A Meeting of Climate Champions in Tennessee

Spring Retreat
Fall Creek Falls State Park, April 28-30, Page 6

Conservation Education Day
Lobbying in Nashville, Cordell Hull Building, March 1, Page 3

Cover Photo Courtesy Cris Corley; From Left: Gabe Hernandez, Cris Corley, Ben Jealous, Al Gore, and Ramón Cruz, Carthage, TN
Masthead Photo by Todd Waterman. New Leaves, Japanese Maple

Explore, Enjoy, and Protect!
Progress on Chattanooga’s Climate Policy!

by David Hoot, Cherokee Group Chair

The effort to officially establish progressive climate goals for the City of Chattanooga took an important step at the beginning of 2023. A community feedback meeting was hosted jointly by City officials and Chattanooga, a joint organization of several key area environmental groups, including the Sierra Club’s Cherokee Group. The January 12th meeting was well attended with about 100 citizens in attendance. The event was facilitated by the City Planning, and Erik Schmidt, Director of Sustainability, present the City’s updated Climate Action Plan (CAP). Key elements include zero-carbon and zero-waste goals for city operations and the community, growing a green economy, protecting natural resources, and closing the disparity gap for the most socially and economically vulnerable communities.

A spirited public comment period followed with a wide range of concerns and questions voiced. Attendees were encouraged to remain active during the renewed CAP process.

Learn more: https://www.facebook.com/ClimateChattanooga

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From Tennessee Chair Dr. Cris Corley

Early Morning Thoughts: A Successful and Satisfying Retreat!

Finally, I am returning to my normal sleep routine, early-to-bed and early-to-rise. Our Cedar Forest (actually named Cedars of Lebanon State Park) retreat was officially deemed a success — a lot of members showed up, we broke even, and no one got sick. A three-year in-person hiatus due to Covid 19 concerns had been affecting our interpersonal Sierra relationships. But, the advent of oral antiviral medication made Coronavirus a more manageable monster. Mortality rates in Wilson County were up and viral positivity rates were down, so we took a deep breath (masked) and decided to get back to fellowshipping with our nature-loving buddies.

The Cherokee group was the official sponsor, and of course Bill Moll ended up being the main show horse. Charlie High (Middle Tennessee Group) took on the challenge of finding the best price for a dozen eggs, and recruited his brother as chief cook. I was tasked with finding the finest chef in Lebanon to prepare a Saturday night dinner that suited everyone’s taste for less than 20 bucks. As of this writing, the Cedars retreat holds the distinction of being the only retreat in history not featuring one single complaint regarding the cuisine.

Traditionally, Cedars has always held the distinction of being the first retreat of the year. Lebanon always makes the ideal choice for winter, being only 10 miles from the geographic center of our lengthy state, conveniently close to the Interstate, and having relatively flat topography in case of ice and snow.

The preregistration numbers were looking good in early January, partly due perhaps to a little hype regarding the possibility of our esteemed Sierra Club President Ramón Cruz being in attendance. We got a rain check — a conflict in his travel schedule arose due to the appointment of our new national Executive Director, Ben Jealous. I feared the specter of being tared and feathered by the fireside, but was spared from prosecution. New member registrations reached record levels, and old, faithful members would always return for their annual pilgrimage to the Cedar Glades, to saunter with the esteemed State Naturalist Randy Hedgepeth.

Charlie and I showed up a day early, packing the fridges with massive amounts of food and beverages. Having been designated the campfire tender several years ago, I delivered a load of my cherry-plum, well-seasoned sugar maple, to burn. My sleep was a little troubled the night before the retreat — would our members return to Enjoy, Explore, and Protect? Arriving early Friday afternoon, I was relieved to find Jerry Thornton and Bill Moll already settled in for a long weekend of activities. The old group lodge began to reawaken from the years of silence, friends reuniting with handshakes, laughter and love.

Friday evening is traditionally spent eating Mexican food at the nearest locale, providing an excuse to go back to town to buy the toothpaste that you forgot to throw in your backpack. The city finished the evening with beautiful music by the fireside. I blamed it on all the calories expended on the Hedgepath hikes. Antoinette and Murphy, said he had never seen a group of people pile their plates three inches high and devour it all. I was tasked with finding the finest chef in Lebanon to prepare a Saturday night dinner that suited everyone’s taste for less than 20 bucks. As of this writing, the Cedars retreat holds the distinction of being the only retreat in history not featuring one single complaint regarding the cuisine.

