Tennessee Chapter Joins Economic Stimulus Tracking Project to Evaluate Savings from Energy Efficiency, Conservation Projects

By Don Scharf

In late March the Tennessee Chapter joined 12 other Sierra Club chapters around the country on a project to track and influence how federal economic stimulus funds are spent. One of the details of the economic stimulus bill, or American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), is a block grant program to fund energy efficiency and conservation projects at the state and local levels. As a result of this program, Tennessee will receive over $42 million from the US Department of Energy (DOE). Our goal is to evaluate the block grants made in Tennessee for how much energy is saved, how much money is saved, and how many green jobs are created.

While detailed guidelines for what projects will be funded are not yet available to us, the DOE has said grants will be approved for residential and commercial building energy audits, energy efficiency and conservation programs for buildings and facilities, implementation of transportation programs to conserve energy, energy efficient traffic signals and street lights, and other projects.

About $28 million is available to 17 cities and 10 counties in Tennessee which will submit grant applications to the DOE. The cities are Bartlett, Brentwood, Chattanooga, Clarksville, Cleveland, Collierville, Franklin, Germantown, Hendersonville, Jackson, Johnson City, Kingsport, Knoxville, Memphis, Nashville, Murfreesboro, and Smyrna. The counties are Blount, Hamilton, Knox, Maury, Rutherford, Sevier, Shelby, Sullivan, Sumner, and Wilson. All other local governments in Tennessee can submit grant applications to the Tennessee Energy Office for a share of almost $14 million.

So far, at least 16 Sierra Club volunteers throughout Tennessee are tracking how their local government plans to spend the energy efficiency block grant. While some communities are considering several ideas, others have already decided how they want to spend the money. The city of Murfreesboro plans to spend its entire $961,100 grant on an energy makeover of the 17-year-old city hall.

If anyone in the Tennessee Sierra Club would like to join us on this project, please contact Don Scharf at 615-896-8338 or d.scharf@comcast.net. Volunteers are still needed to contact their local government and find out how the block grant will be spent in Cleveland, Hendersonville, Kingsport, and Blount and Maury, Sevier, Sullivan, and Sumner counties. This is an exciting chance to help your community do what’s best for both the environment and the economy.

Kick Up Your Green Energy Education!

Plan to Attend Our Home Energy Field Assessment Kick Off . . .

1:00 p.m., Saturday - May 16th

Are you passionate about saving energy but don’t know how to get started? If so, the Middle Tennessee Group (MTG), in the Nashville area, is hosting its first ever pilot Home Energy Field Assessment event, and this may be just what you need to kick start your own home greenovations!

This first ever MTG Home Energy Field Assessment will not only provide you with lots of green energy efficiency information, but will also offer hands on instruction and experience that you can apply to your own home!

Did you know the typical American household spends about half the energy it uses within the home; the balance is devoted to transportation? That’s right! It takes supremely concentrated, refined, liquid fuel for our cars to flit around the way they do, and our current infrastructure requires lots of flitting, which means that big reductions in transportation energy use will be a tough nut to crack. Houses, on the other hand, have a huge advantage: They don’t move! That means converting them to greener, more secure forms of energy is much easier. On top of that, the typical house is leaky, under insulated, and means converting them to greener, more secure forms of energy is much easier. On top of that, the typical house is leaky, under insulated, and harbors inefficient, energy hogging appliances. What that translates to is lots of opportunities to save energy, dollars, and carbon that would otherwise go into the atmosphere. Let’s get started!

Here’s how the Home Energy Field Assessment will work: Participants will converge on the host’s house prepared to get grungy. We’ll be assessing the house from the crawlspace to the attic, so you’re liable to get dirty. If you’re claustrophobic, fear not, you won’t be forced to belly crawl up under the house. You may also want to bring a pad for taking notes, and definitely bring a flashlight. We’ll go from bottom to top, assessing the structural and thermal systems as we go. You’ll be accompanied by a certified Home Energy Rater, Steven Tyree, who will be talking a mile a minute about energy efficiency as we go along, but questions will be encouraged and welcomed. Once we’ve finished our assessment, we’ll do a blower door test. Basically this test is a big fan that can suck gobs of air out of the house, and in the process reveals leaks that steal heating and cooling energy.

