

# Tennessee Sierran

SIERRA CLUB  
TENNESSEE CHAPTER

The Bimonthly Newspaper of the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club

Volume 56, Number 6 - November / December 2023

## Tennessee Communities Rise Up Against TVA's Proposed Gas Pipelines and Plants

Story on page 7

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**Justin Pearson Receives Sierra Club's  
Most Prestigious Award - page 6**

Cover Photo: "The ducks like to people-watch." Jo Ann Ray, who shot this scene behind her home, and other Cheatham County residents are concerned a proposed TVA methane gas plant and its pipeline could ruin their beloved, idyllic Sycamore Creek (photo courtesy Jo Ann Ray)

Masthead Photo: Engine Creek, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, © Ron Shrieves

Explore, Enjoy, and Protect



# From Tennessee Chair Cris Corley

## Early Morning Thoughts: Wild Dreams and Wild Fires



Waking up in a cold sweat, after a scary nightmare, has become commonplace for me, especially over the last few weeks. In this morning's early dream, I was running down the hall at full speed, sprinting for a slowly-closing elevator door in the Senate office building, late for a meeting with an unnamed U.S. senator. A grinning lone staffer operating the elevator allowed the door to slowly close, seconds before I could jump aboard.

The past month has included travel through six time zones — I now fear my biological clock has suffered permanent scarring. I have written here of the dominant Corley trait of regular patterns of blissful sleep. Now, with sunrise coming a little later every day, and with my slow recovery from my recent thousands of miles of travel,

sweet dreams are a rarity. But to make our voices heard, we of the Sierra Club have many more miles to travel, doors to open, and meetings to hold with government officials. Ensuring planetary protection is absolutely essential for our survival, and we have only a short time to act. We may lose a little sound sleep, but we have to get out of bed and get to work!

August began with record-breaking high temperatures across the globe and numerous wild-fires. I'd booked my annual Hawaii trip to visit friends months earlier. Just days before my departure, tragedy struck Maui. Lahaina (my favorite Hawaii small town) was burned to a crisp in minutes by a fast-moving fire. Years of neglect that allowed tall-growing invasive grasses to grow in abandoned pineapple fields, coupled with the effects of prolonged drought, and complicated by the high winds of a strong hurricane a thousand miles to the south, sparked disaster! One-hundred-mph wind gusts snapped high-voltage electric transmission poles, igniting dry forage. Nearly 100 folks died as they ran to save their souls. As our atmosphere warms, so do our oceans. Bigger storms, drier conditions, warmer days: climate change is a reality.

Peering out the window of the Boeing 777 on final approach to Kona International on the Big Island, I could see heavy smoke in the upcountry of nearby Maui. The fire in Lahaina was smoldering, but the less-reported highland fires were far from being contained, burning thousands of acres. Climate change from the continued increase and accumulation of greenhouse gasses has resulted in record-breaking drought conditions in previously lush areas of Maui and the Big Island. Knowing a dear family of ranchers living in the area, I called them on arrival. I was relieved to learn they were safe, but saddened to hear 35 acres of pasture had already been lost to fire. Thankfully their horses were able to outrun the flames.

The next few days after arrival were spent at the dock on the Big Island, assisting locals in obtaining basic supplies and loading them onto small vessels for transport to the neighboring island of Maui. Over the next 10 days, my thoughts centered on our personal responsibility for this disaster, especially when watching Hawaii's spectacular sunsets. Should I have been more active in SC's past efforts to protect? As the sun slowly sinks into the western Pacific, the gradual change in colors is magnificent. In Hawaii, sunsets seem to take hours, plenty of warning that darkness is approaching. After the sun disappears below the horizon, things get dark quickly. We have been seeing similarly slow signs of change in the environment for many years. Our actions for change have only recently begun to intensify — hopefully those efforts will delay nightfall.

The week after departing the Big Island, I was privileged to have the opportunity to travel to Chicago for the annual Council of Club Leaders (CCL) joint meeting with the National Directors board. The first days involved passage of important resolutions to assist the Executive Director and board in developing future policy. Early this year, I had received a call from a school teacher in Texas who educated me on the climate threat from energy-gobbling mega-computers mining cryptocurrency. Texas has become a favored location for production due to its weak zoning regulations and cheaper electric rates. It appears rural Tennessee is now also on the front lines for the development of these electricity-sucking monsters, which devour massive amounts of energy, much of it derived from burning fossil fuels. But with help from our alternate delegate and legal eagle Charlie High, a well-received resolution was written and passed, thus guiding our directors in addressing this environmental time bomb. Executive Director Ben Jealous gave me a thumbs-up during the presentation, signaling fast action on policy regarding this massive greenhouse producer. Just a few days ago, I was contacted by leadership and asked to serve on a task force being assembled to recommend cryptocurrency mining guidelines and policy.

The Chicago meeting provided a showcase to highlight the Tennessee Chapter's visions and accomplishments. Being a lifelong, ever-optimistic Chicago Cubs baseball fan, I acquired 10 night-game tickets at Wrigley Field. I invited several board members and executive staffers, with an emphasis on inviting folks that might be influenced to see the potential for Tennessee's future in becoming a major new environmental steward. Our state has produced past and current environmental political leaders, both Democrat and Republican.

The annual Sierra Club national awards presentation was held the last night of our gathering. With my recommendation and the strong encouragement of our very own National Board member Rita Harris, Tennessee Representative Justin J. Pearson had been selected to receive Sierra Club's highest award, Changemaker of the Year. Rep. Pearson brought the entire assembly to their feet on multiple occasions with his highly energized acceptance speech. (See also Council on Club Leaders article on next page.)

After arriving back home from Chicago, I found myself quickly repacking my suitcase with clean socks and heading to Washington, DC for work on the Farm Bill. The bill contains numerous programs that fund conservation efforts that protect our soils and waters. The Farm Bill is renewed every 5 years, expiring October 1st. Representing the Mississippi Water Team, I along with 35 other club members met in the SC Washington office for two days of intense training and two days of lobbying for increased conservation efforts. Tennessee and Iowa are the only states with two U.S. House members currently serving on the Food and Agriculture

## Tennes-Sierran

The bimonthly newsletter of the  
Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club  
Volume 56, Number 6 — November / December 2023  
Digital Edition

### Change of Address

Email: [Address.Changes@SierraClub.org](mailto:Address.Changes@SierraClub.org)

Online: [MyAccount.SierraClub.org](http://MyAccount.SierraClub.org)

Snail Mail: Mail new address AND the mailing label on page 1 to:  
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Request no paper copy here: [http://bit.ly/Stop\\_My\\_Paper\\_Copy](http://bit.ly/Stop_My_Paper_Copy)

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December issue of the Chapter E-Newsletter by November 24

January Issue of the Chapter E-Newsletter by December 22

January / February Issue of The Tennes-Sierran by November 30

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<https://www.sierraclub.org/tennessee>

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Committee. I am grateful to the office staff of Congresspersons Rose, DeJarlais, Cohen, and Senators Blackburn and Hagerty. All of my discussions with our representatives seemed to be well received. The planet's well-being is not a partisan issue, it is an "us" issue!

"Liar, liar, pants on fire" frequently comes to my mind while watching the nightly news "talking heads." Climate deniers continue to deliver a false narrative of well-being. We are eyewitnesses to a planet that is literally on fire. Hopefully my blissful sleep patterns will soon return. Always be prepared for the grinning elevator operator; don't be scared to put your foot between the closing doors. You may occasionally lose a few toes, but meaningful relationships sometimes develop on the ride to the top floor, resulting in worthwhile legislative change. Our challenges often seem insurmountable, but we have only one option: "Survival of the Species" — *all* the species. Your help is essential in growing our membership with like-minded individuals who Enjoy, Explore, and Protect the Planet.

Contact Cris at [chapter.chair@tennessee.sierraclub.org](mailto:chapter.chair@tennessee.sierraclub.org)



# A Better Place for Our Children: An Interview with Scott Banbury

by Aaron Butler, Volunteer Writer

If you're an avid reader of the Tennes-Sierran then chances are you've seen the name "Scott Banbury" more than a few times. But who is this obscure, bearded fellow who lives outside Memphis off the banks of Cypress Creek and yet seems to be anywhere and everywhere in Tennessee where an environmental dispute is under way? Let's take a moment and find out.

Scott has always been generous with his time. After having been a guest speaker at a Unity Fest event on a Saturday, he was still more than enthusiastic to have a Teams call with me on a Sunday afternoon. He'd been no less generous a couple of years ago when we'd connected for more than two hours so I could pick his brain while I was writing an article on the Protect Our Aquifer movement in Memphis. After saying our hellos and sharing a few chuckles, my interrogation of Scott began!

