miles of new roads and 52,000 miles of new pipelines (Kerasote, 2003). As energy companies acquire more leases to government land at fire-sale prices, the casualties are big game, upland birds, cold- and warm-water fisheries and communities whose livelihoods are based upon outdoor recreation and ranching.

When the coal reaches its final destination to be burned in factories and coal-fired generating power plants in the East or West, it is not without a social cost. The burning of coal or other fossil fuels releases lead, cadmium, mercury, zinc, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, carbon dioxide, particulate matter, and carbon monoxide into the atmosphere. Studies have shown that low-income people and people of color live in proximity to coal-fired generating power plants and factories or point source pollutants and are disproportionately exposed to environmental toxins. Too often people suffer from burning eyes, itchy skin, wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, and decreased lung function in general. Asthma attacks send African Americans to the emergency room at a rate (174.3 visits per 10,000 population) three times that for whites (59.4 visits per 10,000 population). Researchers, in comparing 86 cities in America, found that infants who lived in a highly polluted city during their first two months of life had a higher mortality rate than infants living in the city with the cleanest air. Too often people living in proximity to point source pollutants are the least protected against environmental harm and at the same time are the most uninsured in terms of health care. To protect the health and environmental conditions of people of color and low-income persons will require a major commitment of environmental protection and the eradication of poverty.

We are not only disproportionately exposed to environmental toxins, but are also exposed at unequal levels to the greenhouse gases that trigger global warming, mainly water vapor and carbon dioxide, with devastating consequences for the earth's entire population. If the planet continues to cook, we can expect the melting solar ice caps to cause floods, droughts, and mass migrations of people in search of dry land, food, employment, and shelter. As people migrate across geo-political boundaries for bold relief, regional conflicts and wars will abound, particularly as people compete over the scarcity of resources. As the West Nile virus, Dengue fever and other tropical diseases migrate North, people without health care or money will suffer dire consequences. Although global warming will affect everyone and every species on the planet, it will differentially affect people without financial means or resources to protect themselves. Global warming may perhaps be the greatest environmental injustice of all because poor people and people of color are the least able to protect themselves against climate change as compared to their more affluent white counterparts. Therefore, if we continue to use fossil fuels, people of color and low-income groups will not only experience greater health effects based upon their proximity to power plants and industry, but they also will be disproportionately impacted by the long-term effects of greenhouse gases and ultimately by global warming. While burning of fossil fuels has been viewed to be an asset in the past, it has now become a national security issue based upon both present and potential catastrophic effects.

When 50 million people in the U.S. were left without energy in August of 2003, another kind of national security issue was raised. If this energy crisis had continued for a period of a couple of weeks or more, it would have had catastrophic effects. Our transportation system, both on the ground and in the air, would have come to a near halt. More specifically, the energy crisis disabled computers, subways, trains, and passenger's security checks at airports. Perishable goods would have cost the economy billions of dollars. Hospitals and healthcare networks would have depleted their reserve supply of energy, creating risk to patients and confusion to the public at large. Financial institutions would not be able

to complete their financial transactions. People would be without clean water and lights. Because of the recent energy crisis, many people were not able to get home and had to sleep on the streets. If the backup energy supply for nuclear power plants fail, then there would be no way of manipulating the control rods, a sure recipe for a nuclear meltdown with perhaps no energy available to sound a warning to the community of eminent danger. If this energy crisis had happened in the winter months, people in the northern states would have frozen to death. Approximately 20 years ago, Amory Lovins and L. Hunter Lovins of The Rocky Mountain Institute, in a book entitled *Brittle Power: Energy Strategy for National Security*, warned us of dangers of our dependency upon the power grid and the potential devastating consequences, particularly related to nuclear power plants. When large numbers of citizens are left without energy would be an optimal time for terrorists to operate in order to exacerbate the emergency for their own military purposes.

What must be done?

Although the picture I paint above is dismal, there are things we can do. These recommendations are by no means exhaustive, but they will take us down the road a piece. More extensive strategies of survival must be obtained elsewhere. First, we should not only require that automobile companies increase the gas mileage of their automobiles, but we must require them to equip cars with an electric socket so that people can plug in an extension cord during power outages, when gas pumps are not operational. There could be millions of mini-generators throughout the country to help people cope with immediate energy outages. This is not a strategy for fundamental change, but a strategy for fundamental survival. Second, we must support HR 4748, the Mineral Exploration and Development Act of 2002, a bill that would replace the 1872 mining law. The Bill includes fiscal reform, environmental protection and the clean-up of abandoned mines among other things.