Contact Cris at chair.tennessee@sierraclub.org

Tennes-Sierran

The bimonthly newsletter of the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club
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Change of Address
Email: Address.Changes@SierraClub.org
Online: MyAccount.SierraClub.org
Snail Mail: Mail new address AND the mailing label on page 1 to:
Sierra Club, P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041


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April Issue of the Chapter E-Newsletter by March 24
May Issue of the Chapter E-Newsletter by April 21
May / June Issue of The Tennes-Sierran by March 31

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Sierra Club Board of Directors Endorsements

The Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter recommends a vote for Marquita Bradshaw and Rita Harris in the upcoming election for the National Sierra Club’s Board of Directors. This election is held each spring. Sierra Club members may vote either online or by mail. You will be receiving details on how to vote later from the Sierra Club or at:


The final date to vote has not yet been set, but will be no later than June 1. At least five percent of the membership must vote to have a valid election. The Chapter encourages you to vote.

Support the Tennessee Waste Recycling and Reduction Act for a Cleaner Tennessee

by Dan Firth, Chair, Tennessee Chapter Solid Waste and Mining Committee

With the introduction of the Tennessee Waste Recycling and Reduction Act (TWRRA) [https://bit.ly/TN-SB07573-HB0550], filed by State Senator Heidi Campbell and State Representative Torrey Harris, Tennessee joins a growing number of states focused on laws related to packaging, known as “extended producer responsibility (EPR).”

Four states — California, Colorado, Maine and Oregon — have enacted laws in the past few years and are currently moving forward with implementation. More than a dozen other states introduced EPR bills in 2022. Among those, New York, Washington, Illinois and New Jersey are likely to advance their EPR policies this year. Tennessee, with the TWRRA, wants to join that group.

As outlined in the Tennessee Sierra Club's January-February 2023 article, members of the Tennessee Chapter wrote the legislation based on extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders from local governments to affected industries. Tennessee towns and taxpayers across the state are struggling with waste disposal, materials recovery, and industrial development. Although Nashville, for example, recently started a twice-monthly recycling program, elsewhere in the state, recycling programs are closing down or scaling back. Tennesseans bear the costs of overburdened landfills; litter in parks, beside roadways, in storm drains, and in rivers; recycling education; necessary infrastructure; and material recovery and use. TWRRA helps address these issues by engaging producers to work together for a sustainable future; Specifically, SB07573/HB0550 will:

(Continued on page 7)

Conservation Education Day is March 1st

Join Chapter Conservation Programs Coordinator Scott Banbury and others who want their voices to be heard in Nashville.

We will meet with our legislative representatives in their offices in Nashville. Likely topics include the EPR bill (see article above), private sewer contractors, coal prmary and more. Training session on Tuesday night, February 28, covering issues and how to lobby your representatives. Keep up-to-date with activities on our new Facebook Group Tennessee Conservation Education Day.

Questions? Contact Bill Moll at 404-401-7899 or whmoll@aol.com

Sponsored by the Sierra Club, Tennessee Conservation Voters, Tennessee Environmental Council, Harpeth River Conservancy, and Tennessee Interfaith Power and Light.

Please Plan to Participate, If You Can.

Memphis Transit Equity Day 2023 Successful

by Dennis Lynch, Chickasaw Group

The Chickasaw Group organized the fourth Transit Equity Day event in Memphis for February 3. Numerous organizations presented at our online event. MICAH, the Memphis Coalition for Action and Hope, was a major player in that regard. It’s noteworthy that the Sierra Club is involved at a national level with numerous partner organizations, including the NAACP, transit unions and others.

“Transit Equity Day is recognized each year on February 4th, the birthday of Rosa Parks. You undoubtedly know Ms. Parks as the person whose defiance led to the Montgomery (Alabama) Bus Boycott, which began in December of 1955 and lasted 381 days, energizing the Civil Rights movement. Marquita Bradshaw, the Tennessee Chapter’s Environmental Justice Chair, reminded us about Rosa, the boycott and about transit equity. “We commemorate Rosa by declaring that transit is a civil right, so that everyone has fair and just opportunities.”