## Was there a specific moment in your life that was a catalyst for creating the Scott Banbury we know today?

Well, I've always been a rabble-rouser. I'm going to tell you two things. My first real civil disobedience was we would go pull up all the surveying stakes at development projects in Arizona's Prescott National Forest. We'd just make it hard for the developers! Also, I was heavily inspired by early readings of Edward Abbey, you know the *Monkey Wrench Gang*; the idea we could, through civil disobedience slow down the paving of our planet, the damming of our rivers.

## What are the three main time-spenders in your role as the sole Chapter Conservation Director for the Sierra Club in Tennessee?

I'm going to say that first and foremost we end up being the contact point for local communities that have a problem going on. Whether it be out in some rural county or whether it be in our municipal areas, people can find the Sierra Club.

A good third of my time is coordinating with all of the other organizations in Tennessee that share our views on one issue or another; organizations like Harpeth Conservancy, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, Southern Environmental Law Center, Appalachian Voices, a coalition we've created called Clean up TVA, Climate Nashville, Climate Chattanooga, and the Climate Reality Project. We have weekly strategy calls; the adoption of virtual meetings has really advanced our game.

Next is monitoring legislation, lobbying and getting that information out to all the other stakeholder groups that don't have the capacity to track legislation. I'm the wonkiest nerd and I do two things every morning when I wake up. I make sure that we haven't missed any permit notices for anything we might be interested in and then tracking the media; I subscribe to more than a dozen papers.

## The battles you're involved in are never won. They're protracted, unfolding over years and decades. Of all these battles, where do you feel Tennessee has made the most progress in the last 11 years, and where do you see it making the most in the next 11?

We've never really done that bad here in Tennessee on clean water issues because we've got a rich tradition. Everybody loves the fact that we're the waterfall state, we're hunters and fishers. Making sure that we keep the good laws on the books. To some extent just keeping what we've got and not making what we've got any worse.

Solid waste is another one we are waking up to. We just had two major lawsuits go our way, one that is no-expansion of the Middle Point Landfill, the other one was no-expansion of the Southern Services landfill that's up in north Nashville. In both cases the regional solid waste board said, 'no you can't expand' and the courts have upheld that. That is also going to come into play with the big landfill that got proposed for the Duck River which we did win last year and got it designated as a Class II scenic river which explicitly says "no land fills." People should be super proud of that.

We're running our own bill now with a bunch of partners coming behind us for extended producer responsibility. We call it the Tennessee Waste Reduc-



tion and Recycling Act. Something like five other states have passed it now in some form or another but it actually makes the brands that produce the packaging crud pay into the management and recycling, which creates an incentive for them to not create so much recycling crud.

## If you could pick any other two career opportunities, things you would have done with the past 11 years, what would you have done?

I'd rather be surfing. I ran my own sawmill from like 1999 until I came to work for the Sierra Club and did custom woodworking. I'd be a custom woodworker and building timber frame houses, cool furniture and fancy cabinetry. That is really kind of my love and I still fool with it a little bit.

## What advice do you have for those who want to make a difference but feel overwhelmed?

Your motivations are first and foremost that you are taking care of yourself, your immediate family and your immediate community and celebrating that. And, just as much as it is reading and writing and making comments and all that kind of stuff, it's eating good food and playing music and dancing and celebrating. I've been doing this stuff for like 30 years and people will ask me "Whoa man, don't you ever get discouraged?" And I'm like, no, because the result that I'm after is not the actual solution to things. Not basing my sense of accomplishment on did we win this or win that, or lose this or lose that. It's that we all did our best with what we know and the tools available to us, to leave a better place for our children.

[A few minutes later Scott brought it back to the importance of celebration by invoking a Grateful Dead lyric: "It's a hand-me-down, the thoughts are broken, perhaps they're better left unsung, I don't know, don't really care, Let there be songs to fill the air."]

## What's the next decade hold for Scott Banbury?

I think we're going to see a lot of growth in the Sierra Club in the next 10 years and our movement statewide, and that's probably the thing that I'm most proud of. I'm still coming into my own. I mean I'm always learning something new, how to do things better, how to communicate better and develop new relationships with people we didn't have relationships with and so I'm looking forward to continuing to help the Sierra Club gain more power in the state, accomplish our goals and hopefully be able to hand on all of those connections, the legacy that we'll create, to future generations.

Wrapping up our call we joke about a bumper sticker that's always "stuck" with Scott (no pun intended) declaring "Don't like Environmentalists? Put them out of work!" We talk about the old Westphalia van and Bradley GT in his carport that he plans to completely refurbish, and I let him know I can't wait to see the finished product when these vehicles are complete. As the call ends, Scott's face blinks off my computer screen and I smile. It's heartening to know someone with his boundless energy and passion is standing guard for Tennessee to do the work that will never be complete.

Contact Aaron at [thegoodfightnow@gmail.com](mailto:thegoodfightnow@gmail.com)

## A Productive Council of Club Leaders Meeting in Chicago

by Charles High, Tennessee Chapter Executive Committee Member

The Sierra Club Council of Club Leaders (CCL) held its annual meeting in Chicago September 7 to 9. Tennessee Delegate (and Chapter Chair) Cris Corley and I (the alternate delegate) attended all sessions of the meeting. Highlights of the meeting included the adoption of twenty-two resolutions, the presentation of the resolutions to the Board of Directors in joint session with the CCL, and the Sierra Club Awards presentation.

Corley presented a resolution to discourage cryptocurrency mining or to reduce the excessive use of electricity in such mining. Cryptocurrency such as Bitcoin is an attempt to develop a medium of exchange that does not rely on the guarantee of a nation or other governmental entity for its value. Each bitcoin transaction requires solving a unique mathematical problem that requires great amounts of computing power and a great amount of electricity. Corley's resolution contained an interactive United States map showing numerous crypto-mining facilities in Eastern Tennessee using TVA electric power. The resolution was adopted by a large majority of the club leaders. Rather than suggesting solutions, Corley left it to the Board of Directors to determine the best way to make changes in the current processes.

Among resolutions passed were promotion of active and engaged grass-

roots network groups, opposition of synthetic turf, opposition of a deceptively named California logging bill known as the "Saving Our Sequoias Act;" increasing opposition to nuclear power; support of programs for the removal of the full range of greenhouse gases, and changing electric utility rate structure policy.

Sierra Club staff presented programs that explained the restructuring of departments recently adopted. The Chapter and Governance Strength Team reported on the particulars of the division of the Club into geographical regions and sub-regions. The session was useful to the Tennessee Chapter as we are in the process of selecting our first Chapter director.

The meeting ended with the presentation of 20 awards to 32 individuals and chapters including elected officials. On the nomination by Cris Corley, the Sierra Club Changemaker of the Year Award was given to Tennessee State Representative Justin J. Pearson, who closed the program with a rousing speech and a call to action, bringing the crowd to its feet numerous times with a call and response, "We the People." It set a positive tone for the power of our people working together to save the planet. (See also Cris Corley's column on previous page.)

Contact Charlie at [cahigh1722@aol.com](mailto:cahigh1722@aol.com)

# How Harmful Are the Average American's Greenhouse Gas Emissions?

## Continuing our series on Living Sustainably: Personal Choice and Citizen Action

by John Nolt, Harvey Broome Group



How harmful are the average American's greenhouse gas emissions? That depends on what we count as harm. Policymakers typically measure climate harms as economic costs, but that whitewashes their moral significance. A more revealing way to understand them is as casualties: numbers of people injured, sickened, forced to migrate, or killed.

It's not easy to determine how many casualties climate change causes each year. Still, several studies have attempted this using a variety of statistical methods. All that I am aware of are in rough agreement: somewhere in the hundreds of thou-

sands of deaths per year. That's deaths. The number would be higher if the other sorts of casualties were included. And even at current mortality rates, climate change will have killed tens of millions of people by the end of this century. The rates, however, are increasing.

The harms of climate change will not, moreover, cease at the end of this century. Most of the global temperature increase is caused by excess carbon dioxide. Once emitted, carbon dioxide lingers in the atmosphere for centuries, continually trapping heat that would otherwise be radiated into space. And as the planet warms, positive feedbacks kick in, multiplying the effect. The arctic ice cap shrinks, for example, and sunlight that would have been reflected back into space by shining white sea ice is increasingly absorbed by deep blue ocean waters. Frigid Canadian and Siberian tundras melt, too, releasing enormous quantities of methane, a greenhouse gas much more potent in the short term than carbon dioxide, turning up the heat still more. Unless we cut emissions drastically and find ways to permanently

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draw greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere, global temperatures will not return to pre-industrial levels for many centuries.