Now for the fun part: After identifying many of the air leaks, we’ll take the opportunity to fix them with spray foam and caulk. Both of these materials are messy, so working with them will be strictly voluntary. Believe it or not, simply plugging up the myriad holes in a house is one of the most cost effective ways to improve energy efficiency and air quality.

After our labors, it will be time to break bread together, socialize, and talk about the opportunities we have in our own homes, including more sophisticated systems like solar hot water and space heating. Congratulations, you’ve just helped save the world, one house at a time!

So where is this Energy Field Assessment going to take place? Mark your calendar for May 16, 1:00 pm, at the residence of Don Scharf - 1608 White Blvd. - Murfreesboro, TN 37129. Light refreshments and drinks will be provided compliments of the Middle Tennessee Group! Attendance is limited, so be sure to RSVP to Rachel Floyd at rfloyd557@bell-south.net or 615-406-9204.

Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet
ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:
Submission DEADLINE is the 10th of the month preceding the new month's issue.
1. Email and email attached files are preferred. Send to lbaker@usw.org.
2. Photographs should be scanned in .jpg or .tif file format and either attached to email or mailed via US Postal Service (USPS) on a 3 ½ diskette or CD Rom. Please include your Sierra Club membership number. To find your membership number, look on the address label of your membership package.
3. Hard-copy handwritten or typewritten articles may be stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like your membership number, look on the address label of your membership package.
4. Photographs and articles submitted via USPS mail cannot be accepted; however, pre-approval from the Editor is required.

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.

Deadline for Tennes-Sierran July-August Issue
June 10, 2009
By Rita Harris

When people think of environmentalists they usually picture a white, granola-eating activist. Blacks Living Green dispels that stereotype.

The author, Dr. Sharon T. Freeman, PhD, dispels the myth that African Americans are not interested in environmental or “green” issues. Her book makes us think about the human resources that we have in our communities not just in Memphis, but across this country.

Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope wrote the foreword for the book:

“...the stories in this book are important – they embody hope, they embody struggle, and they embody connectedness – as an environmentalist, I’m glad to be in this together. And if we reflect on the stories in this book, we’ll probably have a better grasp of the man we just elected to get this country out of the biggest mess in seventy years.”

Blacks Living Green highlights individuals all over the country who have chosen environmental careers, lifestyles, or businesses. Ms. Freeman’s book encouragingly includes an open letter for membership and a list of Sierra Club environmental justice program offices and contacts.

It must be noted that her book is not about environmental justice, but more about remarkable people doing remarkable things that are not limited by artificial barriers of race, class or culture. The success of our wide array of sustainability and environmental work relies on the dedication and capacity of key leaders in our community. Our green role models in Memphis, through their work and activities, promote a better quality of life for everyone and encourage environmental sustainability in the Memphis metropolitan area.

We seized the opportunity to see and hear this wonderful author, who has the endorsement of the national Sierra Club, on April 9. The Sierra Club Environmental Justice Program, Chickasaw Group and Caritas Village sponsored the event.

Ms. Freeman spoke to a crowd of over 75 people interested in her work as a black publisher and someone who has worked in developing countries around the world. She has served as a consultant and advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, U.S. Trade representative, and member of the U.S. Diplomatic Corps. She now is turning her attention to the state of Black America in urban areas.

Learning about the various interests, careers, motivations and inspirations, and even our strategies to create positive change is what compelled her to write her newest book about African Americans.

The Sierra Club took time to applaud those in the Memphis area who are doing similar work and have similar interests as those individuals highlighted in her book. I was proud to join her in applauding our 2009 green role models. Shelby County Mayor, AC Wharton, surprised Ms. Freeman with a key to the state of Shelby County, and she noted she had never received such an honor before in all her travels.

After the program Ms. Freeman signed copies of her book. It should also be noted that each participant received a certificate, a copy of Ms. Freeman’s book, and a unique piece of artwork by local Memphis artist and fellow green role model Frank D. Robinson. The event was a glowing success and one we want to repeat for next year!