Memphis is in an ongoing push to increase funding for transit system improvement. MATA, the Memphis Area Transit Authority, has a good plan, but must continue to earn support from the various segments of the Memphis community.

Our online discussion focused on two current details: MATA’s need for more funding from a dedicated source, and improving the service to build MATA’s reputation and the community’s support. The Chickasaw Group of the Tennessee Chapter “wants you!”, current and future members, to step forward and work with us so that we can keep building the momentum in support for transit.

Contact Dennis at chickasawsierra@gmail.com.

Cherokee Nation Proposes Name Change of Clingman’s Dome Back to “Kuwohi”

by Axel Ringe, Harvey Broome Group Conservation Chair

Within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, situated on the border between Tennessee and North Carolina and visited by nearly 15 million people per year, sits a mountain that, at over 6,600 feet in elevation, is the highest point in the Park. The peak is also the home of an iconic observation tower that enables visitors to see the surrounding landscape of undulating forests for miles around. Currently known as Clingman’s Dome, the mountain was named by the federal government in 1859 after North Carolina Confederate general and U.S. Senator Thomas Lanier Clingman. However, it has been known for millennia by Cherokee people as “Kuwohi,” which translates as “mulberry place.” The mountain also has deep religious significance to the Cherokee as a place to worship and to perform a annual ritual to ensure the rain and all life will endure. In July 2022, the Tribal Council of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians passed a resolution in support of petitioning the U.S. Board of Geographic Names to restore the mountain’s name to “Kuwohi.” The effort has subsequently received support from government bodies and non-governmental organizations, including the North Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club.

For the Cherokee, the mountain constitutes a place of resource and prayer and has done so for thousands of years. Mary Crowe, a member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and a leader in the Restore Kuwohi initiative, believes that restoring the name would help “our younger generation to relearn who and what we are as a people, that Creator placed us here” [https://bit.ly/MaryCroweQuote]. Crowe and Lavita Hill, both members of the Eastern Band, have led the movement to restore the peak’s pre-contact name to Kuwohi.

In recent years, the Department of the Interior, particularly under the leadership of Secretary Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo), has encouraged the restoration of indigenous place names and geographic landmarks, including such well-known examples as the restoration of the names “Denali” to what new inhabitants had renamed Mount McKinley, and “Tava,” called Pikes Peak by mountain settlers.

The restoration of Kuwohi’s indigenous name would thus also be an important part of a broader movement, one that officially recognizes the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. Even if name restoration does not address land theft directly, it can serve as public acknowledgement of settler culture’s participation in a long history of invasion, expropriation, genocide, and racism. For more information and to sign a petition:

https://www.kuwohi.org/

Contact Axel at onyxfarm@bellsouth.net

Lavita Hill and Mary “Misisy” Crowe, both members of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation, are leading the effort to restore the name of Kuwohi to what is now known as Clingman’s Dome in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
A Meeting of Climate Champions in Tennessee
Al Gore Hosts Sierra Club Leaders

by Cris Corley, Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter Chair

Waking up early is part of my daily routine, but arising at 3:15 am is way too early. This particular Wednesday would require a full throttle with the afterburners engaged. Weeks of strategic planning had been involved in arranging this exciting day visiting with a few dignitaries of the Sierra Club that included our current Sierra Club President Ramón Cruz, our new Executive Director, Ben Jealous, and a Nobel Peace Prize winner, the Honorable Albert Gore.

In mid-December, the Sierra Club’s Board of Directors announced the appointment of Ben Jealous as the Club’s new Executive Director. Ben and Al’s friendship dates back many years.

While I was attending the Council of Club Leaders meeting last September in Oakland, a significant amount of time was devoted to discussing the large amount of greenhouse gasses that result from improper agricultural practices. Being a local, I was aware of the vast time and effort Mr. Gore had devoted to transforming his dad’s farm into an environmentally friendly operation.