During all that time of excess heat, the cumulative casualties of climate change will mount. Greenhouse gas emissions thus cause harm in a way unparalleled in ordinary human experience. We tend to think of harm as a one-time event. A gun is fired and someone gets hurt. A factory releases toxic gas and people get sick. But the harms of carbon dioxide emissions go on and on. If I drive my car today, my emissions will contribute to elevated atmospheric carbon dioxide levels for centuries, keeping temperatures high and adding to the casualty count long after I am gone.

So just how harmful are the average American's greenhouse gas emissions? Years ago, I attempted to calculate an answer. The calculation requires, of course, a great many assumptions, some of which are far from certain. The upshot was that *very roughly* the lifetime emissions of the average American produce over the next thousand years about two casualties. Such harms — injury, sickness, forced migration, or death — are not morally negligible.

In 2011 I published that calculation in an academic journal. A slew of papers appeared in response, and even a mention in the *New York Times*. In the intervening years, many other estimates of the same kind have been published, all with somewhat different assumptions. Some yield casualty figures less than mine, some greater. And, of course, there are critics who think the whole effort is frivolous. But expanding our vision to encompass the far-flung yet predictable effects of our emissions is not frivolous. The ultimate moral import of our lives will be most accurately judged by those who come after us. With honesty, imagination and rigorous thought, we can, while still alive, begin to glimpse how we will appear from their vantage point.

## Avoid Taxes: Donate Directly from Your Retirement Account

by Mac Post, Tennessee Chapter Fundraising Chair

If you saved money for retirement in traditional 401(k)s, Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) or other tax-deferred investments, and you are over 72 years old, you may be required to withdraw at least a minimum amount, called the required minimum distribution or RMD, each year and pay income tax on this amount.

You can transfer IRA withdrawals to benefit charitable organizations by making qualified charitable distributions (QCDs). If QCDs are transferred directly from a tax-deferred investment account to a qualified charitable organization, they count toward your RMDs and are not taxable. Your IRA custodian must transfer the funds directly from your account to the Sierra Club Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization. You can specify that the money

be sent to the Sierra Club Foundation and be directed to the Tennessee Chapter to be used for charitable purposes. Here is some suggested wording to provide your IRA custodian:

"I ask that \$\_\_\_\_\_ from my IRA fund be sent directly to The Sierra Club Foundation, a California nonprofit corporation, currently located at 2101 Webster Street, Suite 1300, Oakland, CA 94612, to be used in support of the charitable activities of the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club."

Thank you for considering this type of gift to our Chapter. We recommend speaking to your financial advisor about this to ensure the best outcome.

Contact Mac at [mpost3116@gmail.com](mailto:mpost3116@gmail.com).

## How to Vote for Your Sierra Club State Chapter and Group Leaders

This issue contains ballots for the election of Sierra Club Tennessee's state and group leaders. Please note that **ONLY a paper mail-in ballot is available for this year's ballot** — no electronic ballot is available. Each winner will have a two-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2025. Successful candidates will join other Executive Committee (ExCom) state or group members in managing fiscal, legislative, and environmental matters, the outings program, and governance responsibilities of the Chapter or their group.

- Vote for Tennessee State Chapter ExCom candidates on page 5 of this newspaper.
- Also vote for your group's ExCom candidates based on which county you live in (See the list below).
- Ballots must be received no later than December 15, 2023. Please allow for holiday mail delays.
- Only current members as of November 1, 2023, may vote.
- Joint members must use the same ballot.
- Ballots list candidates in randomized order.

**Complete a ballot for your group on page 8, 9, or 10. Which group you are in depends on which county you live in:**

- **Cherokee Group Ballot on Page 8:** Choose this ballot if you live in one of these counties: Bledsoe, Bradley, Coffee, Franklin, Grundy, Jackson, Hamilton, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Overton, Polk, Putnam, Rhea, Sequatchie, Van Buren, Warren, White.
- **Chickasaw Group Ballot on Page 8:** You are in the Chickasaw Group if you live in one of these counties: Benton, Carroll, Chester, Crockett, Decatur, Dyer, Fayette, Gibson, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Henry, Lake, Lauderdale, Madison; McNairy, Obion, Shelby, Tipton, Weakley.
- **Middle Tennessee Group Ballot on Page 9:** You are in this group if you live in one of these counties: Bedford, Cannon, Cheatham, Clay, Davidson, DeKalb, Dickson, Giles, Hickman, Houston, Humphreys, Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln, Macon, Marshall, Maury, Montgomery, Moore, Perry, Robertson, Rutherford, Smith, Stewart, Sumner, Trousdale, Wayne, Williamson and Wilson.
- **Harvey Broome Group Ballot on Page 10:** Choose this ballot if you live in one of these counties: Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hancock, Hawkins, Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Loudon, Morgan, Pickett, Roane, Scott, Sevier, Sullivan, Unicoi, Union, Washington.



# Election Ballot for At-Large Delegates to the Tennessee Chapter Executive Committee

**2024-2025 Term**

**VOTE HERE FOR CHAPTER AT-LARGE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES:**

<u>At-Large Chapter Candidates</u>	<u>Single Member or First Joint Member</u> - Max 4 votes -	<u>Second Joint Member</u> - Max 4 votes -
Paul Klein	_____	_____
Marquita Bradshaw	_____	_____
Tim Weeks	_____	_____
kate anthony	_____	_____
Charlie High	_____	_____
Grace Stranch	_____	_____

**HOW TO SUBMIT BALLOTS:**

Paper ballots must be properly submitted to be counted.

1. Place both your Group and At-Large ballot in the same envelope.
2. Seal and write "Ballot" plus your county on that envelope.
3. Place that "Ballot" envelope in a second envelope for mailing.
4. Write your name, address, and Sierra Club membership number in the upper left hand corner of the mailing envelope. Your membership number is located to the left of your name on the mailing label of this Tennes-Sierran, and is also available at [myaccount.sierraclub.org](http://myaccount.sierraclub.org). Envelopes *must* include name, address, and membership number to be counted.
5. Ballots must be received no later than December 15, 2023. To avoid holiday delays, please mail ballot promptly to:

**Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter**  
**P.O. Box 113,**  
**Powell TN 37849    Attn: Elections**

**kate anthony** is a retired psychologist. She grew up in Southern California, and spent her young adult years backpacking in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. An environmentalist of long standing, she's done four different National Sierra Club service outings, and participated in the People's Climate March in NYC in 2015. She completed the Climate Reality Leadership training. Besides the Sierra Club, she participates with Quaker Earthcare Witness and is active in Tennessee Interfaith Power and Light. Her main focus is climate change. She is currently serving as Secretary of the Cherokee Group.

**Marquita Bradshaw** is a native South Memphian raised in a pollution-impacted community including a National Priority List Superfund site: the Memphis Defense Depot. Bradshaw obtained her B.S. in Communication from the University of Memphis. Marquita is the founder and Executive Director of Sowing Justice, a non-partisan, environmental justice civic engagement organization. Marquita's work at Sowing Justice empowers pollution-impacted communities across Tennessee and Arkansas to work toward a just transition away from environmental degradation, energy-related pollution, aging infrastructure, and a green economy. Bradshaw serves on the Tennessee Valley Authority Regional Energy Resource Council. She has served on behalf of the Memphis Chapter Coalition of Black Trade Unionist Community Action and Response Against Toxics (CBTU-CARAT) Team, as Community Communications Liaison to the Memphis Community Advisory Board of the Southern Gateway Environmental Health Disparities Research Center of Excellence. Bradshaw received the Dick Mochow Environmental Justice Award from the Sierra Club, the Mid-South Peace and Justice Center's Human Rights Award, Silent No Longer Tennessee's Change Maker Award, and the Harriet Tubman Living Legends Award. Bradshaw made Tennessee history as the first African American woman to win a major political party nomination in a statewide election for her 2020 U.S. Senate bid.

**Charlie High** is an avid camper, hiker, and kayaker. It was his passion for environmental issues that guided him to Sierra Club 35 years ago. As co-chair of Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO), he organizes and conducts summer outdoor activities for school-age children, inspiring them to care for their environment. In the summer of 2023, ICO hosted ten outings for over 100 children. In 2019, Charlie helped develop Jack Lyle's River Kids, in partnership with the Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association, teaching children aged 12 years and older safe and effective use of kayaks. This program has continued offering these valuable, lifesaving skills to date. Charlie has had the honor of serving as Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary of the Middle Tennessee Group; currently, serving as Treasurer. He brings his knowledge and experience as a Nashville attorney to benefit Sierra Club. He currently serves as a Delegate to the Tennessee Chapter Executive Committee and Chair of the By-Laws and Standing Rules Committee, spearheading the creation of written standing rules for the Tennessee Chapter. He also serves as alternate delegate to the Council of Club Leaders.