Blacks Living Green Dispels Stereotypes about Environmental Activists
HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

MAY 2009 PROGRAM: Tuesday, May 12, 7:00 p.m., Tennessee Valley Unitarian-Univeristalist Church, 2913 Kingston Pike.

Outdoorsman Jamie Dahl presents a program on his recent trek in Nepal. A native Tennessean, Jamie grew up hiking—and maintaining—trails in the southeast and has fought forest fires on Clinch Mountain. In recent years he has hiked Alaska’s Gates of the Arctic National Park and the John Muir Trail in California. He has reached the summit of most of the major peaks in New Zealand, as well as Aconcagua in Argentina, the highest mountain outside Asia. Everyone is welcome. For further information contact John Finger at 865-573-5908.

JUNE 2009 PROGRAM: Tuesday, June 9, 7:00 p.m., Tennessee Valley Unitarian-Univeristalist Church, 2913 Kingston Pike.

Denny Miller, an engineer and long-time Sierra Club activist, presents “Energy Future: My 40 Year Perspective.” As a nuclear engineer, Denny will discuss his experiences as a production supervisor and as an opponent of the nuclear industry. Miller has hiked Alaska’s Gates of the Arctic National Park and the John Muir Trail in California. He has reached the summit of most of the major peaks in New Zealand, as well as Aconcagua in Argentina, the highest mountain outside Asia. Everyone is welcome. For further information contact John Finger at 865-573-5908.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

PROGRAM MEETING: Thursday, May 14, 7:00 p.m. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center, 1160 Otter Creek Road, Nashville, Madisonville.

The Tennes-Sierran will be replaced to programs presented by adventurers and eco-tourists Mike and Linda Doodin will be pleased to know that they are going to bring their slides of Madisonville. Madisonville is ecologically both significant and challenging. It exemplifies how the island develops over the course of time, as the island’s size and its effects on the species and its environments and, because of its size, a much more difficult to understand and manage. In the slides, we will see some of that destruction, but we will also see the hope of the survival of the island’s unique species. We will talk about the species of lemurs, unusual mammals which have adapted to a wide range of environments. Because they traveled with the Lemurs and their research, Museum of Natural History. We will see a number of lemurs and monkey species, and if time permits, we also see a video of these fascinating creatures. The distances we will travel during this trip over long, dusty, and rutted roads will showcase both the remarkable and the terribly disappointing experiences of this trip. The group is free and open to the public.

PROGRAM MEETING: Thursday, June 11, 7:00 p.m. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center, 1160 Otter Creek Road, Nashville.

Regional Naturalist John Froschauer (Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation) will bring us a program on “Creating a Butterfly-Friendly Backyard.” It is not too late to think about planting to attract these beneficial and beautiful creatures, but John’s program concerns general insect ecology as much as gardening. As you may know, many species of butterflies are disappearing due to habitat loss. Creating a natural habitat in your yard helps with conservation efforts as well as providing beauty and recreation as well as educational presentation. It is free and open to the public.

PROGRAM MEETING: Thursday, March 18, 7:00 p.m. at Music City United Steel Workers Union building at 3340 Perimeter Hill Drive, Nashville, Tennessee, 37211.

If you have problems finding or accessing the building, call 615-650-0403. Come have a bowl of soup and a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out- cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film. WKNO representatives will offer a short preview of what to expect from the films and the out-cast of the Ken Burns film.
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 contact: info@www.sierraclub.org or call 1-800-328-1646. These Ten Essentials for Hiking are a tried-and-true list of basics to take outdoors for safety and enjoyment. The list, courtesy of The Sierra Club, will help you be prepared when planning your next trip.

To learn more about the Ten Essentials for Hiking, visit: http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/Sig

**Ten Essentials for Hiking**

1. **Adequate map**
2. **First Aid Kit**
3. **Compass**
4. **Rain gear**
5. **Light**
6. **Flashlight**
7. **Extra food, water**
8. **Ten essential tips**: You decide what is the most important thing to bring!