Knowing of the early morning traffic congestion in Nashville, I hit the road before sunrise, arriving at the airport on time. Gabe Gonzalez, Ben’s new chief of staff, had just arrived on an early morning flight from Chicago. The 30-40 mph crosswind gusts made Nashville the “Windy City” and his landing a little bumpy. Ben and Ramón had flown in late the night before, to avoid a possible flight cancellation due to the forecast of ice and snow. They’d hit the ground running, making a quick stop to admire the late-night sights and sounds of Music City on lower Broadway before checking into their hotel rooms for a much-deserved rest. Gabe and I arrived at the hotel around 9 am to find our friends feasting on the finest of southern vittles (free hotel breakfast buffet!). After stuffing a few large suitcases into the back of my dad’s SUV, the four of us headed east on our way to the Caney Fork River. Running a few minutes ahead of our scheduled late-morning visit with Al Gore, I took a short side trip to Fiddlers Grove in Lebanon. Knowing of Ben’s past years serving as President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) I figured he would want to visit the old one-room, 10x10 school house where NAACP co-founder Dr. W.E. Du Bois first taught school in 1886 and 1887. Ben Jealous, Executive Director of the Sierra Club, visits the one-room schoolhouse where Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, a founder of the NAACP, taught while a student at Fisk University. Jealous is a former Executive Director of the NAACP.

Tennessee Chapter Chair Cris Corley, Sierra Club President Ramón Cruz, and Sierra Club Executive Director Ben Jealous, a former President of the NAACP, stop off at the 10x10 school house where NAACP co-founder Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois first taught school in 1886 and 1887.

After being cooked a great lunch consisting of our choice of either plant-based or grass-fed beef cheeseburgers (beef for me), we were treated with a rare opportunity to view the newest climate change slideshow presentation. The big screen was on the blink, so we got a close-up presentation as he balanced his laptop on his left forearm, while pointing vigorously to elaborate new graphics with his right forefinger. As we sat around the lunch table eating organic chocolate ice cream, it felt as if we were being given a front row seat for his newest Oscar-winning, world premiere movie. We also visited with his farming staff, including a brilliant young fellow from Down Under, who made a great presentation regarding soil sampling on the farm and their advances in carbon sequestration. Gabe kept looking at his watch, and mentioned several times they had to catch a flight at 3 pm. I asked Al if we could make it back in 50 minutes. He laughed and said, “if you don’t mosey.” All appeared saddened to part ways. We all know of the great amount of work required to prevent the catastrophic overheating of our planet and the short time we have to reach Carbon Zero. We hurriedly jumped back into the Toyota 4Runner, and I hit I-40 with the pedal down. Ben, Ramón, and Gabe again began fielding numerous calls and texts from the New York Times, CNN, national staffers, etc. My high-speed driving was a little unnerving, but we reached the airport with one minute to spare!

I am excited that the Tennessee Chapter has been in the forefront in welcoming our newest National Executive Director, Ben Jealous. He brings a fresh voice and proven leadership skills to the Sierra Club. I also want to thank President Ramón Cruz for extending his stay an extra day to have lengthy discussions with our leaders JoAnn McIntosh, Charlie High, and Scott Banbury. Fellow members, we have much to be proud of regarding the direction of our Chapter.

Contact Cris at chapter.chair@tennessee.sierraclub.org

Sierra Club Chair Ramón Cruz (lower left) meets with Tennessee Chapter leaders (left to right) JoAnn McIntosh, Cris Corley and Charlie High. Photo by Ramón Cruz

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What Can We Learn from a Fourth Grader?

Part Three: Curing Nature Deficit Disorder

by Karen McIntyre, Retired Metro Nashville School Librarian

“OK, that must hurt.” It was the first time I’d heard Lavelle (not his name) express empathy for anything. Little did he know the little box turtle with a broken shell that I had picked up after it had been hit on the road needed to be cleaned up. A photo to a rehabber brought an immediate response.

“Those white specks are maggot eggs. Get those off ASAP.” That text message resulted in my stepping into the hallway just as a particularly challenging class was walking by. In one hand I held the injured box turtle and in the other a large bottle of water for turtle cleaning.

The wonderful young teacher who had survived Lavelle’s F-bombs and constant interruptions to her teaching looked weary. Summer vacation awaited. Everything was turned in and teachers struggled to keep kids engaged. I thought she might appreciate an impromptu outdoor lesson, and she eagerly accepted.