**Paul Klein.** As an Environmental Justice Activist in Memphis, I co-chair both the Memphis and Nashville Chapters of the Climate Reality Project. Spreading awareness that Climate Change is real, we push for more renewable energy development in the fossil-fuel-addicted State of Tennessee. I am eternally grateful to the Sierra Club for my happy marriage, because it was after I took her to a Sierra Club meeting in Houston about legacy pollution affecting poor zip codes, that my wife finally decided to accept my multiple marriage proposals! I've belonged to the Sierra Club for decades while living in Idaho, Texas, and now Tennessee. I believe in People Power, and participate in activism and actions to support marginalized front-line communities. Recent People Power wins that I have been involved in are the defeat of the Byhalia Pipeline project through a Historic Black neighborhood in Memphis, and the subsequent adoption of new legislation by our city, county and state governments to protect our communities. I became an activist after retiring and moving to my wife's hometown of Memphis four years ago; quickly realizing that our city is a microcosm of all of society's problems. I've found my voice speaking truth-to-power at the City Council, County Commission, and the State Legislature. I am focused on advocating for marginalized folks who are the most affected.

**Grace Stranch** is the CEO of Harpeth Conservancy and of counsel at Stranch, Jennings & Garvey, PLLC. In her legal practice, she worked on the emission defeat device class action against Volkswagen and served on the Sullivan Baby Doe opioid litigation team that won the 2022 Tennessee Trial Lawyer of the Year award. She has been Chair and Vice Chair of the Middle Tennessee Sierra Club. For the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club, Grace is currently on the Executive Committee and has served on the Election Committee for three cycles. For ten years, Grace has led or assisted in organizing the Appalachian Public Interest Environmental Law Conference and was the Tennessee lead for the Environmental Defense Fund. She has considerable organizing experience and has completed grassroots organizational training in Memphis, lobbying training in D.C., and has worked on a rural political campaign in West Tennessee. Based on her significant community involvement, Grace was honored with the 2020 Athena Young Professional Award and with Metro Council Resolution RS220-457. If elected, Ms. Stranch hopes to employ her commitment to the environment and her experience in organizing and training to foster collaborations with environmental and other groups to promote and implement policies that protect Tennessee's natural environment.

**Tim Weeks** is co-chair of Conservation, Middle Tennessee Group, and is a member of the statewide Energy Committee. He recently produced a video with Energy Chair Jo Ann McIntosh about new federal benefits to owning or leasing EVs (electric vehicles). A long-time Nashville resident, Weeks has invested the last 15 years in community organizing and volunteering. Ten of those years, he served as President of the Donelson Hermitage Neighborhood Alliance, a regional organization that sponsors educational forums and represents the area to Metro government on neighborhood issues. Through DHNA, Weeks also became involved with the Coalition of Nashville Neighborhoods, a countywide group that opposed short term rentals in residential neighborhoods. More recently, Tim served as vice president of the steering committee of Friends of Cook Recreation Area, a grassroots organization formed to oppose the Corps of Engineers' plans to commercially develop 200 acres of pristine land on Percy Priest Lake. Weeks consulted with the Tennessee Sierra Club Chapter and Middle Tennessee Group during the campaign, which ultimately was successful when the Corps withdrew their plans in February 2022. Tim is familiar with local and state government. As a television and video producer, Weeks covered the Tennessee General Assembly for statewide public television from 2014-19. Professionally, he has produced, directed, or written a wide variety of programming, including almost seven years of the Grand Ole Opry's show when it was on cable television. Tim and his wife Teresa are residents of Hermitage.



# Recycle And Reinvest: Bridging the Gap between Trash and Crime

by Karen McIntyre, Middle Tennessee Group

Recycle and Reinvest is a Nashville organization that bridges the gap between trash and crime by promoting sustainability and providing job opportunities. “We empower individuals through education and engagement to create a cleaner, safer, and more sustainable future for all.” said co-founder Judah Jaffee.

At the age of 15, Judah Jaffee spent time incarcerated. That experience motivated him to turn his life around by helping others. Judah was fortunate: he had support and role models in his family. Grandparents on both sides who were pastors had created a nonprofit to help their community. Judah used their model to improve life for other teens living in the inner city by creating his own nonprofit.

The concepts that motivated Judah flow from two primary streams of thought: (1) He took the Broken Windows Theory that was proposed in the 1980s, and often used to profile and incarcerate Blacks, and turned it on its head. While he agreed that there was a relationship between broken windows, cluttered environments and crime, he used that knowledge to get young citizens to clean up their environment and take pride in their neighborhoods; and (2) He applied the “17 Principals of Environmental Justice” developed at the National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in 1991. Judah’s program teaches children to appreciate nature, grow vegetables, and eat clean and healthy foods. Additionally, it helps them develop leadership skills that benefit their communities. Another unique feature is the emphasis on the wisdom of the elders, something often missing from many programs.

A big part of his 501(c)(3), Recycle and Reinvest focuses on empowering young kids, showing them that they can change their neighborhoods and fight climate change at the same time. His work dishes out large portions of pride to its participants — bringing deeper purpose to his own life.

When asked how he gets kids involved, Judah responded, “The youth who get involved are introduced to something familiar in a new way from people that look like them. They probably have never seen someone plant a tree, participate in an art program, or clean up litter. They also learn to recycle. It isn’t the recycling we teach that grabs them, it’s how we treat people who are volunteers, staff, or people who sometimes just randomly spark up conversation about the work we are doing in the community. Our other fun activities, like a T-shirt Tote Bag Workshop or Creating Rap Songs about Sustainability, and more also help draw them in.”

He considers the link between climate change and its disproportional impact on people of color to be critically important. “I believe we need more assistance with getting the word out in a creative way. We need to listen and present a comprehensive approach to teach people about the issues we face.”

“By harnessing artistic talents and providing kids with a supportive platform, they break free from negative influences and cultivate their skills in a positive environment. Through this transition, we strive to inspire and guide the next generation, closing the gap between despair and opportunity, and paving the way for a brighter future.”

When asked how the Sierra Club could help, he laughed and said, “That’s easy! Donate, volunteer, and collaborate. Please go to our website: [RecycleReinvest.org](https://RecycleReinvest.org) so you continue to learn about our work.”

Contact Karen at [kjmcinty@comcast.net](mailto:kjmcinty@comcast.net)



Co-founder of Nashville’s Recycle and Reinvest Jaffee Judah (back) organizes student volunteers to pick up trash. Jaffee believes that “a clean community is a safe community.” Photo by Twisted Muse Co.



(left to right) Tennessee State Chair Cris Corley, Sierra Club National Board member and Memphis resident Rita Harris, Tennessee State Representative Justin Pearson, and Tennessee Chapter Compliance Officer Charles High, at the Sierra Club’s 2023 Annual Meeting on September 9 in Chicago where Pearson was presented the Sierra Club’s Changemaker Award.

## Tenn. Rep Justin Pearson Receives Sierra Club’s Most Pretigious Award

by Ellen Davis, Chair, Sierra Club Honors and Awards Committee

Tennessee State Representative Justin Pearson received the Sierra Club’s top honor, the Sierra Club Changemaker of the Year Award. The award was presented on September 9 in Chicago. Pearson co-founded Memphis Community Against the Pipeline (MCAP), which successfully blocked construction of the Byhalia Pipeline through Black neighborhoods in south Memphis. That group renamed itself Memphis Community Against Pollution to focus on a broad range of environmental justice concerns. Pearson won a special election to the Tennessee House in 2022, becoming the second youngest person ever to serve in that body. He gained national attention in 2023 when he was first expelled from the legislature for allegedly breaking decorum in the wake of a school shooting in Tennessee, and then rapidly reinstated.

“Justin has already proven himself to be a unique and powerful advocate for climate action, environmental justice and equity,” said Sierra Club President Allison Chin. “His successful campaign to stop the Byhalia Pipeline and his leadership in the corridors of power shows how community organizing can succeed against the most daunting odds.”

Contact Ellen at [ellen.davis@sierraclub.org](mailto:ellen.davis@sierraclub.org)



Reinvest and Recycle student volunteers and co-founder Jaffee Judah (right) plant trees as part of the Root Nashville campaign which is bringing 251 new trees to District 19 in support of the citywide campaign to increase the tree canopy and fight climate change. Photo by Twisted Muse Co.



