

# Tennes-Sierran

The monthly newsletter for the Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club

Volume 38, Number 2 - February 2007



## Vanderbilt student proposal receives national attention as finalists in the first-ever mtvU GE ecomagination Challenge

By Shanna Petersen  
Editor, *TennesSierran*

mtvU and GE have joined forces to create a challenge to university students across the country to develop new, creative ways to green their campus. The projects are judged in the following areas: ecology, imagination, and economics. Hundreds of applications were sent in. In January, the top 10 finalists were announced and Tennessee's representation came from Vanderbilt University's WilSkills program.

WilSkills is planning to create a self-sufficient, sustainable, student-run biodiesel production system at Vanderbilt University. The system will be used to convert Vanderbilt Dining waste vegetable oil into environmentally responsible biodiesel fuel that can be used in any university diesel-fueled engine. The fuel will be used by Vanderbilt vehicles such as student activity vans, buses, and landscaping machinery. The ultimate goal will be to curb the consumption of petroleum-based fuel by the Vanderbilt community with a system that is economically and environmentally sustainable. In turn, this program will educate others about the viability of biodiesel as an effective alternative fuel.

### **What is biodiesel?**

Biodiesel is a fuel that is created by a transesterification process of vegetable oil. Pure vegetable oil or filtered waste vegetable oil are combined with methanol and lye in specific proportions and heated. A chemical reaction occurs and produces biodiesel and glycerol. The glycerol can be turned into a useful soap product, and the biodiesel can be used directly by any diesel engine or can be blended with petroleum-based diesel in any proportion.

Biodiesel has been extensively studied by many universi-

ties including Vanderbilt. It has many advantages over regular diesel and few shortcomings. It burns cleaner, increases engine life, reduces engine noise, cleans the fuel system, eliminates the "diesel smell," is safer to handle and transport, and transforms a waste product into a useful substance. Biodiesel has not become a viable alternative to petroleum-based diesel on a large scale because the price of vegetable oil has not yet made widespread distribution economically beneficial. However, small scale production and testing using waste vegetable oil has been happening for years.

### **How will the biodiesel be produced?**

We will design and construct an initial pilot biodiesel production system on our campus, and it will consist of a standard "apple seed" biodiesel processor which has been used and tested for many years. We will be constructing and testing a pilot system initially to establish the techniques and protocols necessary to eventually scale-up production in a safe manner. The "apple seed" system will be set up in a plant operations facility on campus and will be self-sustainable in energy and financial needs. The energy required to heat the biodiesel ingredients will come strictly from the sun and a small biodiesel-fueled generator (when the solar energy is insufficient). The energy to run the necessary pumps in the system will be collected by a photovoltaic solar cell backup power system. Rain water will be collected in a large cistern to provide the water necessary for cleaning the biodiesel to ensure the highest quality biodiesel possible.

Robin Midgett, an experienced biodiesel producer and electrical technician at Vanderbilt, will oversee the design and construction of the pilot and full scale systems. Robin has been producing and using his own biodiesel exclusively for three years and has agreed to help start the pilot system and expand the system as necessary.

For more information,  
or to cast your vote please check out  
Ecomagination Challenge online at:  
<http://www.ecocollegechallenge.com/>

Once the pilot system is installed, Robin and Andrea George (sustainability coordinator for Vanderbilt) will help train the Ecomagination Challenge team members on how to safely produce high quality biodiesel fuel from waste vegetable oil. Our preliminary goal is to generate 100 gallons of fuel per week with the pilot system. Trained biodiesel "experts" will lead the biodiesel production while other interested students apprentice. This teaching style distributes the required labor while simultaneously disseminating knowledge and training future experts. We will also be producing and publishing relevant materials on our website to help other universities follow our lead.

### **How is the project going to get started?**

We will be initially collecting small amounts of waste vegetable oil from Vanderbilt Dining for testing purposes, but once the large-scale system is online, we will be collecting all the Vanderbilt Dining oil produced (~250 gallons/week). We will be borrowing a plant operations truck initially to transport the oil, but eventually, we will purchase a transportation vehicle that can be used exclusively for transportation and promotion. The transportation vehicle will have a large graphic applied to its side to advertise the use of biodiesel at Vanderbilt (and the grant that made it possible). We will purchase stickers to be used on all other vehicles running biodiesel to help increase awareness.

Vanderbilt produces thousands of gallons of waste methanol every year between the many chemistry labs on campus, and currently the methanol is disposed of as a hazardous material. Since methanol is a costly key ingredient necessary to biodiesel production, we will be investigating whether or not the methanol produced on campus can be purified to be used to make our biodiesel.

### **Who is going to be involved?**

The labor involved in waste vegetable oil collection and biodiesel production will be lead by the experts from the WilSkills group, but will be a shared effort of many groups on campus. Wilderness Skills, as well as the environmental group SPEAR (Students Promoting Environmental Awareness and Recycling), have a continually replenished student base that will provide the necessary amount of labor to maintain and expand the system.

*Content from Vanderbilt WilSkills website reprinted with permission.*

### **What is WilSkills?**

Wilderness Skills is Vanderbilt University's premier outdoor experience. The course is designed to integrate academic study with practical experience in the wilderness. It utilizes both the classroom and the environment, combining lectures, films, and discussions with trips to the surrounding areas. The trips are designed to teach students the basic techniques of backpacking, caving, rock climbing, and whitewater paddling. The course is offered each Fall and Spring semester and is open to all current Vanderbilt students, both undergraduate and graduate. The course is designed to not only teach certain skills for outdoor activities, but to also respect and care for nature. We hope that every student leaves the course with a new attitude towards the environment.