Third, any cap and trade program should be viewed as an interim program and not an end within itself. Divorcing ourselves from the fossil fuel economy is the long-term solution to many of our environmental problems. The cap and trade program that I suggest for an interim program is the one advanced by Peter Barnes in his book *Sky Trust*. What is unique about this cap and trade program is that emissions permits are sold not only to companies at the top of the carbon chain, but that the monies that come from such sales are placed in a national trust to be distributed in equal amounts to every man, woman and child in the form of Individual Retirement Accounts or Individual Development Accounts for Children. A part of the trust money will also be used to help those most affected by higher carbon prices. Although the trust allows for people who will be affected by higher carbon, it fails to address "hotspots" that will result from trading. For example, if Company A buys pollution reduction credits from Company B to allow A to continue or increase its level of pollution, then people living in proximity to A will continue to suffer or their suffering will increase. Additional attention to solve the "hotspot" problem must be done.

We must reorder our priorities to allocate more of our financial resources to invent and make more efficient forms of alternative fuels and technologies. The Paley Commission of President Truman in its 1952 report stated that if an aggressive effort were made, 13 million homes and commercial buildings could be heated by solar energy by 1975. In 1974, an Atomic Energy Commission study concluded that by the year 2000, solar energy could provide 30 percent of the country's energy needs (*Jobs and Energy*, 1977). If we had followed through on the ideas of these commissions, we would have perhaps divorced ourselves from much of the fossil fuel dependent economy. Also, in 1976, Lovins reported that the country had basically two choices: it could decide to travel the soft energy path of alternative and environmentally benign energy sources and technology, or could choose to travel the path of capital-intensive technology. Lovins claimed that just as one did not need a chain saw to cut

butter at room temperature, one did not need a nuclear power plant to boil water to generate steam to turn a turbine to create electricity.

Fair market value for mining can support alternative energy sources and an income maintenance program for the needy. If fossil fuels and even nuclear power can be heavily subsidized, then why cannot we subsidize people in want and need without the attachment of a social stigma? Every man, woman and child should be protected against want and need, particularly during times of economic downturn. People would not only be entitled money from the trust, but they would be entitled to money from a guaranteed income maintenance program. As we divorce ourselves from the fossil fuels economy, and as we have less need for the trust, the income maintenance program will be increased. The exact policies or rules regarding this income maintenance program must be worked out. To create such a program we must heavily subsidize alternative forms of energy and technologies that are environmentally benign and safe for a productive and livable world. We must explore more efficient ways of using solar, hydrogen, geothermal, wind and other forms of environmentally benign sources of energy. Guaranteed annual income along with a single payer health insurance program are two ways of eradicating poverty. Poverty is perhaps the worst form of pollution because with it comes environmental degradation and the whole alphabet soup of health, social, and economic problems. With insurance coverage that is transportable, people would perhaps feel free to take business or investment risks and to be creative.

By divorcing ourselves from the fossil fuel economy, we not only decentralize our energy resources, but we decentralize political power. Over the years, energy companies have not only accumulated a considerable amount of economic power, but they have accumulated a considerable amount of political power. By divorcing ourselves from the fossil fuel economy for a more resilient, flexible and sustainable energy, we simultaneously return the decision-making to the village square. In order for democracy to prevail in this society we must have distributive energy sources and distributive sources of political power.

The environmental movement and the environmental justice movement have a common enemy—the mining and burning of fossil fuels. Yet struggling alone, whether it's downstream out West or downstream in our inner cities, is not enough. Struggling separately with separate agendas means the best we can do is to fight a rear-guard action. Together we must swim upstream to change the decision-makers that determine the character of the battle downstream. We call upon environmentalists everywhere to form coalitions in order to defeat an administration that has stacked up the worst environmental record in the history of this country and has given away much of our natural treasure in the process. Our downstream problems will have a better chance of being solved if we can elect an environmentally just House, Senate and President. Hightower (2003:xiii) has a statement in his book that I think is appropriate: "Never have so few done so much for such few." We need to write our own chapter that would read: "Never have so many done so much for so many." This would truly be in the spirit of a new America. If we fail to organize politically and vote, then dinosaur give-a-ways and the destruction and pollution of our land, water, and air is nobody's fault but our own.