# Pipeline Project Threatens Damage in Middle Tennessee

**Comments by JoAnn McIntosh, Co-Chair, Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter's Energy and Conservation Committees:**

Organizers of the Cumberland Preservation Group (CPG), Angie Mummaw of Appalachian Voices and Emily Sherwood of the Sierra Club, have had continued success evidenced by an overwhelming response from the Cheatham County community this summer to plans for another Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) gas plant/pipeline project near Ashland City. First, 150 attendees packed the TVA open house in June; then the group created resolutions against the TVA project which were subsequently passed unanimously by the Cheatham County Commission, and both the Ashland City and Pleasant View City Councils. These wins have led to renewed efforts by the CPG for a resolution in neighboring Dickson County; an ongoing concert series in Ashland City by country music singers, including Jonathan Singleton, to increase public support; and a large group of community members from both the Cheatham and Cumberland pipeline areas traveling to Chattanooga to speak at the TVA board's listening session in August.

You can comment online and register to speak at the board's listening session, scheduled for November 8th in Tupelo, Mississippi, during the week before the session at this link: <https://www.tva.com/about-tva/our-leadership/board-of-directors>

The following article appeared on January 5 in the Clarksville Now. Great efforts! WE CAN EFFECT CHANGE!

## Pictures Don't Do It Justice, and Neither Would a Pipeline

by Angie Mummaw, Appalachian Voices Middle Tennessee Organizer



Angie Mummaw, Middle Tennessee Field Organizer for Appalachian Voices and Biology Instructor for Austin Peay State University

I recently spent a couple of weekends exploring around Big Bartons Creek, just south of Montgomery County, with other biologists and nature lovers to see what kinds of plants and animals the area supports. I was amazed at all the diversity we found, and it really hit home how special this part of Tennessee is.

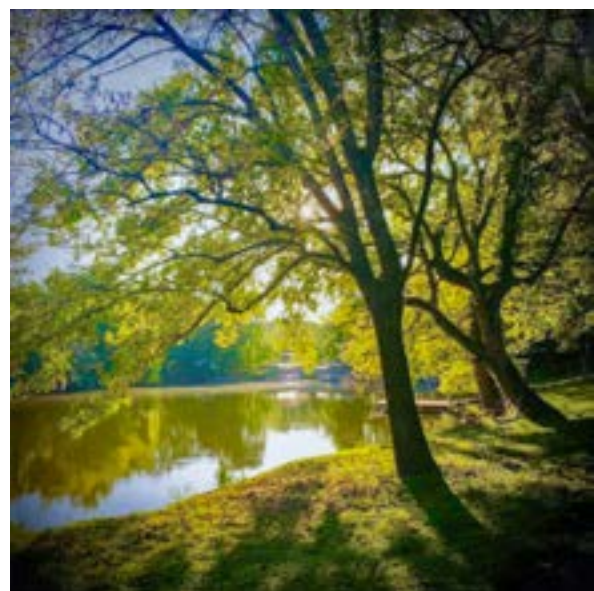
During a creek survey led by the Center of Excellence for Field Biology at Austin Peay State University, we found numerous species of fishes: smallmouth bass, chubs, hogsuckers, minnows, madtoms and darters — just to name a few. We also found four species of crayfishes, including one that we think is new to science! We are awaiting the results of a

DNA analysis before this becomes official and we can give the new crayfish species a name.

All of the abundant natural beauty and wildlife we observed could be threatened if gas giant Kinder Morgan has its way. The company wants to construct a 32-mile pipeline to carry fracked gas through three counties in middle Tennessee. The proposed project would cut a path through more than 155 streams and seven wetlands. The bedrock along the route is karst limestone, which is highly erodible and contains many cracks and fissures. Disturbance from pipeline construction could cause creeks to reroute or even go underground, making them inaccessible to the public, wildlife and livestock that currently rely on that water.

The proposed pipeline project could also present threats to drinking water, recreation and aquatic life in the region. The immediate disturbance from construction, the resulting sedimentation or a spill could affect access to clean water in an area where many rural residents rely on well or spring water and cannot switch to an alternate supply in the event of contamination.

The construction of a pipeline also threatens several watersheds and aquatic ecosystems that are habitats, water resources and hunting grounds for hundreds of plant and animal species, including endangered freshwater mussels that are highly susceptible to sedimentation and poor water quality since they are filter feeders that lay immobile on the bottom and strain food particles or small organisms through their specialized feeding structures. Disturbances that cause turbidity, pollution or light reduction greatly impede their ability to feed through filtration.



Sycamore Creek in Cheatham County could also be impacted by the proposed gas plans. Photo courtesy of Abbey Ray, a member of Preserve Cheatham County.

The majority of the 32-mile proposed pipeline would cross through Dickson County, Tennessee, where, according to Tennessee's Department of Environment and Conservation, there are 26 rare or endangered species of plants and animals. The department also lists seven at-risk species for Houston County and 36 for Stewart County, which are also in the path of the proposed pipeline. Some of these include the golden

eagle, little blue heron, gray bat, Indiana bat, Price's potato bean, hellbender and the alligator snapping turtle.

The pipeline threatens more than Tennessee's natural beauty and abundant wildlife. There are many other reasons we should protect this land from a gas buildout. The proposed pipeline would only be about one mile away from cultural sites in our region like the Promise Land Heritage area and the historic Cumberland Furnace community — areas that are home to more than 20 historic sites, including churches, schoolhouses, cabins, a commissary and even a train depot. There are also several Century Farms that are directly in the route of the pipeline. Kinder Morgan's plans would place numerous historical lands and homes within the impact zone or evacuation zone of the highly flammable pressurized methane gas pipeline, leaving them vulnerable to leaks and deadly explosions.

Many residents and businesses along the pipeline route, including the Highland Rim Head Start Preschool and the overcrowded Houston County Jail, would be exposed to risks of leaks, explosions and pollution since they are located within the impact zone of the methane gas pipeline. The pipeline will run through rural areas that are a great distance from local fire departments, leaving many folks more vulnerable should an explosion occur.

The proposed pipeline is only needed if the Tennessee Valley Authority continues with its plan to replace the coal-burning Cumberland City Fossil Plant with two methane-fired units — a gas buildout that would force the Cumberland City community to endure more water and air pollutants, while only providing a fraction of the long-term jobs that clean energy alternatives could provide. In addition, reliance on fracked gas could further increase the energy burden on low-income residents, not only in Cumberland City, but throughout the Tennessee Valley. TVA has already increased electricity bills significantly this year — that trend would continue if the gas buildout is approved, leaving the community burdened with increased pollution, fewer jobs and higher electric bills.

The 32-mile pipeline project would only supply gas to the Cumberland City Fossil Plant, where TVA plans to replace coal with methane, even after several coal and natural gas units failed during recent sub-zero temperatures. Many local residents were left in the cold as TVA requested rolling blackouts for the first time in their 89-year history. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also has raised serious concerns about TVA's proposal. Installing two methane gas pipelines and constructing two gas-fired units is a step in the wrong direction when we should be making considerable strides to combat the climate crisis. Trading one fossil fuel for another does not make sense, especially when methane is 80 times more potent a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

There are other clean and renewable options to consider that are sustainable, safer and more environmentally friendly. With readily available clean energy replacements for the Cumberland City Plant, a new pipeline is unnecessary.

If you want to get involved in stopping this harmful pipeline, contact Angie Mummaw at [angie.mummaw@appvoices.org](mailto:angie.mummaw@appvoices.org).



A wetland in Dickson County that might be negatively impacted by the proposed pipeline project. Photo by Angie Mummaw.

# Election Ballot for Cherokee Group Executive Committee

## 2024 - 2025 Term

**VOTE HERE FOR CHEROKEE GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES:**

<u>Cherokee Group Candidates</u>	<u>Single Member or First Joint Member</u> - Max 4 votes -	<u>Second Joint Member</u> - Max 4 votes -
Doug Carlson	_____	_____
Tony Wheeler	_____	_____
Lisa Luck	_____	_____
Bruce Blohm	_____	_____

**HOW TO SUBMIT BALLOTS:**

Paper ballots must be properly submitted to be counted.