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**CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)**

“Signs of Spring” Walk, Sunday, May 3, 1:00 p.m., Memphis Botanic Garden, 750 Cherry Road

This is an easy walk along paved pathways, past walking and forest trail in this City of Memphis park. If you are interested in local park issues and park preservation, join them. Members of the Memphis Area Master Gardeners as we visit this lovely setting. There is even a small, sunny wetland presented as a beacon of hope for the future. Additional opportunity to see the storm water reten-

**Park car at Blanchard Springs**, Thursday, May 14-17, Sylamore Creek Campground, Mountain View, Arkansas – Come for all or part of the weekend in a beautiful camp-

**Eagle Lake Trip**, Sunday, May 31, 8:30 a.m., Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park – This is the swamp canoe trip we have been waiting for! Meet at 8:30 a.m. for a tour of a unique and interpretive specialist-led, easy canoe trip in a heron rookery. If you are interested in wetland and wildlife conservation, you won’t want to miss out! Additional opportunity to see the amazing spring in the square. Optional trip to Blanchard Springs caves at the visitors’ center. Don’t camp! Stay in a local B & B or motel. Campground has new showers and restrooms. There is a charge for camp-

**Sunset Hike**, Saturday, June 13, 6:30 p.m., Downtown Memphis – We will take our annual sol-

**Chattanooga Group**

Please contact our outings co-chairs if you are willing to lead an outing, or if you have suggestions for outings we could plan to go. We are building an outings program, and will be working on getting people certi-

** Cherokee Group (Chattanooga)**

Sierra Club outings offer a variety of wildlife and natural history experiences. It is important to realize that while all trips are guided by a leader, it is ulti-

**Middle Tennessee Group (Nashville)**

May 22-24, Wilderness First Aid, 7th Annual WPA at Foster Falls near Tracy City, TN. Cost is $175 per person. Full details available in the May issue of Tennessee Outdoors (www.tennesseoutdoors.com). Contact Katherine Pendleton by May 20.

May 23, Outdoors Leader Training 101. For those interested in leading future outings, Katherine Pendleton will conduct OLT 101 during the WPA weekend. Contact Katherine for details at katbug1959@aol.com or 615-943-6877.


June 25, Membership Wine & Cheese Party. Start your weekend with some wine and cheese and get to know some of your Sierra Clu-

**June 6-7 (Sat-Sun), Beginner Backpack, Citico Creek Wilderness**. We’ll leave a shuttle vehicle at the “Warden’s Station” on the Cherokee Forest Service Road #35, then drive out Double-Camp Creek Road to the northern end of the Fodderstack Trail (FS #95) at Farr Gap. This is a ridge top trail with moderate to steep slopes. From Farr Gap (elev. 2,800 ft) for about 6 miles to a campsite just below the ridge line on the Crowder Branch Trail (FS #48). From there we will hike to the Cove Section, FS #36. Depart Cove Section, FS #36 at 8:30 am. Arrive at Meeman-Shelby State Park by 10:00 am. We will share experiences and information about equipment, supplies, techniques, and destination locations for backcountry camping. On Saturday after-

**June 26-28, Smokies Backpacking Trip.** Start your summer with a trip to the Smokies! Tentative plans include backpack to Gregory Bald to catch the last of the flame azaleas. Will depend upon reservation availability. For more information contact Katherine Pendleton at 615-943-6877.

**Cades Cove Section, GSMNP.** This is a repeat of a rain-

**State of Franklin Group (Tri-Cities)**

Contact Tom Mozen, SOF Group chair, at (423) 232-0827 or moznetzec@yahoo.com about any out-

**Middle Tennessee Group (Nashville)**

**June 21 (Sun), Duckie, Cades Cove Section, GSMNP.** This excursion is to Gregory Bald. We’ll meet at 7:00 AM at the Cove entrance for an early start on the 12 mile trek (with a 1,000 foot elevation gain). Bring lots of water and a lunch as it will be a long day. This will not be a fast hike! Rated: difficult.