Explore, Enjoy and protect the planet

# Meet Your New Chapter Chair

## Dear Tennessee Sierra Club Members,

During the 2007 Winter Sierra Club Chapter meeting I was elected to the position of your chapter chair. I am excited to serve the Tennessee Chapter and look forward to working with you to make a difference for a better environment in Tennessee.

I joined the Sierra Club in 1993 largely because I was interested in backpacking with people who have an appreciation for the outdoors. In 2002 I became active with the Middle Tennessee Group in Nashville as an outings leader and shortly thereafter was asked to become the group's outing chair.

As the needs of the group changed I served as membership chair, program chair, and eventually group chair. I have served the chapter as chapter outings chair and chapter treasurer. I currently am serving on two national Sierra Club committees including the Medical Advisory Committee and the Local Outings Support Committee. I attended the Sierra Summit in 2005 as a chapter delegate.

My educational background includes a bachelor degree in Nursing from MTSU and I am a part-time student at MTSU pursuing a master's degree in nursing administration. As a registered nurse with 26 years of nursing experience I am currently employed as the nurse manager for Precision Healthcare in Nashville.

Keith Romig (your chapter fundraising chair) and I have been married for 12 years.

Together in the coming year we can all work together to make a difference in the state of Tennessee. To the health of the dioxin threatened citizens in New Johnsonville, to the quality of life in Upper East Tennessee, in Middle Tennessee, and throughout our state, to the ability of Tennessee residents to save money on energy and thereby contribute to cleaner air and to the possibility of curbing rapid climate change in our lifetime.

*Katherine Pendleton*  
Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter Chair

## Tennes-Sierran

The monthly newsletter of the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club.

### SEND ARTICLES TO:

Email: [tn.sierra@gmail.com](mailto:tn.sierra@gmail.com)  
or mail: Shanna Petersen, Tennes-Sierran Editor  
2703 Adobe Hills Place  
Thompson Station, TN 37179

### SEND CHANGE OF ADDRESS TO:

\*Email: [address.changes@sierraclub.org](mailto:address.changes@sierraclub.org)  
Or mail new address to:  
Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968  
Address changes are processed much faster if you include your Sierra Club membership number. To find your membership number, look on the address label of this newsletter.

### ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

**Submission DEADLINE is the 10th of the month preceding the new month's issue.**

1. Email embedded text submissions, or PDFs, which are preferred to [tn.sierra@gmail.com](mailto:tn.sierra@gmail.com).
2. Photographs should be in a .jpg or .tif file format, whenever possible, then either attached to email or mailed via US Postal Service (USPS) on a CD Rom. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like your disk or photo prints returned.
3. Hard-copy handwritten or typewritten articles may be accepted. Pre-approval from the Editor is required.
4. Any materials submitted via USPS mail cannot 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.

# Moving?

My new address is:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/St/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

or Email to:

[address.changes@sierraclub.org](mailto:address.changes@sierraclub.org)  
(be sure to include your member ID#)

Mail to:  
Sierra Club  
P.O. Box 52968  
Boulder, Colorado  
80322-2968

Attach mailing address label in this box, or  
fill in current name, address & Membership  
ID#

Current Address:

Member ID# \_\_\_\_\_

## Sierra Club Officers

### TENNESSEE CHAPTER:

Chair: Katherine Pendleton (615) 943-6877  
[Katibug1959@aol.com](mailto:Katibug1959@aol.com)  
Vice Chair: Gloria Griffith (423) 727-4797  
[gla4797@earthlink.net](mailto:gla4797@earthlink.net)  
Secretary: Carl Leathers 615-662-4178  
Treasurer: Rachel Floyd (615) 406-9204  
[rfloyd557@bellsouth.net](mailto:rfloyd557@bellsouth.net)  
Conservation: Gary Bowers (615) 714-3185  
[GB1Nature@aol.com](mailto:GB1Nature@aol.com)  
Outings: Judith Hammond (901) 276-2819  
[hammondjudithm@yahoo.com](mailto:hammondjudithm@yahoo.com)  
CCL Delegate: Don Richardson (901) 276-1387  
[donrich@juno.com](mailto:donrich@juno.com)  
CCL Alternate: Katherine Pendleton (615) 943-6877  
[Katibug1959@aol.com](mailto:Katibug1959@aol.com)

### TN LOCAL GROUPS:

**Cherokee Group - Chattanooga** (in reorganization)  
[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/cherokee](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/cherokee)  
contact: Terry Miller (423) 842-5053  
[trmcha@comcast.net](mailto:trmcha@comcast.net)

### Chickasaw Group - Memphis

[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/chickasaw](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/chickasaw)  
Chair: Tom Lawrence (901) 237-4819  
[bus@thecave.com](mailto:bus@thecave.com)  
Vice Chair: Juliet Jones (901) 374-0582  
[julphill@midsouth.rr.com](mailto:julphill@midsouth.rr.com)  
Conservation: (in transition)  
Secretary: Teri Sullivan (901) 320-7191  
[tsullivan5@midsouth.rr.com](mailto:tsullivan5@midsouth.rr.com)  
Outings: Judith Hammond (901) 276-2819  
[hammondjudithm@yahoo.com](mailto:hammondjudithm@yahoo.com)  
Membership: (in transition)  
TV Program: Judith Rutschman (901) 767-5916  
[rutschman@rhodes.edu](mailto:rutschman@rhodes.edu)