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Meetings



HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT: Saturday, January 10, 10:00 a.m. at the home of Will Skelton, 4064 Kingston Park Drive, Knoxville. An opportunity for the Executive Committee and other interested activists to really spend some time planning for the big conservation issues of 2004. Bring a sack lunch or contribute to delivery pizza. Optional potluck dinner will begin at 6 pm. Directions: East bound on Kingston Pike, turn right (south) on Kingston Park Drive, immediately east of the Greek Orthodox Church. Go to the end of the street, and park in the lower church parking lot. Will's house is gray. His phone number is 523-2272.

PROGRAM MEETING: Tuesday, January 13, 2004, Tennessee Valley Unitarian Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville. Patagonia: Trekker's Dream. Patagonia, with its famed Torres del Paine, is on every hiker's list of must see places. Will Skelton will present a slide show of a solo trip he recently made to this exceptionally scenic corner of South America. Call 523-2272 for more information.

STRATEGY MEETING: Tuesday, January 27, 7:30 p.m., Tennessee Valley Unitarian Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville. If you're interested in getting more involved or in finding out about what drives the Sierra Club in this area, this is the meeting to attend. Call Roger Jenkins at 690-3257 for more information.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

PROGRAM MEETING: Thursday, January 8 at 7:00 p.m. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center in Nashville. This month's program will feature a presentation on caving. Ed Yarbrough, a Nashville attorney, will present our program this month on the caves of the southeast, including Tennessee and Alabama, and pit caves of Mexico, including some that have large bird populations. In addition to being a great caver, Ed is a wonderful photographer. Join us and see this glimpse of the beauty beneath our feet. This will be a joint program for the Middle Tennessee Group of the Sierra Club and Cumberland-Harpeth Audubon.

STRATEGY MEETING: Wednesday, January 28 at 6:30 p.m. Please note that because our usual December meeting date fell on Christmas day, the December meet-

ing was postponed until January 7. The January meeting on the 28th will get us back on schedule. Conservation issues are now 1st on the agenda! Come early, bring your sack dinner, or snack on refreshments provided by our group and get the news on what's happening in our Middle Tennessee Group. All members are invited to attend our conservation and administrative meeting at 2021 21st Avenue South (the old St. Bernard Academy Building). We try to have signs out front to point the way, but, just in case, we meet on the 4th floor. We welcome each of you to participate or just to be with us to learn of the group's conservation initiatives and community activities. Additions to the conservation agenda should be sent to Caty Butcher at JLCLBUTCH@comcast.net. For additions to the administrative agenda or for more information regarding the meetings, send a message to Rachel Floyd at rfloyd557@aol.com, or call 792-2590.

UPPER CUMBERLAND GROUP (Cookeville)

PROGRAM MEETING: 4th Thursday, Jan. 22nd, 7:00 p.m. in the lower level meeting room of the Putnam County Library. Mark Stanfill, CTC Program Coordinator, will do a presentation on the Cumberland Trail. Contact Peggy Evans at 931-432-6680 or maevans@TWLakes.net for more information on program meeting dates and times.

STATE OF FRANKLIN GROUP (Tri-Cities)

STRATEGY MEETING: Please contact Linda Modica at <lcmmodica@aol.com>, 753-9697 (H) or 676-2925 (cell) to confirm a meeting or to place an item on the agenda.

PROGRAM MEETING: To confirm meeting or topic, or for directions, please contact Linda Modica @ <lcmmodica@aol.com> or 753-9697.

CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

MONTHLY MEMBERS GATHERING: Thursday, January 1, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. - Otherlands, 641 South Cooper, Memphis, Tennessee. Join us for Chickasaw Group's "FIRST THURSDAY" monthly gathering where Sierra Club members, activists and friends can meet in a casual setting to talk about issues and interests. Contact Membership Chair Jill Johnston <jdjhstn@memphis.edu> at (901) 278-2713 for more information.

STRATEGY MEETING: Monday, January 12, 6:30 p.m. - St. Louis Catholic Church, 203 South White Station, Memphis, Tennessee. This meeting of the Executive Committee is open also to all members of the Sierra Club. Contact Charlie Rond <chasrond@bellsouth.net> (by January 8 to place items on the agenda) at (901) 452-8150 for more information.