May 6-7, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, Junior Park Naturalist Certification Class. Contact with Will Shelton: H 523-2272, Cell 742-7337; whshelton@bellsouth.net.

**Wapasha** – This is an easy hour and a half walk on paved walk-

**10 Essential Tips** for Hiking

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<tr>
<th>Tip</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Always bring a map and compass.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Bring a first aid kit, including all necessary medications.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Always wear sturdy, comfortable footwear.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Carry a reliable and waterproof flashlight.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Always carry a light source or means of starting a fire.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Matches are good, but a lighter provides easier ignition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Bring a multi-tool or a pocket knife for small repairs and emergencies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Always bring a whistle or some other method of signaling for emergencies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Bring a hydration system or at least a water bottle.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Always bring a headlamp or flashlight for night hikes.</td>
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Chickasaw Group’s Day of Service

The Chickasaw Group participated in the National Day of Service on the birthdate of Martin Luther King, Jr., January 19 by working in the forest at Lichterman Nature Center in Memphis. We worked with the staff and other community volunteers to rid the center property of two invasive species of plants that are destroying the ecology of eastern forests: privet and non-native honeysuckle.

Sierra Club members and friends from West Tennessee, Arkansas, and Mississippi included Shelly Bogada, Margaret Dixon, Diane Dyer, Eddie Ellsworth, Judith Hammond, Keith Hoover, Mike Lupfer, Shirley Lupfer, Nancy Ream, Nels Paulson, Steven Sondheim, Christine Taylor, and Sue Williams.

President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama called for a National Day of Service, and the Sierra Club answered the call!

For more information and photos of this and other projects, visit http://www.sierraclub.org/scrappbook.

Chickasaw Group February Presentation

Sid Lerner gave the February 25 presentation to the Chickasaw Group at the Benjamin Hooks Central Library. Sid represents Greater Memphis Greenline, a group that has long worked for a creative use of the old CSX railroad right-of-way in Memphis.

The Greenline is a proposed 13-mile park and trail that extends from where Poplar and Union Avenue come together in Midtown out to near Houston Levee in Shelby County.

Sid said that an earlier “over the fence” appraisal was too high because it was dependent on values of nearby individual residential properties regardless of the Greenline’s proposed use as a park and trail. Another slowdown has been caused by the railroad thinking with a longer timeframe than many trail proponents. Now, the railroad has removed the old tracks, an important step in making the land useful as a trail.

The first part of the Greenline will be opened soon in rudimentary form without the proposed paving. This first part will not cross any watercourses, obviating the need for any work on bridges. There have been more developments in the story since this Sierra Club meeting.

For more recent information about the Greenline, visit the website www.greatermemphisgreenline.org.

Chickasaw Group March Presentation

Don Richardson of the Sierr Club moderated a panel discussion on “Sustainable Shelby” at the Trinity United Methodist Church on March 26. The four-person panel was composed of County Land Use, Transportation, and Code Enforcement officials Sheila Pounder, Tim Moreland, Gregory Love, and Brett Roler. Over 50 people attended the meeting.

Shelby County Mayor A C Wharton has made sustainability a priority. The initiative, begun some time ago, has taken Doug Farr’s Sustainable Urbanism as its primary text. Farr has said, “The path to a sustainable lifestyle builds on the principles of smart growth, new urbanism, and green buildings.”

Various committees have been formed to deal with all these topics. The initiative’s committee of special concern to the Sierr Club is called “Environment and Natural Resources.”

Input from the environmental community will be accepted on an interactive website which is soon to be developed by partners at the Memphis College of Art.

Memphis Goes Ape over Jane Goodall

By Barbara Standing

Fortunately for Memphis, Dr. Jane Goodall, the world’s leading primatologist, humanitarian, and life long activist, included the Bluff City in her worldwide lecture tour.

Although I missed her first talk at Christian Brothers University, I was able to attend her second appearance at the Memphis Zoo on March 21. Despite the cold and rainy conditions, Goodall spoke to an overflowing crowd about her extensive and well-known research career on chimpanzees in Tanzania, and the complex web of social and environmental issues like the illegal bush meat trade that plague the continent and threaten chimpanzees and many other iconic African species with extinction.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Goodall’s lecture was her ability to connect the plight of African environmentalism to the lifestyle choices of average Americans, including those of us living in Memphis.