### Harvey Broome Group - Knoxville/Oak Ridge

[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/broome](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/broome)  
Chair: Axel Ringe (865) 397-1840  
[onyxfarm@bellsouth.net](mailto:onyxfarm@bellsouth.net)  
Vice-Chair: Beverly Smith (865) 531-8480  
[Blsmith1300@comcast.net](mailto:Blsmith1300@comcast.net)  
Conservation: David Reister (865) 670-8991  
[dreister@bellsouth.net](mailto:dreister@bellsouth.net)  
Outings: Ron Shrieves (865) 922-3518  
[rshrieve@utk.edu](mailto:rshrieve@utk.edu)

### Middle Tennessee Group - Nashville

[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/mtg](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/mtg)  
Chair: Rachel Floyd (615) 406-9204  
[rfloyd557@bellsouth.net](mailto:rfloyd557@bellsouth.net)  
Vice Chair: Carl Leathers, 615-662-4178  
Conservation: Diane Perschbacher Phifer  
(615) 895-1236 [Diane@Propson.com](mailto:Diane@Propson.com)  
Outings: Katherine Pendleton (615) 943-6877  
[Katibug1959@aol.com](mailto:Katibug1959@aol.com)

### Watauga Group - Johnson & Carter Counties

[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/watauga](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/watauga)  
Chair: Gloria Griffith (423) 727-4797  
[gla4797@earthlink.net](mailto:gla4797@earthlink.net)  
Vice Chair: Dr. Earl Taylor (423) 727-7211  
Conservation: Dean Whitworth (423) 727-7214  
Outings: Webb Griffith (423) 727-4797  
[gla4797@earthlink.net](mailto:gla4797@earthlink.net)

### Upper Cumberland Group - Cookeville

[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/ucg](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/ucg)  
Chair: Peggy Evans (931) 432-6680  
[maevans@twlakes.net](mailto:maevans@twlakes.net)  
Vice-Chair: Josie McQuail (931) 372-6142  
[Jmcquail@tntech.edu](mailto:Jmcquail@tntech.edu)  
Conservation: Mary Mastin (931) 268-2938  
[zeblady@twlakes.net](mailto:zeblady@twlakes.net)  
Outings: VACANT

### National Sierra Staff in Tennessee:

Rita Harris, Community Organizer  
Environmental Justice Program (901) 324-7757  
[rita.harris@sierraclub.org](mailto:rita.harris@sierraclub.org)  
Bill McCabe, Central Appalachian EJ Organizer  
office - 423-944-3220 fax - 423-944-3221 (call first)

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

*in remembrance of*  
**Jack Neff**

JANUARY 22, 1921 – DECEMBER 5, 2006

Robert (Jack) Neff, who was a long-time Sierra Club member and conservation activist, died in Nashville on December 5, 2006. Jack was a hiker, camper, and, in the words of his wife, Ruth Neff, an optimistic gardener. On a Savage Gulf backpack to Hobbs Cabin one winter long ago, he was also a one-time songwriter and singer who composed in his tent and later performed (maybe a bit off-key) his creation "Recombinant DNA Woman", sung to the tune of "St. Louis Blues". It was an unforgettably funny performance, and it has always been one of my sorrows that we could never convince Jack to write down and give us the lyrics.

In the mid-80's, the proposed siting of a monitored retrieval storage system (MRS) at Oak Ridge was a huge issue for the Sierra Club and for all Tennesseans. The MRS would have been a "temporary" storage site for nuclear waste from all over the country until permanent storage could be finalized. Needless to say, we were convinced that "temporary" would eventually become permanent. Jack led the battle for the Sierra Club and devoted an enormous amount of time and energy over a period of several years to researching the issue, educating the rest of us, and fighting to keep the country's nuclear waste out of our state and off our highways and railways. The MRS proposal was eventually defeated, and Jack deserves a major portion of the credit for that defeat.

Jack was an inspiration to the rest of us in the Chapter, the Middle Tennessee Group, and those with whom he worked on the national level. In the words of Don Scharf (MTG), "I heard stories about all the great work Jack had done, especially on nuclear issues. Encountering a Sierra Club activist with such a strong background in science helped convince me that the Club takes positions supported by science. Even though our encounters were brief, Jack impressed me as a man who cared deeply for human health and the health of the environment."

Jack was a graduate of the University of Missouri, earning his Ph.D. after a stop along the way to serve as a medical technician in New Guinea, the Philippines and Japan during World War II. He taught for a year at Johns Hopkins Medical School and then served for 37 years as a teacher and research scientist in the Departments of General and Molecular Biology at Vanderbilt until his retirement in 1987.

Jack asked that instead of sending flowers, contributions be made to the Middle Tennessee Group, which may be sent to the office at Sierra Club-Middle Tennessee Group, 2021 21st Avenue South, Suite 436, Nashville 37212. His regard for the environment and the Sierra Club are shown by this gift. We appreciated Jack for his intelligence, his passion, his humility, and his humor, and those of us who knew him will miss him.



# Sierra Club State Legislative Program for 2007

contributed by Penny Brooks, Sierra Club

Every year the Legislative Committee meets and proposes a state legislative program for the Tennessee Chapter to approve. With Executive Committee approval, Mike Murphy, our lobbyist, and the Legislative Committee will work hard to write bills which reflect the approved program, find sponsors for the bills, and push to have these bills introduced in the State Assembly. In addition to bills that we promote, we also oppose bills that, if passed, will be detrimental to the environment.