PROGRAM MEETING: The next program meeting will be in February. Program Meetings are scheduled every other month. Contact Clark Buchner at (901) 327-2545 or coyotem@usit.net for more information.

TELEVISION PROGRAM: Every Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. and Wednesday at 11:30 a.m., CST, The Library Channel, Memphis Cable 18, WVPL, "The Nature of Conservation" is sponsored by the Sierra Club. A different program is aired, usually each month, with the program repeating every Tuesday and Wednesday throughout the month. For January, Conservation Chair Allan Lummus will continue his discussion, with Program Director Judith Rutschman, of why there is widespread opposition to the Free Trade Area of the Americas agreement. If any groups or individuals in the community have a special problem or concern, or would like to see a program on a special issue or subject, please contact Judith Rutschman <RUTSCHMAN@rhodes.edu> at (901) 767-5916.

**Winter
Tennessee Chapter Meeting**

**Cedar's of Lebanon State Park
January 16-18, 2004**

Hosted by The Cherokee Group

Join us at Cedars of Lebanon State Park, south of Lebanon, Tennessee. We will occupy the Group Lodge where bunks are provided, but bring your own bedding, pillow, and towel. A short evening program is planned.

The cost for the entire weekend is only \$30.00 per person (1/2 price for children under 12 years old). This includes lodging, Saturday breakfast and dinner, and Sunday breakfast.

Please RSVP to:
Terry R. Miller - 6755 Moss Lake Drive
Hixson, TN 37343
email: trmcha@comcast.net.
telephone: 423-842-5053

Registration Info Needed:
Number of Attendees & Names
Number of carnivores
Number of herbivores

**Directions: take I-40 to the Lebanon exit; go south on US 231 for 6 miles; the park is on the left.
Park phone number: (615) 443-2769.**

Group News from Chickasaw

Compiled by various members

A tradition at the Chickasaw Group's Holiday Party is to award individuals that have gone that "extra mile" in their efforts to insure that our air, water and land is protected from the efforts of polluters and despoilers. The 2003 award winners were:

**1) EJ and Community Action Award:
Ernestine Carpenter**

Ms. Carpenter has served for the past few years as State Representative Barbara Cooper's District 86 Advisory Committee Chair. Fulfilling her duties as Chair, she has been dealing with air pollution problems associated with the former Williams Refinery, which is now owned and operated by Premcor. Working closely with Representative Cooper, Ms. Carpenter has been to Air Quality Board meetings, chaired community meetings and led discussions about strengthening community effectiveness in dealing with the big industries that loom over the French Fort, Riverview and Kansas neighborhoods in southwest Memphis. Additionally, her interest in environmental justice has led her to participate in the 2003 Sierra Club In-Gathering which examined the issues of "Dismantling Racism" and making our Sierra Club Environmental Justice Program more effective. Ms. Carpenter also participated in the premiere release of our air pollution video this summer and is featured in it.



**2) Smart Growth Award:
Steve Sondheim**

Mr.Sondheim is a member of the Friends of Shelby Farms as well as Citizens for TDOT reform. Along with other members of Friends of Shelby Farms, Steve is trying to get local government officials to look at routes that will not adversely impact the 4,000+ acre Shelby Farms area and to involve the public in all phases of the planning process. As was recently reported in the November 2003 Tennes-Sierran Commissioner Gerald Nicely of TDOT referred this project back to local government for additional study at the local level.



**3) Unsung Hero Award:
David Carter**

Mr.Carter is the Video Program Coordinator for the Memphis&Shelby County Public Library. He insures that all aspects of the show's production results in a professional product that enables the Chickasaw Group to place the myriad of environmental issues in front of a potential viewing audience of 200,000+ cable television subscribers in Memphis and Shelby County.



Top Photo: Left to right; David Carter-Unsung Hero, James Baker-Outstanding Volunteer Service, Charlie Rond-Chickasaw Group Chair, and Steve Sondheim-Smart Growth.