Specifically, Goodall pointed out the environmental impact of forgoing our own free, clean, locally provided, aquifer water source for bottled water shipped from distant locations and perhaps more questionable sources. Clearly an environmentalist, Ms. Goodall emphasized the vast number of simple opportunities available on a daily basis for reducing individual carbon footprints, such as eliminating bottled water, recycling and eating less meat.

Goodall wrapped up her lecture with a discussion on finding true happiness in the lifestyle choices of average Americans, including those of us living in Memphis.

A Yahoo Group for the Sierra Club

Chickasaw Group and Friends is a Yahoo group for members and friends of the Chickasaw Group of the Sierra Club (Memphis/West Tennessee). It is an announce-ment-only email list to send notices of upcoming events and other “green” information of local interest. All announcements are accessible to the public, so you can look up the latest posts anytime! To view and/or join the Yahoo Group, go to http://Groups.yahoo.com/Group/sierra-club-chickasaw/

Chickasaw Group Needs Volunteers

The Chickasaw Group is looking for a program coordinator in the Jackson, Tenn., area. If you are interested in helping to get exciting and informative programs in Jackson, contact Chickasaw Group Program Chair Tom Lawrence at bus@the cave.com.

Chickasaw Group members: At this time the Chickasaw group needs four volunteers for specific purposes. We need a conservation chair to help us organize all of the different conservation efforts we are doing.

Secondly, we need a database administrator to help us with Constant Contact.com, our new email and newsletter effort. Thirdly, we need a publicity person to help us get the word out.

We also need someone to manage our web-site and keep it up to date. If interested, please call Chickasaw Group Chair Nancy Ream (901) 759-9416 or email njream@aol.com.

Ms. Goodall featured her mascot, “Mr. H,” and has taken him to over 50 countries with her.

Mike and Shirley Lupfer at Lichterman Nature Center in Memphis.
Tennessee Sierrans Spearhead Educational Project at Legislative Plaza with LCD Screen

By Peggy Evans and Mary Mastin

The Tennessee chapter’s new 42-inch LCD display screen has received extensive use this spring. Its purchase was part of a project from the legislative committee of the TEC/TCV Sustainability Summit. Participating environmental groups across the state can use the screen.

It was used Feb. 18 for a slide show at Legislative Plaza on the TVA Coal Ash disaster and drew much attention. Mary Mastin and Peggy Evans manned the table most of the day, and David Bordenkircher packed the screen for safekeeping.

Other groups signed up to use the screen over the legislative session are Tennessee Clean Water Network, Tennessee Environmental Council, Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation, Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning, Tennessee Franklin County, Breathe Clean Air Task Force, and a local clean air group from East Tennessee.

Local food groups from Chattanooga and Nashville have also expressed an interest.

The conference agenda was also sensi- tional. I attended the workshops called “Towards Copenhagen and A New Global Climate Treaty,” “The Next Generation of Bio-fuels,” “Green Jobs in Appalachia,” and “The International Dimensions of Green Jobs.” I attended many of these to match my academic interests in International Studies at Rhodes. I got to learn about the next global treaty on greenhouse gas controls to follow up the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and the challenges associated with people trying to have green jobs in Third World countries.

Lobbying for Change

Perhaps the most exciting component of the conference was Advocacy Day, where I got a chance to visit Capitol Hill and meet my congressmen in person to advocate for environmental issues in Memphis and Tennessee. I talked to Congressman Steve Cohen about the potential Memphis has for college students entering the labor market and how green jobs could attract young talent to the city and keep it there. I also heard his history with environmental issues in the city, and asked him to keep the concerns of the Sierra Club and green jobs in mind as he legislates in Washington.