The 2007 Tennessee Chapter's Legislative Program:

1. We will introduce two energy related bills; (1) a bill to establish state appliance and equipment energy efficient standards. This bill was prepared by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE). The products covered by this bill include bottle type water dispensers, commercial hot food holding cabinets, compact audio products, digital versatile disc players and disc recorders, medium voltage dry-type distribution transformers, metal halide lamp fixtures, portable electric spas, residential furnaces and residential boilers, residential pool pumps, single-voltage external AC to DC power supplies, state-regulated incandescent reflector lamps, walk-in refrigerators and freezers, and other products designated by the Commissioner. The provisions apply to products sold, offered for sale or installed in the state. (2) a bill to require California auto requirements when 50% of the population of the country is covered by those requirements. The logic behind this bill is that auto manufacturers will eventually have to make all cars conform to these standards if various markets are under the jurisdiction of those requirements—especially if the markets are distributed across the country. Right now about 40% of the population resides in states that have this requirement (14 of them). Tennessee is just one state that could help push the industry into making more fuel efficient and low emission cars.

2. We will introduce a bill to authorize up to a \$500 million bond issue for the purchase of land for parks, greenways, natural areas and other state lands and their preservation. Up to \$15 million will be devoted to replacing the tax losses to counties for greenbelt limit expansion.

3. We will draft and introduce a new container deposit bill that will be very similar to the one that didn't pass last year but with some amendments to make participation by grocery stores and markets optional and to allocate some of the profits to counties for litter cleanup and for compensation for taxes lost to conservation easements, parks and greenbelt acreage expansion.

Get on the Tennessee Conservation Voters' email list and keep up with the progress of these bills and other important environmental bills over the legislative session. Email [tcved@bellsouth.net](mailto:tcved@bellsouth.net) for weekly legislative updates.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

## Commitment has its rewards



Since 1892, Sierra Club has been committed to preserving the American wilderness; and the rewards are all around us. From our mountains to our forests to our rivers - and the wildlife that inhabit them all - Sierra Club has successfully campaigned to protect Earth's natural beauty for decades.

The need for vigilance continues in many of our wild places. You can carry on the fight by becoming a Sierra Club Life Member. Your dues go right to work in a special Life Member Fund that supports vital Sierra Club conservation programs.

So enroll today, and become a Sierra Club Life Member. And make a commitment that will have an impact today and tomorrow!

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

***I am pleased to enroll as a Life Member of the Sierra Club.***

Please enroll me as an individual Life Member.

- Full payment of \$1000 is enclosed.
- \$350 first annual installment is enclosed.

We are enrolling as joint Life Members.

- Full payment of \$1250 is enclosed.
- \$450 first annual installment is enclosed.

Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.

Please charge my:  Visa  Mastercard  AMEX

Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

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 to Sierra Club,  
 P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968  
 or visit our website [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)

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# Conservation Issue Committee Reorganization

By Gary Bowers  
TN Chapter Conservation Chair

The January issue of the TennesSierran described the TN Chapter's conservation committee structure reorganization. Additional definition of this reorganization will occur at the January TN Chapter Excom meeting on January 20th and 21st. If you have interest in working on any of the issue committees below, please let the super committee chair know.

To express your interest in being involved in any of these committees, please call or email the super committee chair. When emailing, please show the committee name in caps in the subject (for example – ENERGY SUPER COMMITTEE)

- Energy Super Committee – Clark Buchner, 901/327-2545, coyotem@usit.net
- Wild Legacy Super Committee – Axel Ringe, 865/397-1840, onyxfarm@bellsouth.net
- Safe & Healthy Communities – Don Scharf, 615/896-8338, d.scharf@comcast.net  
Gary Bowers, 615/361-7572, gb1nature@aol.com

## ENERGY

Air Quality  
Cool Cities  
Global Warming/Energy Conservation  
Transportation  
TVA

## WILD LEGACY

Big South Fork  
Great Smoky Mountains National Park  
National Forests  
State Parks  
TN Forests & Natural Areas  
Biodiversity  
Wilderness

## SAFE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Container Deposit Legislation  
Genetic Engineering  
Fair Trade  
Nuclear & Toxics  
Water Quality  
Confined Animal Feeding Operation  
Population  
Environmental Justice  
Environmental Education  
Smart Growth/Land Use Planning

# Spring 2007 Chapter Meeting

The spring 2007 Chapter Meeting will be hosted by Watauga Group on April 27-28-29 with the additional goal of making this quarterly gathering a special getaway weekend for extended family and friends attending a TN Chapter meeting. Please share this preliminary announcement as widely as possible. Camp Ahistadi is located in the Cherokee National Forest, four miles south of downtown Damascus, VA on State Hwy 91 near Laurel Bloomery, TN. Ahistadi, the name chosen for this Methodist Church Camp and Retreat, comes from the Cherokee language and means "the very best of all." Four bunk style cabins are available with attached bathrooms that accommodate 14 people each. So reserve space for your family and friends ASAP. Lodging plus Sat and Sun breakfasts and Sat night dinner included in the \$40 per person weekend charge.

## Events, outings & programs:

**Sat afternoon matinee at the Barter Theatre**  
(reservations required for \$40 theatre tickets and \$6 shuttle bus). Reservations to WG before March 30, 2007 will enjoy theatre discount pkg price of \$26 per person.