Middle Photo: Ernestine Carpenter - EJ and Community Action Award and Charlie Rond

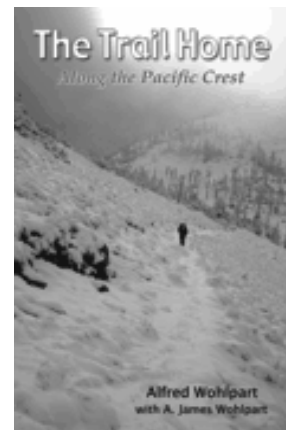
Bottom Photo: Brunswick Road on a foggy November afternoon. The Brunswick Farms P.D. Phases 2 & 3 development shows without a doubt why the Chickasaw Group picked Mr.Wayne Todd of WATCO as our 2003 recipient of the Paving Paradise Award. Photo by James H. Baker

Chair of the Chickasaw Group in 2003 as well as being on the Environmental Justice Steering Committee. He has written several articles for the Tennes-Sierran.

In addition to recognizing the efforts of those who are working so hard to improve Earth's environment, the Chickasaw Group also recognizes those whose efforts are resulting in large scale environmental destruction. The 2003 winner of the Paving Paradise Award went to, Mr.Wayne Todd of WATCO, for the Brunswick Farms P.D. Phases 2 & 3. This 47 acre site is in the process of being completely stripped of all vegetation in preparation for construction of a classic sprawl subdivision. The Water Sentinels have already notified the state environmental regulators that the site appears to be out of compliance for applicable erosion and sediment controls and the mud and silt are washing into a nearby creek already listed by the state for being adversely affected by mud and silt.

**The Trail Home: Along the Pacific Crest
by Alfred Wohlpart, with A. James Wohlpart
ISBN: 1581125674**

The Trail Home describes a 2,650 mile trek on the Pacific Crest Trail and the internal transformation that occurred along the way. Starting in southern California and heading northward, the author spends six months journeying through some of the most spectacular landscapes in America, from the arid deserts of the southwest to the High Sierras and the Cascade Mountains. Ultimately, the author arrives at the Canadian border in mid-October, but is no longer the same person as when he began. The Trail Home describes the intertwined, dual journey undertaken—the external journey exploring the physical landscape and the internal journey exploring the landscape of the soul.



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Sorry, we cannot accept credit cards. Please make check payable to Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club and mail to: Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club, 2021 21st Avenue South, Suite 436 - Nashville, TN 37212

If you would like to be active in the Save Our Smokies campaign, please contact Beverly Smith at 865/531-8480 or blsmith1300@comcast.com
 Your help would be greatly appreciated!

Outings

All participants in Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver before you participate, please refer to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/SignInWaiver.PDF>, or call 415-977-5630, for a printed version. Transportation to the outing, including carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar, is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel.

HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

Saturday-Sunday, January 24 - 25, 2004, Winter Backpack, Meigs Mountain, GSMNP. - If you would like to try a little winter camping on a fairly easy backpack, join us for a hike to Campsite #20 via Curry Mountain and Meigs Mountain Trail. We will car shuttle between trailheads and begin our hike with a 1000', 3.3-mile warm-up climb on Curry Mountain Trail. This is the most difficult challenge on this backpack. We will turn left at the Curry and Meigs Mountain trail junction and hike an easy 2.1-miles to Campsite #20 (King Branch), a large, pleasant campsite with plenty of water nearby. Our Sunday morning hike out will be a short 2.0-



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!

miles on Meigs Mountain Trail. We should be back in Knoxville by early afternoon. Please note, this hike will become a bit more difficult with snow although it is still quite doable as an easy backpack. Pre-register with Beverly Smith. Contact the leader no later than 3 days before the beginning of the hike. Evening phone number 865-531-8480; email blsmith1300@comcast.net

MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

Thursday, January 1 - Radnor Lake Dayhike - Come out and greet the new year with new and old friends! Linda Smithyman will lead an easy hike around the lake. For meeting time and to register, contact Linda at 615-822-1979.

Saturday, January 3 - Percy Warner Park Dayhike - Join us for an easy to moderate 5 mile hike in Edwin Warner Park. Meet at the trailhead at 1 p.m. We'll hike the Harpeth Woods and Owl Hollow trails, along with portions of the old roadway. Trails are paved and dirt, so be prepared for a little mud if it's rained recently. Come early if you wish to tour the Nature Center. The park is located on the southwest side of Nashville, off of Hwy 100. Contact Diane for more details and to register at 615-895-1236 or Diane@Propson.com.