We sat in the shade of two huge old friends, a Fir and a Shingle Oak that accompanied each other despite being planted far too closely. The class waited quietly, eager to engage with the turtle. I reminded them about a little boy, Noah Charney, who lived in Westmeade and put radio transponders on box turtles to see where they went. We used the book he and his mother wrote, Noah and the ARC, about creating a corridor for migrating animals from Radnor Lake to the Cumberland. It introduced second graders to local geography, wildlife and trees. He continues to work to build that corridor even now when he has become a professor at the University of Maine. The kids remembered the fun of a scavenger hunt to identify the plants and animals on our campus after reading the book. We returned our focus to the little turtle. “This is the carapace where the crack extends all the way from the mid point to the plastron, it is made of bone,” Lavelle made the connection. “Is that like a broken arm?” It was his only other interruption that morning!

I reassured Lavelle that the rehabber would give the little turtle an injection for pain and then one to prevent infection. She would “glue” the shell back together quietly, eager to engage with the turtle. I reminded them about a little boy, Noah Charney, who lived in Westmeade and put radio transponders on box turtles to see where they went. We used the book he and his mother wrote, Noah and the ARC, about creating a corridor for migrating animals from Radnor Lake to the Cumberland. It introduced second graders to local geography, wildlife and trees. He continues to work to build that corridor even now when he has become a professor at the University of Maine. The kids remembered the fun of a scavenger hunt to identify the plants and animals on our campus after reading the book. We returned our focus to the little turtle. “This is the carapace where the crack extends all the way from the mid point to the plastron, it is made of bone,” Lavelle made the connection. “Is that like a broken arm?” It was his only other interruption that morning!

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E-bike Use on Trails? Sierra Club Establishes a New Policy

by Vicky Hoover, National Sierra Club Recreation Issues Team Member

E-bikes — bicycles powered by electric motors — seem to be prevalent all around us as they have gained rapid popularity. E-bikes can go faster, farther and higher. E-bikes now occupy a world with walkers, cars, buses, bicyclists, horses, and wildlife. Great for urban transportation, but in wild backcountry places, this can lead to serious conflicts and impacts.

This rise of e-bikes challenged the Sierra Club to accommodate this new form of travel, yet still meet our mission to protect the environment and help people get out into nature. In the past year, The Recreation Issues Sub Team of the national Wildlands Team led the revision process for our Off-road Use of Bicycles and our Off-road Use of Motorized Vehicles policies. In May, 2022, the Sierra Club’s Board of Directors adopted the new policies recommended by the recreation team.

The new policy recognizes the benefits of electric motorized bicycles and promotes their use in urban and developed areas. This policy makes clear that for use on trails on public lands, all e-bikes must be considered and managed as motorized vehicles.

When e-bikes first appeared, they had to meet the requirements for motorized use such as being allowed on roads. However, because these limitations would be too harsh for the environment,生产商 and manufacturers formed an organization to advocate for change. Today this organization, PeopleForBikes, has 27 full time employees and a budget of $3.7 million year.

The industry invented a three-tier classification system that ranks e-bikes as Class 1, 2, and 3. E-bikes are faster, heavier, and more powerful. Some have engines that propel the bike up to 20 miles per hour, and therefore should be allowed where traditional bicycles are allowed. A conventional bicyclist typically goes just over 10 miles per hour. Class 2 and 3 e-bikes are faster, heavier, and more powerful.

Unfortunately, it is not physically possible to look at an e-bike and determine its “class.” Many e-bike models can be reconfigured and look identical. This artificial e-bike classification system is an e-bike industry legislative lobbying ploy aimed at expanding use of e-bikes. This distinction is enforceable by a land manager and thus, if allowed, would open any non-motorized trail to any motorized bike. Even so, PeopleForBikes Coalition has been successful in 43 states passing legislation that adopts their recommendations.

Human recreation results in harm to animals’ behavior and health, and causes wildlife to avoid otherwise safe or natural habitat. Studies have shown that e-bikes impact wildlife more than hikers, cyclists, and horseback riders. Growing pressure to use more vehicles for recreation conflicts with a critical need to protect biodiversity and preserve wildlands values. In response to climate change and the rapid loss of biodiversity, the Club champions the 30x30 campaign to protect 30% of natural habitat by 2030. Allowing e-bikes in candidate wilderness areas may prevent achieving 30X30 goals. Motorized use may disqualify candidate natural areas for federal wilderness designation.