**Live music featuring local artists**

**Friday evening welcome party for early arrivals**

**Semi annual Silent Auction**  
(donated auction items welcomed)

**Hiking along Laurel Creek**  
(borders Camp Ahistadi) in the Cherokee National Forest

**Trout fishing**  
(bring fishing tackle and TN fishing license w/ trout stamp)

**Creeper Trail Bike Ride**  
(see more specific details next column)

## Creeper Trail Bicycle Outing

The VA Creeper ride will take place from 8 AM till noon and will take advantage of one of the many shuttle/bike rental services in Damascus called "Bike Station". This Saturday morning bike outing will be an easy bike ride of 17 miles from White Top Station (elevation 3576) to downtown Damascus (elevation 1930). Downhill for first fourteen miles with some peddling required for the last three miles of the journey. The trip will include a bike rental and shuttle service pickup from Camp Ahistadi and a shuttle ride back to Ahistadi from Downtown Damascus. This trip is scheduled early AM so Chapter EXCOM members and delegates can ride the Creeper before their quarterly meeting begins.

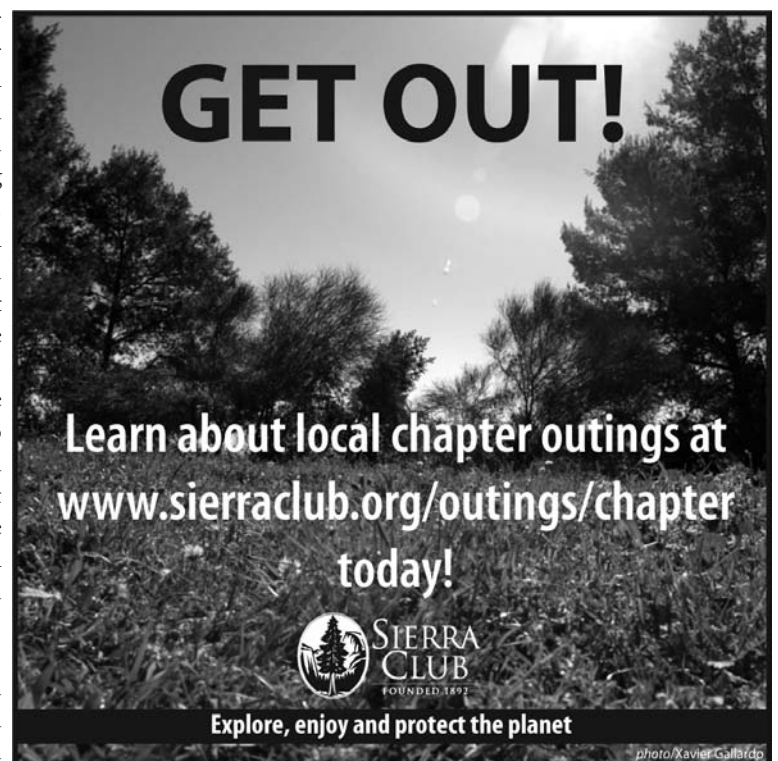
The Virginia Creeper Trail is a multi-use (biking, hiking, equine) rails-to-trails conversion. The Creeper Trail links present day biking and hiking enthusiasts with nature and history buffs as they travel an old Indian path through some of the finest Southern Appalachian countryside, alongside rushing streams and gorgeous mountain scenery. Along the way are several converted railroad stations now used as rest areas and a museum plus midway down a Taylor Valley restaurant offering 'al a cart' menu and their signature "chocolate multi layer cake."

This outing covers only the top half of the Virginia Creeper Trail. We will be biking to Damascus, Virginia downhill from the North Carolina border and, except for a short stretch through Taylor's Valley, is part of the Jefferson National Forest and is administered by the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area staff.

Google Earth takes you on a virtual ride on the Virginia Creeper Trail and is well worth the download. Google Maps gives location details.

**Preregistration fees are required for both the Barter Theatre and/or the Virginia Creeper outings to:**

Watauga Group Sierra Club  
C/O Webb Griffith  
5907 HWY 421 South  
Mountain City, TN 37683  
423-727-4797



## 11th Annual Campaign

# Defenders of Tennessee

The Sierra Club's Defenders of Tennessee campaign funds our legislative program. The Defenders campaign allows us to maintain a strong voice in the legislature through volunteer lobbying, member contacts to our lawmakers, and the work of Mike Murphy, our professional lobbyist, who is a longtime conservation activist.

We have a large number of faithful contributors, for whom we are very grateful. Through normal attrition, however, we have lost some of our longtime supporters. *Our campaign is running behind on contributions this year* and we hope you will become a Defender, or renew your commitment, so that we can continue this vital program.

We had a number of important successes in the state legislature last year, and we need your help to continue in the upcoming 2007 session. **PLEASE** support the Defender program by donating to this once-a-year solicitation. Your contribution is not tax-deductible, but it is critical in enabling us to continue to have an advocate on "the hill". We urge you to fill out the form below and send a check made out to Sierra Club Defenders, c/o Adelle Wood, 4641 Villa Green Drive, Nashville, TN 37215. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Bill Terry, Legislative Co-Chair  
Penny Brooks, Legislative Co-Chair

we are very  
appreciative  
of our  
defenders



Those listed below contributed between December 10 – January 9

Sharon Boyce  
Bob Brown  
Clark Buchner  
Steve and Patty Ghertner  
Eleanor Lewis  
Dr. and Mrs. Reginald Lowe  
Jack Lyle and Mary Buckner  
John and Chris McCarthy  
Joe McCaleb  
Monty Matney  
Deborah Narrigan  
Ruth Neff  
John Noel and Melinda Welton  
Annelies Raetzer  
Larry Smith and Naomi Van Tol  
Bill Terry and Adelle Wood  
Anonymous donors

## takeACTION

### Yes! I'd like to help!

Amount of donation: ( ) \$75 ( ) \$150 ( ) \$250 ( ) \$500 ( ) Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

May we publish your name in the Sierra Club newsletter as a donor?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

(OPTIONAL) Your e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Sending our letter of appreciation to you electronically will allow us to conserve paper and save money. We will not divulge the address nor use it for other purposes.