Sat./Sun. Jan. 3-4 - Longhunter State Park Backpack - Join us for our 3rd annual trek to the overnight campsite on the Volunteer Trail. This is an easy to moderate 12 mile round trip trail. All levels of backpackers welcome. Last year we had a jolly good time! For additional information and to register, contact Katherine Pendleton at 615-943-6877 or email Adelicia1@aol.com

Saturday, January 17 - Looking for Icicles Dayhike - Heloise will lead us on a easy five mile hike in Franklin Marion State Forest outside of Monteagle, TN. For additional information and to register, contact Heloise at 615-896-6278 or email heloisew@bellsouth.net.

Tuesday, January 27 - Olympic National Park Slide Show - Katherine Pendleton will present a slide presentation at REI in Brentwood, TN of a backpacking trip that she led in August, 2003 at Olympic National Park in Washington. The program will begin at 7 p.m. For additional information, contact Katherine Pendleton at 615-943-6877 or email Adelicia1@aol.com.

LOOKING AHEAD:

Saturday, February 7 - Eagle Watching Dayhike - Join Heloise for an educational easy seven mile dayhike in Guntersville Lake State Park in Alabama as we look for eagles. For additional information contact Heloise at 615-896-6278 or email heloisew@bellsouth.net.

STATE OF FRANKLIN GROUP (Tri-Cities)

TRAIL WORK - As you may know, the State of Franklin Group has adopted the section of Appalachian Trail which winds through the beautiful Big Laurel Branch Wilderness (BLBW), just west of Watauga Lake. The use of power tools is prohibited in such designated wilderness areas and for this reason some members of trail maintenance groups actually oppose the protections that wilderness designation provides. We can show our support for wilderness by performing necessary and timely maintenance in the BLBW and perhaps, with enough support, adopt other wilderness trails. In addition to BLBW, we do trail work on other sections of the AT & in Johnson City Parks, as well as various other projects. Volunteers are needed. No prior experience is necessary and you may work at your own pace. As with all SOFG Sierra Club Outings everyone is welcome, so bring your friends. See the monthly schedule below.

1st Saturday - Appalachian Trail Maintenance at BLBW.

3rd Saturday - Appalachian Trail Maintenance at BLBW or other AT sections with the Tennessee Eastman Hiking Club.

Last Saturday - Trail Maintenance at one of Johnson City's Parks, such as Buffalo Mountain Park, Winged Deer Park or Willow Springs Park.

3rd Wednesday - Various Projects.

For details & to sign up contact John Arwood 423-926-9876.

To be informed of upcoming outings via email send a brief note to: Trail_Work_Play@hotmail.com

CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

First Aid /CPR - First Aid Class/CPR Class for Chickasaw Group Sierra Club Members in January, date and time to be announced, at the American Red Cross Headquarters, 1400 Central Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee. You will learn Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and some first aid. Time is 8:30 to 3:30 with an hour for lunch. Space is limited. If you lead two outings, the Chickasaw Group will reimburse you. Your check made out to the Chickasaw Group Sierra Club is your reservation. Send your checks to Judith Hammond, 481 No. McLean Blvd., Memphis, Tennessee 38112. Your check is your reservation.

DISCLAIMER: The following activities are not sponsored or administered by the Sierra Club. They are published only as a service to our members. The Sierra Club makes no representation or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of these activities. Transportation to the outing, including carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar, is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel.

Saturday, January 10, 2003 - 10:00 am - The Old Forest Trail. "Second Saturday Hikes" Explore the only urban old growth forest of its kind in America. Learn about the forest's history, identify big trees and wildflowers and observe firsthand the impact of natural and human forces on forests in an urban setting. Meet at the bridge next to the parking lot at the end of Old Forest Lane in the center of Overton Park. The informative and entertaining trail map to the self-guided mile-and-a-quarter mile loop hike with seasonal bird watching and wildflower-viewing guides is available for free at the Golf House in Overton Park at all other times. For additional information, contact Don Richardson <donrich@juno.com> at (901) 276-1387. Sponsored by Park Friends.

Join the Nashville Recycling Team!



Any good friend of the earth who can donate 2 or 3 hours any Saturday morning can join the fun at our Kroger Elysian Fields Recycling Site. We need you! AND, your efforts directly contribute to the environmental campaigns of your local Middle Tennessee Group.