Contact Vicky at vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org
Tennessee Chapter Spring Retreat
April 28 – 30 ~ Fall Creek Falls State Park

The Harvey Broome Group cordially invites you to the Tennessee Chapter’s Spring Retreat at beautiful Fall Creek Falls State Park. Enjoy the company of other environmentalists during the peak of spring wildflower season! Be a part of the fellowship, hikes, fireplace chats, and meetings. Don’t miss the Saturday evening program, silent auction, and the informal social gathering that follows. Join others who share your love and respect for the environment. This retreat will focus on fun, connecting, outdoor adventures, and interesting programs. An Outdoor Leaders Training course will be offered if there is sufficient interest. No Chapter executive committee meeting will be held.

FAMILY FRIENDLY
We particularly encourage families to bring children of all ages to introduce them to the wonderful natural landscape of Fall Creek Falls State Park! We are planning some special nature activities just for kids and, if the weather cooperates, we will have a bonfire where kids (of all ages) can make s’mores. Yum.

HIKES
Tennessee State Naturalist Randy Hedgepath will lead hikes at the April 2023 Chapter retreat. Photo by Todd Waterman Tennessee State Naturalist Randy Hedgepath will lead hikes at the April 2023 Chapter retreat.

FiSMAL FRIENDLY
We particularly encourage families to bring children of all ages to introduce them to the wonderful natural landscape of Fall Creek Falls State Park! We are planning some special nature activities just for kids and, if the weather cooperates, we will have a bonfire where kids (of all ages) can make s’mores. Yum.

ACCOMMODATIONS
Newton Ford Bunk Lodge (formerly Group Lodge #1) is centrally located 35 miles southwest of Crossville and 44 miles southeast of Cookeville. Venue information and directions are available at https://tnstateparks.com/parks/fall-creek-falls. The Lodge has separate bunkhouse wings for males and females. Bring linens or a sleeping bag, pillow, towels, and toiletries. If bunkhouse living is not for you, rent a park cabin or room at the brand new hotel (Lodge Fall Creek Falls), or go to the hotel dining room or park general store. There is ample space in the lodge refrigerators and freezers for your personal foods and drinks. A personal drinking cup is a good idea, but you do not need a mess kit or utensils. Dishes, cutlery, and cups are provided from the lodge kitchen. Adult beverages are allowed for consumption within the Group Lodge.

FALL CREEK FALLS STATE PARK
Fall Creek Falls State Park (FCF) has spectacular water features. In 1937, when the federal government began purchasing land for the park, much of it was badly eroded. The Works Project Administration (WPA) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) began conservation programs to restore the ecosystem. After the National Park Service determined the land was too small for a National Park, it was transferred to the State in 1944 and became a state park. The park was recently expanded to over 30,000 acres, with many waterfalls and cascades, gorges, caves, and extensive forests including exceptional stands of virgin timber. Average late April weather at the park — highs in the mid-70s, lows in the low 50s. In 2022, the new Lodge at Fall Creek Falls hotel opened to replace an older lodge that was razed in 2019.

RETREAT MEALS
Full registration includes the cost of two breakfasts (Saturday & Sunday) and Saturday supper. These will be prepared and served in the Group Lodge kitchen. Lunch each day is on your own due to the variety of activities and the probability that many will not be at the Group Lodge at lunchtime. Bring food for your lunches and use the lodge kitchen for any preparation you need, or go to the hotel dining room or park general store. There is ample space in the lodge refrigerators and freezers for your personal foods and drinks. A personal drinking cup is a good idea, but you do not need a mess kit or utensils. Dishes, cutlery, and cups are provided from the lodge kitchen. Adult beverages are allowed for consumption within the Group Lodge.

RETREAT SCHEDULE

RETREAT COSTS
• Early Birds: Register by April 22 (lodging, 2 breakfasts, Saturday dinner): Adult $60; After April 22 register for $70
• First Chapter Retreat?: Receive a special price (lodging, 2 breakfasts, Saturday dinner): Adult $40
• Student (lodging, 2 breakfasts, Saturday dinner): $30
• Sunday Only (registration, breakfast, no lodging) — $10; (no lodging or breakfast): $5
• SCHOLARSHIPS!!! If you want to attend, but can’t afford it right now, apply to Jerry Thornton (gatwildcat@aol.com or 865-719-9742) for a scholarship.

Mail a check payable to Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club and mail to: Chapter Treasurer Craig Brandt, 12484 Ivy Lake Drive, Farragut, TN 37934 OR pay at the retreat by cash or check (no credit cards).