No letter of acknowledgement is requested \_\_\_\_\_

## Chickasaw Group News

Contributed by various members

### An Inconvenient Truth House Party

On a very warm mid-December afternoon, James Baker represented the Chickasaw Group of the Sierra Club at one of three house parties that was held in the Memphis area to watch An Inconvenient Truth. The parties were promoted by MoveOn.org. Across the United States, over 1,575 house parties were planned. The party that James attended had 11 people. While many of the people at the party had already seen the movie, it is worth seeing again.

Speaking of climate, on January 10, 2007, the Associated Press released an internet article stating that preliminary data from the National Climatic Data Center shows that 2006 was the warmest year since record keeping began. Five states had their warmest December on record -- Minnesota, New York, Connecticut, Vermont and New Hampshire. No state was colder than average in December. Worldwide, it was the sixth warmest year on record.

### Wolf River Boulevard Public Meeting

Also in December, the City of Germantown, along with representatives from the Tennessee Department of Transportation held a public meeting to discuss the Environmental Assessment for this 2-mile section of road.

Here are just a few reasons that Chickasaw Group opposes construction of this segment:

\* The road's proposed alignments pass through the area formerly occupied by a portion of the Riverwoods State Natural Area. The boundaries of this Natural Area were administratively reconfigured in May 2005 as described in a letter from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's Attorney – Allan Leiserson to Germantown's Mayor - Sharon Goldsworthy. In a nutshell, Leiserson said that as long as the acreage of Riverwoods remained the same, then "no harm-no foul" and Legislative Action was not required. Chickasaw Group feels that only Legislative Action under the Natural Areas Preservation Act can create, reconfigure boundaries, or decertify Natural Areas, and that this precedent setting ruling seriously jeopardizes the entire Natural Areas Program.

\* The proposed road is sited in the 100-year floodplain of the Wolf River. The road bed will be built up, and may act as a crude dam, essentially raising the 100-year flood level even further because a portion of the floodplain will be constricted.

\* The difference in travel time on existing streets verses this proposed \$22 million dollar road is already only TWO minutes at worst. Upgrading existing streets would save the taxpayers a lot of money.

## 5th Annual Wilderness First Aid Training

*Plans Are Being Finalized*

The TN Chapter of the Sierra Club is pleased to sponsor our 5th Annual Wilderness First Aid Training (WFA). As this month's issue of the *Tennes-Sierran* goes to press, the details are still being finalized. Our plan is to hold this event early June at Fall Creek Falls State Park. We also plan to use Landmark Learning, LLC again this year as our training organization. Watch for details in the March issue of the *Tennes-Sierran*.

pitch a tent with  
someone you love



# Outings

## CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

**Saturday, March 3, Full Moon and Lunar Eclipse Hike**  
Time and place TBA. For more information contact Sue Williams, 274-0524.

**Saturday, March 10, 2007 - The Old Forest Hike - The Old Forest Trail, Overton Park, Memphis, Tennessee. Second Saturday Hikes.** Explore the only urban old growth forest of its kind in America. 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 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 at (901) 276-1387 or donrich@juno.com. Sponsored by Park Friends and the Sierra Club.

**Sunday, March 11, 2007, 1:00pm Sings of Spring Walk,** Memphis Botanic Garden. Sunshine or snow! For more information, contact Judith Hammond, 276-2819.

**TELEVISION PROGRAM: WPYL - Channel 18, Memphis, Tennessee:** "The Nature of Conservation" is the Sierra Club's Chickasaw Group TV Program hosted by Judith Rutschman. A different program is aired, usually each month. For the schedule, please see the website: [www.memphislibrary.org/tlc18/18SCHD.htm](http://www.memphislibrary.org/tlc18/18SCHD.htm) 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 at (901) 767-5916 or [rutschman@rhodes.edu](mailto:rutschman@rhodes.edu)

## HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

All HBG outings may be accessed at this website:  
<http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/broome/>

**Feb 24-25, 2007 (Sat-Sun), Mt. Sterling Backpack (Great Smoky Mtns National Park)** On this winter breakout hike, we will begin hiking from the Big Creek campground and climb 6.2-miles Campsite 38 for a total elevation gain of 4,050'. Hopefully the weather will be cold and we can practice winter backpacking. Hike rated: Strenuous, 12.4-miles roundtrip. Drive: 150 miles roundtrip. Pre-register with Beverly Smith, [blsmith1300@comcast.net](mailto:blsmith1300@comcast.net) (email preferred), or phone 865.531.8480. Group size is limited based on park regulations. (If problems with campsite reservations, we will backpack to another site in the area)

## CHEROKEE GROUP (Chattanooga)

For information on upcoming outings, contact Chris O'Connor at [chris\\_o77@yahoo.com](mailto:chris_o77@yahoo.com) or visit our web site at <http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/cherokee/index.htm>.

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.

## MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

**Saturday, February 24, 2007 South Cumberland Rec Area Greeter Falls Day Hike:** Join the group for a 5 mile hike to view multiple waterfalls and walk the rim of Savage Gulf for spectacular views of the gulf and sandstone cliffs. Trail is 3 miles easy, 2 mile medium difficulty. (We'll be taking the Greeter Falls loop and Greeter trail, both accessible from a parking lot near Altamont.) Bring lunch, as we'll eat on the trail. Hiking boots recommended, as there is some boulder walking and slippery footing near the falls. Contact Diane Perschbacher at [Diane@Propson.com](mailto:Diane@Propson.com) or 615-895-1236 for car pooling and start time.