1. Place both your Group and At-Large ballot in the same envelope.
2. Seal and write "Ballot" plus your county on that envelope.
3. Place that "Ballot" envelope in a second envelope for mailing.
4. Write your name, address, and Sierra Club membership number in the upper left hand corner of the mailing envelope. Your membership number is located to the left of your name on the mailing label of this Tennes-Sierran, and is also available at [myaccount.sierraclub.org](http://myaccount.sierraclub.org). Envelopes *must* include name, address, and membership number to be counted.
5. Ballots must be received no later than December 15, 2023. To avoid holiday delays, please mail ballot promptly to:

**Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter**  
P.O. Box 113,  
Powell TN 37849    Attn: Elections

**Bruce Blohm** is an outdoor enthusiast, an environmental advocate and active with numerous local sustainability efforts. He is a certified Tennessee Naturalist, currently serves on the Land Conservation committee as a board member for Friends of South Cumberland State Park, and as secretary/sergeant at arms for South Chickamauga Creek Greenway Alliance. He is originally from New Jersey, semi-retired and has been a resident of Chattanooga since 1981. He and his wife Kerry have one grown daughter living in Memphis.

**Doug Carlson** is an electrical engineer by training, with over 25 years' experience in quality management, the last 12 years in senior leadership. His focus has been on developing and implementing robust quality management systems and performance improvement programs within multiple industries, including process and discrete manufacturing and specialty pharmacy. He has been able to facilitate achievement of third-party accreditations and international quality registrations, helping ensure regulatory compliance and continual improvement of operations. Doug is passionate about doing the right things right with minimal waste. He moved to Chattanooga with his wife Carolyn in 2016, primarily for the size, location, quality of life and outdoor recreation, including cycling, climbing, paddling and hiking. There they built a net zero energy home, as Doug feels compelled to work toward restoring a safe climate and livable planet in all ways possible. He is a member of green|spaces and serves on the Green Communities Committee, and has been active in the Climate Chattanooga group that was instrumental in getting the city to create and adopt the Chattanooga Climate Action Plan.

**Lisa Luck** works for the Upper Cumberland Development District as a solid waste planner. She provides assistance regarding waste management issues and works with fourteen counties in Tennessee to improve and expand solid waste services. She is also the program manager for the Putnam County Solid Waste Department. For over a decade, Lisa has provided education for the county about best practices of waste management including litter, recycling, composting and reducing waste. She writes articles about solid waste management and gardening for several publications in Tennessee.

**Tony Wheeler.** With degrees in Chemistry and Biochemistry, my professional career as a scientist and engineer has included environmental, health and human safety issues. In 1970, I directed an NSF environmental study of man-made lakes in Iowa. With three years at the National Animal Disease Center working in virology and physiology, I became involved with pandemic disease issues and human health. I have published work in medicine and have served as EPA and OSHA compliance officer for government and multinational organizations. After moving to Tennessee in 1985, I purchased property that included abandoned coal mines. By 1990, I had initiated a federal Rural Abandoned Mine Program in the Middle Creek watershed on Signal Mountain involving six landowners and multiple mines. This program continues today under TDEC supervision. In 2001, I was part of a community effort that prevented the development of a property at the top of the watershed that had significant sewage and storm water issues. In 2018, after another even more dangerous development proposal next to my home, I became the environmental representative for the Mountain Planning Group and have spent the last five years presenting multiple health and safety issues to Walden, Signal Mountain, Hamilton County, TDEC and the Tennessee legislature. I am now on the environmental committee for Walden and attempting to promote responsible zoning over the coal hazard at the headwaters of Middle Creek.

# Election Ballot for Chickasaw Group Executive Committee

## 2024 - 2025 Term

**VOTE HERE FOR CHICKASAW GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES:**

<u>Cherokee Group Candidates</u>	<u>Single Member or First Joint Member</u> - Max 1 votes -	<u>Second Joint Member</u> - Max 1 votes -
Paul Klein	_____	_____

**HOW TO SUBMIT BALLOTS:**

Paper ballots must be properly submitted to be counted.

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3. Place that "Ballot" envelope in a second envelope for mailing.
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**Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter**  
P.O. Box 113,  
Powell TN 37849    Attn: Elections

Paul Klein. As an Environmental Justice Activist in Memphis, I co-chair both the Memphis and Nashville Chapters of the Climate Reality Project. Spreading awareness that Climate Change is real, we push for more renewable energy development in the fossil-fuel-addicted State of Tennessee. I am eternally grateful to the Sierra Club for my happy marriage, because it was after I took her to a Sierra Club meeting in Houston about legacy pollution affecting poor zip codes, that my wife finally decided to accept my multiple marriage proposals! I've belonged to the Sierra Club for decades while living in Idaho, Texas, and now Tennessee. I believe in People Power, and participate in activism and actions to support marginalized front-line communities. Recent People Power wins that I have been involved in are the defeat of the Byhalia Pipeline project through a Historic Black neighborhood in Memphis, and the subsequent adoption of new legislation by our city, county and state governments to protect our communities. I became an activist after retiring and moving to my wife's hometown of Memphis four years ago; quickly realizing that our city is a microcosm of all of society's problems. I've found my voice speaking truth-to-power at the City Council, County Commission, and the State Legislature. I am focused on advocating for marginalized folks who are the most affected.



# Election Ballot for Harvey Broome Group Executive Committee

## 2024 - 2025 Term

VOTE HERE FOR HARVEY BROOME GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES:

<u>Harvey Broome Group Candidates</u>	<u>Single Member or First Joint Member</u> - Max 6 votes -	<u>Second Joint Member</u> - Max 6 votes -
Julie Elfin	_____	_____
Axel Ringe	_____	_____
Maggie Longmire	_____	_____
Stefen White	_____	_____
Dana Loseke	_____	_____
Dr. Melanie Mayes	_____	_____

### HOW TO SUBMIT BALLOTS:

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**Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter**  
P.O. Box 113,  
Powell TN 37849    Attn: Elections

**Julie Elfin** is excited to seek a second term on the HBG ExCom. Julie has served as editor-in-chief of the HBG newsletter since February 2021 and also manages the group's website and social media. She has been a Sierra Club member since 2013 and has organized for fossil fuel divestment, renewable energy, and environmental justice ever since. As a young adult herself, Julie understands the importance of adapting traditional activism to collaborate with new partners and appeal to younger generations through new avenues like Instagram. As an ExCom member, Julie will continue to prioritize seeking out diverse perspectives and building coalitions to improve the East Tennessee environment for all residents. She uses the HBG newsletter to highlight the work of allies like the Sunrise Movement, SEED, and SOCM. Julie lives in Knoxville and advocates for sustainable transportation alternatives in her job with Bike Walk Knoxville. Her previous work experience in East Tennessee includes two seasons as a park ranger in Great Smoky Mountains National Park and educating local students about the environment through AmeriCorps positions with the Water Quality Forum in Knoxville and Discover Life in America in Gatlinburg.

**Maggie Longmire.** I started UTK 1966, majoring in Sociology but became a professional singer rather than a Sociologist. I have recorded 4 CDs of original compositions. After decades of performing, I took a break to purchase a leather manufacturing company where I was owner and lead designer for 20+ years. I joined the Sierra Club to learn how to mitigate the consequences of using fossil fuels. I helped to organize "Sing for the Climate" in 2019 to raise climate change awareness. I am a current ExCom member, Membership Chair, member of Political and Conservation Teams. Some projects I have engaged in include: closure of Bull Run Fossil Fuel plant and its consequences on the Claxton Community; supporting Kingston Coal Ash Workers and their fight for justice. Protested against TVA; winning a "Save the Trees" campaign protecting trees at the downtown Music Park Knoxville; raising awareness of The Urban Heat Island Effect and the importance of increasing our Tree Canopy; supporting "Trees Knoxville" Urban Forest Master Plan; and engaging in EV events and Energy Efficiency Upgrade Enrollment. Advocating for renewable energy and environmental justice to leave an inheritable planet for our children is my purpose.

**Dana Loseke.** Before moving to Tennessee in 2021, I was a chairperson of the *South Dakota Sierra Club*. As the chair I developed working relationships with the *South Dakota State Parks and the SD DENR*, and other organizations coordinating tree planting events, invasive species removal, and establishing an on-site tree and plant species identification program. I founded and led a clean water group, *Friends of the Big Sioux River*, which worked to improve water quality in the Big Sioux River watershed. I also served as Treasurer of *Sharing the Dream*, a fair-trade group based in Guatemala, a Director of the *East Dakota Water Development District*, treasurer of my church, and a *CASA* worker representing foster children. In Tennessee I have become a certified *Master Gardener*, a volunteer at the *Knoxville Botanical Gardens*, a volunteer with the *Native Plant Rescue Squad* and *Trees Knoxville*, a volunteer for *Keep Knoxville Beautiful*, and a trail maintainer with the *Benton MacKaye Trail Association*, *The Cherokee National Forest*, and *Frozen Head State Park*. I would like to join the ExCom because I am not a bystander. I want to help direct the activities of the group towards further protection of the environment in East Tennessee.