RETREAT COSTS

RETREAT SCHEDULE

RETREAT COSTS

RETREAT SCHEDULE

RETREAT COSTS

RETREAT SCHEDULE

RETREAT COSTS
Dear Eartha:  
Advice from An Eco-Guru

Dear Eartha,

I'm wondering what's going on with young people and the national and global environmental movement. I was inspired by young activists at the COP27 in Egypt this year but didn't see as much coverage as I wanted. How are youth involved in the environmental movement?

—Third Act Activist

Dear Third Actor,

Young people have stepped up in a more visible way this last decade with Greta Thunberg getting publicity through her individual and then collective actions when a tween. Here's what I know:

Ayisha Siddiqa, 23, from Pakistan, was one of the headline speakers at the Children and Youth Pavilion at COP27, the first time young people have had a dedicated space where activists in November held a formal meeting with United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres.

Heidi Campbell, the Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) spokesperson helped develop YOUNGO, the youth constituency for the UN’s framework convention for climate change and the co-executive director of the United States-based organization Care About Climate. According to Campbell, youth will now have more say in “the design and implementation of climate policies.” ACE is outlined in article 12 of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Extinction Rebellion (XR)'s youth faction staged a demonstration at London’s YouTube office to protest “its disproportionate platfoming of climate denial, on a site where is the most watched platform for 16-24 year olds.” Youth protesters for XR, reports Jessica Murray for The Guardian, “number at least 80 XR youth groups internationally, 55 of which are in the UK. All are made up of climate activists born after 1990, with an average member age of 16, although some as young as 16.” XR’s US motto is “The climate and ecological crisis is a justice crisis. We fight for a just world and stand in solidarity with Black Lives. Take action for Black Lives and support radical Black leadership. End white supremacy now.”

Just to give you a feel for the numbers of youth activists fighting for policy change globally, check out these organizations: Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change; FACE Intergenerational Justice; Federated States of Micronesia; Yurok Tribes; NAACV Environmental and Climate Justice; Black Eco Bloom; Clarkson University’s The Wild Center; Ecocycle Limited; Evangelical Environmental Network; and many more. Check out the ACE website at acesspace.org.

As an activist for Third Act (Bill McKibben’s nonprofit of over 60 Americans fighting for climate action) activist, you know that empowering youth to change climate denial policies is crucial going forward. Here are a few environmental activist programs for elders in the US: Senior Environmental Employment Program, Elders Climate Action, The Elders, Retirees in Service to the Environment, Earth Challenge, and many more that are state-focused or worldwide. In Tennessee, check out these organizations: Greater Knoxville Citizens Climate Lobby; Elders Climate Action; Tennessee Environmental Council; Sustainable Environmental Climate Advocate; and other local branches of organizations such as The Nature Conservancy.

Should be a momentous year for environmental activism, no matter the age! Together we stand.

Earth

The column was written by Rita Bullinger.

Submit your question for Eartha to: sierratnnews@gmail.com

First Sugar Moon of the Pandemic

by Anna Laura Reeve

Chickweed and bird’s eye speedwell receive,  
the tiny white teeth and blue water  
of their flowers  
giving way to hairy bitternes, purple dead-nettle. White tufts  
flanked by dark javelins rise  
beside dragon heads.

Maple sap drips from sapsucker holes, and the green troll-hair  
of onion grass pocks the lawn  
while each answering cardinal call  
splatters the air with a thin  
iridescent paint, here and gone.

When they decide it’s spring, it’s spring. Calendar be damned.

Now, year-old sage will sprout leaves  
from root crowns. Honeysuckle bushes  
will crack their green fireworks.

Yonder,  
a robin has been trying for ten minutes  
to break a beakful of shredded polypropylene twine  
from its tangle  
on a tomato cage.

Agricultural tine now appears in the nests  
of an increasing number of birds, who love it  
for its flexibility and strength,  
who often fly in search of it, whose feet  
it entangles,  
whose hatchlings  
it orphans. Even chicks  
get tangled, limbs becoming deformed.

This is not a poem about survival.

The robin stops tugging  
and perches on the cage wire,  
preening.

In a moment, I will go to the tangle  
and she will fly away, while I cut the white  
threads from the wire, crushing them  
in my hand.