**March 5, 2007 Sierra Club Outings Training 101:** Outings Training 101 is a requirement for outings leaders to have in order to be certified to lead an outing for the Sierra Club. The training's focus is on developing basic leadership skills related to leading activities such as hikes. The training modalities include lecture and video presentations. Middle Tennessee Group is looking for new outings leaders and this is an excellent opportunity to come and see if becoming an outings leader is right for you. The training will be held from 7-9 p.m. at the home of MTG's Outings Chair, Katherine Pendleton. For additional information and to register please contact Katherine at 615-943-6877 or email [Katibug1959@aol.com](mailto:Katibug1959@aol.com).

## 10 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.

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!

**March 23, 2007 Membership Wine and Snacks Gathering:** Come out and meet fellow Sierra Club members at the home of Katherine Pendleton from 7-10 p.m. This is a good opportunity for new members to come out and get acquainted and learn about the Sierra Club. Wine and snacks will be provided. For additional information and for directions contact Katherine at 615-943-6877 or email [Katibug1959@aol.com](mailto:Katibug1959@aol.com).



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



**You don't need a resolution to make a big change.**

This New Year, say goodbye to old habits, and hello to new beginnings.

**Join Sierra Club now.**

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 \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
<b>Special Offer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$25</b>	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
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"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



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 to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)**

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# Meetings

## CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

**Monthly First Thursday Members Gathering:** Thursday, February 1 & March 1, 2007, 5:30-7:00pm - 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 Juliet Jones (901) 374-0582 julphill@midsouth.rr.com for more information.

**Greening Greater Memphis with Alex Garvin:** Thursday, February 8, 2007, 5:00pm - Memphis Botanic Garden, Hayden Hall, Memphis, Tennessee. Start the year off by working with the Wolf River Conservancy and its partners by starting a new movement to "Green Greater Memphis." The Wolf River Conservancy, along with many major partners including the Sierra Club, will host a meeting with nationally known park planner Alex Garvin. The goal is to create a new movement within the Greater Memphis community that will demonstrate grass roots support to our political and business leaders to implement and enhance Greenways, Greenlines, and parks. If you or your group would like to participate, please contact Greg Maxted at greg@maxlineinc.com. For more information, phone the Conservancy at (901) 452-6500 or go to <http://www.wolfriver.org/>.

## Revitalizing Our Parks & Restoring Our Cities with Charles Jordan:

Saturday, February 10, 2007, 10:30am - Memphis College of Art Auditorium in Overton Park. Charles Jordan will speak on the theme "Revitalizing Our Parks, Restoring Our Cities". He will be introduced by Shelby County Mayor AC Wharton, who is a catalyst for parks and greenways in the Memphis community. Mr. Jordan is currently Chairman of the Conservation Fund, America's land trust which has protected 5.4 million acres of public spaces across America. He rose to prominence as City Commissioner and then Director of Parks and Recreation of Portland, Oregon. This program is part of Black History Month. It is part of a series, "A Visionary Speaks," presented by Friends for Our Riverfront and sponsored by the Crawford-Howard Family Foundation. Admission is free, and everyone concerned about the urban environment is invited. For more information, call (901) 458-4061 or go to <http://www.friendsforourriverfront.org/>. Sponsored by Friends for Our Riverfront and Sierra Club



Charles Jordan

**STRATEGY MEETING:** Monday, February 12 & March 12, 2007, 6:30pm - Prescott Memorial Baptist Church, 961 Getwell, Memphis, Tennessee: This meeting of the Executive Committee is open also to all members of the Sierra Club. Contact Allan Lummus by February 9 (February meeting) or March 9 (March meeting) to place items on the agenda. Tom Lawrence (901) 237-4819 tomlawrence@bellsouth.net

**PROGRAM MEETING:** Wednesday, February 28, 2007, 7:00pm - Memphis Public Library and Information Center, 3030 Poplar, Memphis, TN. Come at 6:30pm for social time! Program meeting starts at 7:00pm. For more information, contact Tom Lawrence at 901-237-4819. or tomlawrence@bellsouth.net.

## WATAUGA GROUP

**PROGRAM MEETING:** Every second Tuesday at 7 p.m. Please contact Gloria Griffith, (gla4797627@aol.com), (423) 727-4797 for more information.

## HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

**PROGRAM MEETING:** Tuesday, February 13, 2007, 7:30pm at Tennessee Valley Unitarian-Universalist Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville. Dr. Alan Heilman will present a slide show on "Plants: A Closer Look." Heilman is Professor Emeritus of Botany at the University of Tennessee and a longtime expert photographer of flora. His show will feature exquisite closeups of flowers, mosses, ferns and other plants, mostly in the Southeast. They will provide what Dr. Heilman calls the "internal adventure" of a closer, more analytical inspection of nature as an alternative to the common emphasis on panoramas and nature at a distance. All welcome. For information call 573-5908.

**STRATEGY MEETING:** Tuesday, February 13, 2007, 7:30 p.m., at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville. We urge all Harvey Broome Group members to join us as we discuss and plan strategies for issues of concern to the group. These meetings provide you an opportunity for input into issues of concern to you. Please join us! For more information contact Axel Ringe at 865-397-1840.