**Dr. Melanie Mayes** is a geologist and Distinguished Scientist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and an adjunct faculty with the University of Tennessee. Melanie's two-decade research career involves radionuclide and heavy metal migration in soils; remedial solutions for mercury; and greenhouse gases, soil carbon, and climate change. She is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a Lead Editor of the U.S. Global Change Research Program's Second State of the Carbon Cycle Report. Melanie has contributed to the mission of the Harvey Broome Group with her expertise in subsurface hydrology, metal contamination, and climate change since 2022. She commented on various environmental assessments and impact statements, including the NRC review of the Triso-X nuclear fuel production plant, the proposed General Aviation airport in Oak Ridge, the EPA's cleanup of the south Knoxville Smoky Mountain Smelter property, TVA's Bull Run coal-fired power plant, and TVA carbon policies. She also helped lead a field trip at the spring Tennessee Chapter meeting and contributed to the HBG's updated version of the Cherokee National Forest hiking guide. Melanie is an avid hiker, logging over 12,000 miles in the Appalachian Mountains.

**Axel Ringe.** I would like to be re-elected to the HBG ExCom. I have an academic background in the natural sciences and am retired from the US Department of Energy. I have served on the HBG ExCom continuously since 2001 and have held the position of Group Chair and currently serve as co-Conservation/Political Chair and Fundraising Chair. In addition, I hold or have held several positions in the Chapter ExCom, including Conservation Chair, Legal Chair, Water Quality Committee Chair, and Biodiversity Committee Chair; and I continue to be active on the state level, serving on the Chapter Energy Committee, TVA pipeline team, Forestry Committee, and Land Management Committee. I consider myself to be a committed activist, and believe I can continue to be an asset to the HBG.

**Stefen White.** I graduated from Austin-East Magnet High School in 2007 and from Rust College in 2011 with a Bachelor's of Science in Business Administration. I am now completing a Master's of Science in Instruction and Curriculum Leadership and a Master's of Arts in Liberal Studies at the University of Memphis. I have a passion for economic development, business/organizational development, investing, entrepreneurship, entertainment, and health—mental and physical. I am Co-founder and CEO of Allinwon, an award-winning startup LLC that's dedicated to increasing the rate of experiential-learning and the diversification of personalized-curriculum and personalized-experiences for all subjects / studies. Allinwon has developed a business accelerator called the Allinwon-a-thon that utilizes our technology and the inclusion and resources of the community to intentionally help business and people grow. I have been an Intake Specialist with Knox County Community Action Committee, the Veterans Program Coordinator with The East Tennessee Technology Access Center, and the Curriculum Director with SEED (Socially Equal Energy Efficient Development). I believe in abundance and the capability that all have to contribute to everyone having the most fulfilling life / world possible.



# Election Ballot for Middle Tennessee Group Executive Committee

## 2024-2025 Term

### VOTE HERE FOR MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES.

<u>Middle Tennessee Group Candidates</u>	<u>Single Member or First Joint Member</u> - Max 4 votes -	<u>Second Joint Member</u> - Max 4 votes -
Nancy Stetten	_____	_____
Jack McFadden	_____	_____
Karen McIntyre	_____	_____
Ann Cover	_____	_____

### HOW TO SUBMIT BALLOTS:

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3. Place that "Ballot" envelope in a second envelope for mailing.
4. Write your name, address, and Sierra Club membership number in the upper left hand corner of the mailing envelope. Your membership number is located to the left of your name on the mailing label of this Tennes-Sierran, and is also available at [myaccount.sierraclub.org](http://myaccount.sierraclub.org). Envelopes *must* include name, address, and membership number to be counted.
5. Ballots must be received no later than December 15, 2023. To avoid holiday delays, please mail ballot promptly to:

**Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter**  
**P.O. Box 113,**  
**Powell TN 37849     Attn: Elections**

**Nancy Stetten** has both a BA and a PhD in Policial Science from the University of Chicago. Her love of nature began with summer stays at The Children’s School of Science at Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Nancy worked at the State Department of Education and as a professor at Fisk University in Nashville. Her love of nature and experience with educating children brought her to garden with kids and teachers at a school near her home. “If we are going to bring nature to all students equitably, we can’t rely on field trips. We need to create green school yards; learning spaces, where children experience nature in their world.” Nancy introduced native plants, animals, insects and vegetable gardening in the midst of a food desert. Students worked on real problems studying water patterns on campus and installing a rain garden and cisterns to manage water. All this ended with a principal who didn’t think of the campus as learning space but thought it didn’t look manicured enough. “I have been impressed with how Sierra Club impacts policy and attitudes. I would welcome the opportunity to work within its powerful existing framework to contribute to a resilient and livable future for our children and grandchildren.”

**Jack McFadden’s** history of support for environmental responsibility began as part of a team organizing events on his college campus for the very first Earth Day. Jack spent the early part of his professional life utilizing video technology in education and community development before transitioning to Information Technology positions in telecommunications and planning. Since retirement in 2018, he has been active in support of program planning for the Middle Tennessee Group, and has served on its Executive Committee for the past two years. He is committed to practicing environmental sustainability and has volunteered for tree planting and other activities to support our natural landscape with the Cumberland River Compact. He is also an avid hiker and has introduced family and quite a few friends to the many wonderful trails and natural areas available to us in Nashville area parks and reserves

**Karen McIntyre:** I grew up surrounded by people who loved nature, spending summers by the Gallatin River in Montana and winter weekends with a park ranger uncle on after-dinner walks in the woods. I recently retired as an elementary school librarian (Nashville, TN). My BA degree from Chapman University is in history. I have an MLIS from the University of North Texas, and an M.Ed. in reading from Eastern New Mexico University. I have worked to bring outdoor education and sustainability to children in Metro Nashville Public Schools. Because public schools have an outsized reach to help prepare the way for measures we all must adopt to slow and reverse climate change, following retirement, I organized the Sustainability Stewardship Advisory Committee to get Metro Nashville Public Schools to act sustainably. Thanks to a Sierra Club challenge grant we have two schools rescuing food and composting their waste. We’ve organized a FaceBook Group, “Re-wilding Nashville” to create habitat in our yards. We now are very active with nearly 700 members. As we close in on 2030 deadlines to limit our carbon footprint and re-establish wildlife habitat we’ve no time to waste!

**Ann Cover:** I have been actively engaged in the natural world for as long as I can remember. I grew up playing outdoors, loving summer camp experiences, and was taught to conserve and respect the natural world. My husband and I have passed that respect on to our three grown children and to many children and youth in the community. I am currently a United Methodist pastor (Vanderbilt Divinity School, 2001) and the co-chair of our annual conference’s Creation Care Ministry. I manage a large church garden, using restorative agricultural practices (no-till, cover crops,etc) at South End United Methodist Church, Nashville. I also bring to this work a sense of concern for the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change have wrought on the health and wellbeing of people and communities. My first career was in maternal child nursing. (West Virginia University School of Nursing, BSN, 1976; and Columbia University, NYC, MSN /MPH, 1981/1982). I worked as a pediatric nurse practitioner in several urban settings and coordinated a lead poisoning prevention program. My passion is to work with others of all backgrounds to leave a livable future for the generations yet to come.



Concerned residents in Tennessee’s Upper Cumberland Region gather for a People’s Town Hall to learn about the Ridgeline pipeline in December 2022. This methane pipeline would be built to supply TVA’s proposed gas plant replacement for Kingston coal plant. The town hall was organized by community leaders who went on to form the grassroots group SAGE TN (Safe, Affordable, Good Energy for TN) in opposition to the gas plant and pipeline (photo by Gabi Lichtenstein, Appalachian Voices Tennessee Energy Democracy Field Coordinator). Also see story on page 7.



**A note from Eartha to Readers:** This is my last Dear Eartha column for the time being. Thank you for reading and I hope to see you on our activist journey as we fight the good fight for environmental justice. A big thank you to Allie Stafford, my editor, who has supported and made this column better over the years I've been writing it. I wish her and you the very best.

## Dear Eartha: Advice from An Eco-Guru

Dear Eartha,

Well, the planet's still burning and a few in the corral of Republicans running for president are admitting climate change does exist and is caused by human activity. The 24/7 news cycle doesn't offer much hope for us humans, especially for the next generations. Can you, ma'am, offer anything worth fighting for?