Anna Laura Reeve is a poet living and gardening near the Tennessee Overhill region, traditional land of the Eastern Cherokee. Previous work of hers has appeared or is forthcoming in Beloit Poetry Journal, ROOM Magazine, Terrain.org, and others. She is the winner of the 2022 Adrienne Rich Award for Poetry, a finalist for the 2022 Ron Rash Award and the 2022 Heartwood Poetry Prize, and a two-time Pushcart nominee. Her debut poetry collection, Reaching the Shore of the Sea of Fertility, is forthcoming from Belle Point Press.

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrain of nature — the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.” — Rachel Carson

chains and struggle to source the materials needed to make new packaging and products. Over 100 global companies, including a number here in Tennessee, have stated their support for producer responsibility policies that will increase recycling, reduce plastic pollution, and help strengthen local economies.

Sign the petition in support for TWRRA: sc.org/twrra

Contact Dan at dan.firth.sierraclub@gmail.com

TWRRA (Continued from page 3)

• reimburse the cost of recycling valuable materials to create a circular economy  
• create incentives for companies to design packaging that is more recyclable  
• decrease or eliminate product packaging where possible  
• significantly increase the domestic supply of recovered materials available for new products.

Under the TWRRA, producers will form a nonprofit Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) with oversight from an advisory board and the Tennessee Department of Conservation (TDEC). The PRO conducts a statewide assessment to analyze and identify improvements needed for Tennessee’s recycling infrastructure and services, both rural and urban. The plan identifies a minimum recyclables list and an associated dues structure producers pay based on the type of packaging their products use in Tennessee. The dues refund cities and private entities for recycling costs. The plan also reduces non-recyclable materials that are now littering Tennessee or going into landfills. The fund provides for Tennessee towns to be reimbursed for the costs of creating and enhancing their recycling and recovery infrastructure. The valuable materials flowing from these recovery programs will provide the materials needed by many businesses in Tennessee. These businesses face disruptions in supply chains and struggle to source the materials needed to make new packaging and products. Over 100 global companies, including a number here in Tennessee, have stated their support for producer responsibility policies that will increase recycling, reduce plastic pollution, and help strengthen local economies.

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Contact Dan at dan.firth.sierraclub@gmail.com
Tennessee Chapter Fundraising Corner

by Mac Post, Tennessee Chapter Fundraising Chair

The annual March Appeal fundraising letter either recently arrived in your mailbox or will shortly. It outlines several of the Chapter’s priorities for the year. They include:

• Fixing state laws so local communities are protected from the reckless siting of fossil fuel pipelines, landfills, and confined animal feeding operations
• Ensuring the proper cleaning up of TVA’s coal ash impoundments across the state
• Advancing legislation that moves Tennessee toward a truly circular economy by keeping packaging waste out of our landfills and environment
• Working with local and state governments to see that Tennessee takes full advantage of the opportunities available through the federal Inflation Reduction Act.

We need for you to pitch in and help fund our activities to achieve our goals.

Didn’t get a letter? To save expense, we send this letter only to members who have contributed beyond their membership dues in the past three years. To make a contribution now, please use the handy online Chapter webform. Scan the QR code or use this link:

[sc.org/TNForward2023]

Many Thanks to these December 2022 – January 2023 Generous Contributors to the Defenders Fund!

Lorraine Vancamp  JoAnn McIntosh  Renee Hyatt
Bob Oravetz  Adelle Wood  Mary Mastin
Russ Manning  Robin Peeler  Kay Bradford
Don Scharf and Teri Davis  Kathleen Mahoney-Norris  Bill DeVan

RETREAT SCHEDULE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 2023</td>
<td>Fall Creek Falls State Park April 28-30</td>
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<td>Fall 2023</td>
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UPCOMING MEETINGS

COVID-19 NOTICE

COVID-19 NOTICE: Sierra Club activities may enforce group size limits, PPE, social distancing requirements to comply with COVID-19 restrictions of the meeting venue, city, and county rules where the activity takes place. Please contact the activity organizer for any updates. Check website for Zoom or in-person meeting status or contact your chair (see page 2).

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

From delisting endangered species like the Gray Wolf 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 cooler tote (limited time!) as well as 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.

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Name ____________________________
Address ____________________________
City ___________________ State _______
Zip ____________ Phone (_____) _______
Email ____________________________

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Student/Limited Income ☐ $25 ☐ $35

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Or click JOIN on our website: http://www.sierraclub.org/tennessee

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