## UPPER CUMBERLAND GROUP (Cookeville)

**PROGRAM MEETING:** Every second Tuesday at 7 p.m. Please contact Peggy Evans at maevans@twlakes.net or (931)432-6680

## MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

**PROGRAM MEETING:** Thursday, February 8, 7:00 p.m. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center, 1160 Otter Creek Road, Nashville. Baby, it may be cold outside, but inside the visitor's center at Radnor Lake on Thursday, February 8th, the program will be heating up! May Leinhart with the Land Trust for Tennessee will speak about the "Loveless to Leiper's" initiative, which is an effort to protect the historic and culturally rich landscape adjacent to the Natchez Trace Parkway through a cooperative effort between private landowners and the Trust. Many people believe that the land adjacent to the Natchez Trace Parkway is protected, but it isn't. The Trust is focusing on protecting the views and the land for future generations from future development. The Trust is concerned about this pristine area becoming another "used to be countryside" and wants to let you know what's going on and what you can do to help. Join us for this great program, questions and answers, light refreshments and conversation. For more information on this program, contact Martha Wilson at 376-2535. Enter the Radnor Lake area on Otter Creek Road, accessible only from Granny White Pike. Non-members are always welcome!

**STRATEGY MEETING:** Tuesday, February 27 at 6:30 p.m. in the old St. Bernard's Academy Building, 2021 21st Avenue South, 4th floor. Conservation issues are first on the agenda. All members are invited to attend this conservation and administrative meeting to get the news on what's happening in our Middle Tennessee Group. We welcome you to be with us to learn about the group's conservation initiatives and community activities. For conservation issues or additions to the conservation agenda, contact Diane Perschbacher at 615-895-1236 or email Diane@Propson.com. For additions to the administrative agenda or for more information regarding the meetings, send a message to Rachel Floyd at rfloyd557@bellsouth.net or call 792-2590.

## MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP SIERRA CLUB

# 2007 Planning Retreat

**Saturday, February 17th**  
**9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

The Middle Tennessee Group Sierra Club (MTG) announces the new 2007 Executive Committee:

Rachel Floyd, Chair  
Katherine Pendleton, Vice Chair  
Diane Perschbacher Phifer, Co-Conservation Chair  
Don Scharf, Co-Conservation Chair  
Gary Bowers  
Phillip Miller  
Carl Leathers

You are invited to join our annual planning retreat



SIERRA CLUB  
FOUNDED 1892

Every year the MTG meets to plan and establish our group's goals for the new year. So, whether you're new to the club, or you've been wanting to become involved and just haven't found a suitable area to contribute your volunteer spirit to, this is the perfect opportunity! By attending this meeting you can not only discover the issues, and easily become involved, but this could be a ground floor opportunity for you to pursue areas of conservation you have personal passion for.

This year we will conduct our planning and strategy meeting at our local group office at 2021 21st Avenue South, Suite 436—Nashville, Tennessee 37221. We will have one of our famous Potluck Lunches, so bring something to share with others.

Remember, whether you are a regular, or have not been active in the past, we want to hear exactly what you want the MTG Sierra Club to be! Bring your ideas for outings, volunteer activities, or new topics of concern? If you want to do more for the environment and the world, the new year is a great time to become active in the MTG Sierra Club! Join us! We want to hear from you!

# Sierra Club Alert!

*How many of you have ever received an envelope with this return address?*

If you have, did you throw it away?  
Did you open it?

*If you opened it you would have found that it was a request, not for money, but to make a phone call.*

The Legislative Committee sends out letters to you when we need you to make a phone call to your legislator concerning an environmental bill coming up in the legislature. We also include information about what you should talk about in your phone call. We only send these letters out when we need fairly quick response and when the bill or issue is very important. Last year we sent out about 500 letters concerning the container deposit bill. We needed people in 3 legislative districts to call their legislators to ask them to support the container deposit bill. Many of you did make the phone call and it may have influenced at least one legislator to vote for the bill.

It is important to remember that legislators have dozens of lobbyists in their offices everyday. Yet, you are their constituents and it means a great deal for you to call them about your opinions. If they don't hear from you, then the only information they have is from the lobbyists.

So—next time you see the Sierra Club Alert! on the return address label, do not discard the letter. Open it and make a difference!

## ELECTION MARCH 13! Marrero Endorsed for Cohen's Seat

The Tennessee Chapter endorsed Beverly Robison Marrero for the state Senate seat formerly held by Steve Cohen. The endorsement is for the primary and general election. The general election is March 13.



Chickasaw group Conservation Chair Steve Sondheim, Chapter Environmental Justice Chair Dick Mochow, Chickasaw Political Chair Sue A. Williams, and Senate Candidate Beverly Robison Marrero when Sierra Club announced her endorsement for Democratic Primary being held in January.



Attendees of the Winter 2007 Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club Meeting held in January at Cedars of Lebanon State Park. Photo by Wilbert 'Webb' Griffith.

### Planet Makes Way for New Grassroots Pages on Web

After a run of more than a dozen years, the Planet, the Sierra Club's activist newsletter, ceased publication with its Nov/Dec 2006 issue. Stories about the Club's grassroots campaigns, a Sierra Club Scrapbook, and activist profiles can now be found on our new Grassroots pages on the Sierra Club's Web site at [www.sierraclub.org/grassroots](http://www.sierraclub.org/grassroots). The stories comprising the Nov/Dec Planet, including a 2006 Victory Roundup and a 4-page Smart Energy Solutions primer, will be posted online.

You can continue to access the Planet archives at <http://www.sierraclub.org/planet>.

The Sierra Club - Middle TN Group  
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