— Eco-Anxious in Rogersville

Dear Eco,

There is a great deal to be downcast about these days — the 1,000 wildfires burning in Canada, the hundred plus dead in Lahaina, the scorching temperatures in the South, the loss of homes and life all over the planet as the glaciers melt and the icecap diminishes and the forests burn and temperatures soar. But, yes, as a matter of fact, there is much worth fighting for — and I'm here to catalog the hope and rouse the anxious into action.

[Euronews.green](#) reports positive actions all over the planet. Here are a few of them from that news source for 2023:

- Wild baby bison was born for the first time in a thousand years in the UK;
- Cool Roof France (CRF) is using 130,000 tons of discarded oyster shells to make sustainable white paint for roofs to cut energy costs by keeping buildings cool;
- A Ukrainian woman is taking on the challenge of using "wave power" as an energy source;
- A Montana judge ruled that children have the right to a healthy environment in a huge blow to fossil fuel producers in that state;
- A woman in Mexico City's Polanco neighborhood has turned her apartment into a refuge for hurt and injured hummingbirds;
- India has slashed its greenhouse gas emissions rate by one third in a 14-year time period in that country's efforts to meet its promise to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change;

- France is raising taxes on air flights to help pay for its rail trains in a move to make train travel less expensive and therefore more attractive;
- The Scottish government has given the green light to expand a hydro storage plant which will help Scotland reach its goal of net-zero targets;
- A group of Army veterans are helping the US government restore coral reefs off the southern tip of Florida;
- India, Germany, and Poland are harnessing solar power for railways;
- Brazil's Amazon deforestation dropped 33% during President Lula's term, according to government satellite data.

The Tennessee Environmental Council reports a plethora of tree plantings, compost initiations, pollinator habitats created, and creeks cleaned of litter, but not so many solar power initiatives or fossil fuel use alternatives. Still, trees and natural habitats are good news.

According to a report from WPLN (a Nashville affiliate of National Public Radio), "TVA is planning to add 10,000 megawatts of solar throughout its seven-state territory by 2035, and the utility just issued a request for up to 5,000 megawatts of carbon-free energy that must be operational before 2029 (Caroline Eggers, August 15, 2022)." Eggers also reported that Vanderbilt University became the biggest solar power user in Nashville, after students protested, and that "the Knoxville Utility Board could become the solar leader for watts per customer in the southeast by 2025."

So, yes, Eco-Anxious, we have reasons to fear and reasons to cheer environmental changes throughout the world, and in our nation. But with these factual examples of human action and environmental policy to buoy our spirits, hope can be maintained and uplift achieved.

Despair may be the enemy always. I hope these examples provide hope in the face of anxiety going forward.

As the Brits say, Stay Calm and Carry On!

Rita Bullinger/Eartha

## Remembering Margaret Ford Olson: Poet and Dedicated Sierra Club Member

by Will Skelton, Harvey Broome Group



Margaret Ford Olson was active for many years with both the Harvey Broome Group in Knoxville and the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club. Indeed, she was the longest serving secretary of the Group ever, from 1983 to 1996. She lived much of her life in Oak Ridge but moved in retirement to Pleasant Hill in 1996. Margaret was a wonderful woman who loved the outdoors, travel, and (which is how I got to know her best) working to preserve our wilderness and natural areas. A professional typist, among many other talents, she typed much of the documentation for the successful Cherokee National Forest wilderness campaigns of the 1980s. And, as often is the case, she had an additional talent, writing poetry. Three of her poems are provided here.

Contact Will at [whshome@bellsouth.net](mailto:whshome@bellsouth.net)

### Round and Round

Round and round this turning earth,  
Dawn to dusk and dusk to dawn,  
Night follows day, day follows night,  
And the circle of years goes on and on.

Each day is another day of my life,  
A day remembered, a day that is lost.  
Whichever it is, it is over and gone,  
Joyous or painful, peaceful or storm-tossed.

So round and round, when my world turns its last,  
Pray do not sorrow and pray do not grieve.  
As day turns to night and night turns to day,  
Cherish and savor this world that I leave.

### Wild Hearts

My heart is in love  
With so many wild things;  
Dark pine woods of winters,  
Bright meadows of springs;  
The last fading star  
At morning's first light;  
The first one to greet me  
Announcing the night;  
The rush of the stream  
Tumbling over the falls;  
A far crack of thunder  
Before summer squalls.  
Wildness is the path  
That my heart seeks to go;  
But where my feet lead me  
Not even I know.

### Dreams

As a growing teen lying at night  
In a city full of wartime fears,  
I listened to trains roaring through my sleep.

Engines spewed sparks; burning coal dust  
Colored snow with dirt as quickly as it fell  
Clogging the air with ash and soot.

I dreamt of placid northern lakes  
Where loons called plaintively  
Across waters rimmed by dark fir trees.

I dreamt of mountains, high crags  
Capped by glaciers reflecting alpenglow  
Where soaring eagles ruled the world below.

I dreamt of lying on unprinted sands  
Watching herons fishing in the shallows,  
Sandpipers chasing waves on toothpick legs.

I dreamt of stars untouched by city lights  
Hanging so close I almost could reach up  
And pluck them one by one from out the sky.

Lying at night with wartime city noise,  
I never thought some far-off time and place  
Would merge those dreams into reality.



# Say **NO** to TVA & **YES** to Solar + Storage

TVA wants to build more gas fueled generation.



**Bad** Idea that will **cost** customers **Billions**



## What to Do?

1. Send a Letter to your newspaper's editor
2. Send a Letter to the TVA Board of Directors:  
TVA Board of Directors  
Board Services  
400 West Summit Hill Drive WT 7  
Knoxville, TN 37902  
**OR** [board@tva.gov](mailto:board@tva.gov)

**Dear Editor, . . .**

**Dear TVA Board, . . .**

### Want help with info and writing advice?

Email your name & phone number to [Bpaddock1939@gmail.com](mailto:Bpaddock1939@gmail.com). Put "TVA Advocacy" in the subject line and he will get you some capable assistance. All communications are confidential except your LTE or message to TVA when you send it to them.



**Be a champion for the environment. Join today for \$15.**

From TVA's planned methane gas plants to species extinction to climate change to coal ash to drilling for dirty tar sands, the threats to our environment have never been greater. Your support is absolutely essential to preserving our most precious natural resources - join the nation's largest and most effective grassroots movement today.

We'll thank you with this free insulated trail cooler tote (limited time!) and these exciting Members-only benefits:

- One-year subscription to *Sierra* magazine
- Worldwide Members-only outdoor trips
- Automatic membership in your local Chapter and Group
- Discounts on Sierra Club calendars, books, and other merchandise.



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.  
 Please charge my:  Visa  Mastercard  AMEX

Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Card Number \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
<b>Special Offer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail with this full ad to:

Sierra Club  
 P.O. Box 7059  
 Merrifield  
 Virginia 22116-7059

Or click JOIN on our website:  
[sierraclub.org/tennessee](http://sierraclub.org/tennessee)

**F94QB43001**

	LOCATION	DATES
Winter 2024	Cedars of Lebanon State Park	January 19-21
Spring 2024	Fall Creek Falls State Park	May 3-5
Fall 2024	Fall Creek Falls State Park	October 18-20
Winter 2025	Cedars of Lebanon State Park	January 17-19
Spring 2025	Fall Creek Falls State Park	May 2 - 4

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### COVID-19 NOTICE

**There is always a risk of acquiring a communicable disease in any group setting. Please contact your local department of health for guidance in protection and prevention.**

#### Group Program Meetings

Group	Date	Time
Cherokee (Chattanooga)	Mon 11/27, No Dec, 1/22	6:00 PM
Chickasaw (Memphis)	Thu 11/16, 12/21, 1/18	6:00 PM
Harvey Broome (Knoxville)	Tue 11/14, 12/12, 1/9	7:00 PM
Middle TN (Nashville)	Thu 11/9, No Dec, 1/11	7:00 PM

#### Group Business Meetings

Group	Date	Time
Cherokee (Chattanooga)	Mon 11/6, 12/4, Jan 7	7:00 PM
Chickasaw (Memphis)	Wed 11/1, 12/6, 1/3	6:30 PM
Harvey Broome (Knoxville)	Tue 11/28, 1/6, 1/23	7:00 PM
Middle TN (Nashville)	Mon 11/20, 12/18, 1/15	6:30 PM

#### Regional Conservation Committee Business Meetings

Committee	Date	Time
CareNET (Rogersville)	Thu 12/7, 1/25	6:00 PM
Clarksville	Tue 11/14, 12/12, 1/9	6:00 PM
Holston Valley	Tue 11/21, 12/19, 1/16	6:00 PM
Watauga (Mountain City)	Tue 11/14, 12/12, 1/9	5:00 PM