To volunteer call David Bordenkircher at 333-3377 or email dabordenkircher@mindspring.com

Thank
You!!



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For reservations and information,
Call (606) 376-7383; 376-8042

A Wet Walk in the Woods

A True Tennessee Adventure

By Beth Powis, Group Outing Chair
Los Angeles, CA

Ever since I'd read *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson I'd been curious about backpacking the Appalachian Trail, as he had done and chronicled hilariously in his book. When this past October I discovered a Sierra Club chapter in Tennessee preparing to hike the trail at the peak of fall colors, I was off.

And so two weeks before Halloween I found myself soaking wet, slip-sliding up and down the AT in pouring rain, and yelling at a tree limb when for the third time one tricked me into thinking it was our much-longed-for trail shelter, only to turn back into a tree as I got closer. A walk in the woods indeed.

Of course unlike Bryson I wasn't hiking the whole 2,100+ mile Appalachian Trail from Maine to Georgia. We were traversing just half of the approximately 80 miles that straddle Tennessee and North Carolina, in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

But the 12 miles we hiked that day were the longest miles I'd ever hiked.

"This was what one of my friends would call a 'character-buildin' day," said trip leader Katherine Pendleton in her friendly southern drawl after we were finally ensconced in Siler's Bald trail shelter (Siler being one of the Southern Appalachia mountain folk who lived here before the Park Service kicked them out in the early 1930's to create the park, and "bald" being an open meadow perched on a mountain). It was the third day of our six-day trip. With us were three friends of Katherine's from Nashville; Nancy J, a kindergarten teacher, Nancy's beau Jerry, a firefighter and emergency medical technician, and Nancy F., a recreational therapist in a long-term-care facility.

All of us were soaked to one degree or another, despite raingear. Damp clothes and gear decorated the rafters and every inch of the chain-link fence that formed a barricade across the front of the shelter. Meant to keep bears out, the fences turned the shelters into a perverse sort of reverse zoo. Each night we'd shut the gate and lock ourselves in by wrapping a chain around the gatepost. Inevitably I'd be awakened several hours later by the clanking of the chain and rattling of the gate when someone went outside to pee. We stayed at a different shelter each night, and never did see any bears.

We dried out from our drenching the next day. The rest of our days were a mixture of sun and the deep, misty fog that gives the Smokies their name. Hardwood trees with magnificent fall foliage grew in dense thickets right up to the sides of the trail. Damp leaves underfoot hid rocks and roots and made the steep trail slippery, sometimes treacherous. It wasn't until the fourth day of our trip that we climbed high enough to escape the deep forest and have any sort of real view. Always we followed the ridgeline straight up – and down – the rolling hills until we reached our goal, that day's shelter.

Made of stone with a tin roof, the shelters are completely open on one side (except for the fence). Despite this, it's dark and dank inside most of them. Two large wooden sleeping platforms, one several feet above the other, stretch the width of the shelter, forming in essence a huge bunk bed with a roof. Each shelter sleeps 12, and ours were almost always full. However, one hiker we met said they packed 25 people into a shelter during one particularly nasty storm several years ago.

Each night we'd clip our food sacks to the bear cables strung up in the nearby trees and use a pulley to haul them safely aloft. Water came from natural springs, most with a lead pipe funneling the water into a shallow puddle. Not so nice were the "toilet areas" at shelters that didn't have an outdoor privy. Basically a designated patch of woods, these areas were littered with toilet paper and sometimes unburied human waste. With more than 10 million people traveling through the Smokies each year, many of them on the Appalachian Trail, such impact is perhaps inevitable, but still deplorable.

The only person in our group not from Nashville, I was treated with warm Southern hospitality. Officially I was co-leader of the trip, filling in at the last minute. But this trip was more relaxed than official, and my trip-mates were quickly becoming friends. We traded stories of hikes and adventures, and they taught me the words to "Rocky Top," the fight song for the University of Tennessee. Named after a peak we'd hiked across on day two, it embodied perfectly the history and character of these mountains: "Ain't no smoggy smoke on Rocky Top, ain't no telephone bills..."

The shelters, crowded as they were, nevertheless turned out to be a great place to meet and study people. There was "The Jerk" who tried to hog two spaces in a full shelter until Katherine (who is also a park volunteer) shamed him into giving one to a thru-hiker who needed a spot. Then there were the five men from Pennsylvania, Ohio and Colorado who drank, smoked and held a farting contest after the rest of us went to bed (note to self: bring earplugs!). We met a young couple, both environmental biologists, who were on a six-month road trip from Virginia to Mexico and who had



Top Photo:
MTG
Outings
Chair
Katherine
Pendleton
with fellow outing participant Nancy
Fleming.

2nd Row Left: Katherine Pendleton, Nancy Fleming, and Beth Powis stop for pose in front of AT Shelter.

2nd Row Right: Nancy Juodenas, Jerry Hendrixson, and Nancy Fleming relax in their AT Shelter after a wet day of hiking.

stopped off to hike in the Smokies. And there was the pack of teenage Boy Scouts who forgot an entire box of honey buns when they left the next morning, much to our delight.

Our last day we met two thru-hikers on the trail, a man and woman. They had just gotten back on the trail after a few days washing up and resupplying in a nearby town. Somehow we never got their names. But we laughed as they told us how they became instant celebrities at their latest trailhead when people found out they were thru-hikers. "Everyone wanted to take their picture with us," the woman said, "even our cabdriver!" We politely refrained.

I spent the last night on the trail remembering entries people had written in the various shelter registers. "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, if it keeps on rainin' my butt will rust," was one favorite. I drew pictures in the register of people rollerblading under palm trees on the Santa Monica bike path.

The sixth day of our trip we emerged, craving beer and pizza, at Newfound Gap, the spot where Teddy Roosevelt had dedicated the park in 1937. And then all too soon I was back on an airplane heading home, my walk in the woods completed, but new friendships just begun.

State of Franklin Group (Tri-Cities) Needs Outing Leaders

SOFG needs volunteers to help with the effort to offer a schedule of year around outings. There are numerous possibilities for fun & informative outings, a great form of outreach to our membership & would-be members, such as:

- Day Hikes (leisurely to fast paced)
- Overnight/Multi-Day Backpacking
- Campground Based Camping
- Trips to Points of Interest
- Interpretative Walks (flora, fauna, geology, history, etc.)
- Family Oriented (with kids, single parents, etc.)
- Star/Moon/Meteor Gazing
- Development of Wilderness Skills
- Trail Work
- Tree Planting/Restoration Work
- [combinations of the above]

If you have an interest in helping to promote a love & understanding of our natural environment within others, through SOFG Sierra Club outings, please contact:

John Arwood - SOFG Outings Chair
423-926-9876 - Trail_Work_PLay@hotmail.com

Where will you be when you need it?

What will you do when someone is injured and you're the only one there? Watch for details of the upcoming Wilderness First Aid training tentatively scheduled for the weekend of April 24th.

Defenders of Tennessee Charge Forward in 2004



For the past 7 years, the Sierra Club has become a serious player in the state Legislature because we have had a contract lobbyist to represent our interests. We have been able to fund this critical program through member contributions, and we are inviting you to become one of our **Defenders of Tennessee**. In January when the Legislature reconvenes, the struggle to protect our air, water, wetlands, and parks will begin again.

We need a strong presence in the Legislature, and we are happy to announce that, because of the support of our members and friends, we again have been able to retain Mike Murphy to represent our interests with the Legislature. Mike is a long-time environmentalist and a former member of the state House of Representatives. Because he knows the issues and understands the political process, he is an exceptionally effective lobbyist for the Sierra Club, for the environment, and for you. With the election behind us, **we need Mike back on Capitol Hill**. Please consider donating to the Defenders of Tennessee as a gift to the Sierra Club, to the environment, and to yourself. Your contribution is not tax-deductible, but it is critical in enabling us to continue to have a voice "on the hill".

Please send the form below and your check, made out to Sierra Club Defenders Fund, c/o Adelle Wood, 4641 Villa Green Drive, Nashville, TN 37215. **Thank you!**

Sincerely,
Bill Terry, Legislative Co-Chair

Penny Brooks, Legislative Co-Chair

Amount of donation: () \$50 () \$125 () \$250 () \$500 () Other _____

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May we publish your name in the Sierra Club newsletter as a donor?

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We are very grateful for the support of the following contributors (through December 1)

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Happy New Year!

From the
Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club



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