As a student about to enter the work force, I was also glad to learn about lots of green employers who hire people with bachelors’ degrees to do all kinds of work, from consulting green businesses to working against poverty and creating sustainable economic development. There was information about paths I could take to postgraduate study that might lead me to more qualified green jobs. I was interested to learn how Memphis has a potential for green industries such as biofuel production and wind turbines, and I’m eager to take the conference’s lessons back home to advocate for the green economy here in my city and college.

For details about the 38 speakers, 50 workshops, 85 Expo vendors, and 18 Expo presentations, reports and videos, please visit www.greenjobsconference.org and www.bluegreenalliance.org. Also check out the Green Jobs Guidebook at www.sdf.org/greenjobs. The majority of keynotes are now posted online and can be found here: www.youtube.com/bluegreenalliance

Tennessee Sierrans Spearhead Educational Project at Legislative Plaza with LCD Screen

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**Energy Matters**

By Steven Sondheim

These are exciting times for Sierra Club members with much happening on the national, state and local levels. After years of being on the defensive, now YOU can help shape Tennessee’s energy future.

Join our conference calls—usually 3rd Wednesdays 7:30 pm CST. We will familiarize and train you. Contact Gloria Griffith, 423-727-4797, gla4797@EMBARQMAIL.COM for instructions.

**Nuclear**—Contact Bill Reynolds, 423/624-6821, Cisland@aol.com

**Radioactive Waste**

Several of Tennessee’s municipal landfill dumps have long been piling up so-called “low level radioactive wastes.” No other U.S. state is known to permit that sort of landfill dumping at all! The Tennessee Sierra Club, in conjunction with the “Know Nuclear” coalition and Senator Beverly Marrero, is promoting bills in this year’s General Assembly to put a stop to radioactive waste dumping in our municipal landfills.

**New Power Plants**

In conjunction with the TN-AL coalition “Belmonte Efficiency and Sustainability Team-BEST” (chapter of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, BREDL http://bredl.org ) interventions have been filed with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) through BREDL to stop TVA from being granted license to build two newer generation nuclear plants, designated “Units 3 & 4,” at TVA’s old Bellefonte site in northeast Alabama (about 44 miles from Chattanooga.). In response to TVA’s recent request for NRC to reactivite its license to complete construction of “Units 1 & 2,” we are getting ready to file a petition to stop that construction from going forward.

TVA—Contact Louise Gorenflo, 931/484-2633, lgorenflo@gmail.com

**Board appointments**

Tennessee Sierra Club signed on to the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (SACE) initiated letter to Obama’s transition team urging all future TVA board appointees to have an environmental compliance track record. National environmental groups (including Sierra Club) sent a sign-on letter to the Obama transition team urging TVA’s new board appointees to be selected on the basis of their willingness to transform the TVA into an energy efficiency and renewables environmental protection leader. A recent Tennessee news article suggests the Obama administration is moving on these nominations.

**Energy Efficiency and Renewables Program**

There is ongoing communication with Jim Keiffer’s staff on TVA energy efficiency and Generation Partners. TVA assures that the 1,400 MW target and funding for Energy Efficiency (EE) savings remain intact. Rollout of EE programs may be having problems due to distributors’ resistance—they fear falling revenue.

**Citizen Engagement**

We requested true cost accounting and greater citizen participation. Jim Keiffer said that TVA would soon convene a public meeting to reveal its EE programs. Joe Hoagland said that TVA would do an environmental impact statement on its environmental guidelines. Mike Duncan, TVA chair, said he wanted TVA to revisit its environmental guidelines for all of its programs—land, air, water, energy. TVA will soon hold scoping hearings across the Valley.

**Solar Valley Coalition**—Contact Louise Gorenflo, 931/484-2633, lgorenflo@gmail.com

Bi-monthly calls working on TVA, state energy plans and legislation.

**Transportation**—Contact Brian Paddock, 931/268-2938, bpaddock@twlakes.net or Steven Sondheim, 931/761-1793, StevenSondheim@yahoo.com

Work with the Tennessee Dept. of Transportation continues to influence smart transportation/land use design. Recent stimulus funds monitored. Unfortunately, much of the money is going to road and freeway building of out of legacy projects. The next chance to influence future transportation is by working on the 2009 National Transportation Re-Authorization Bill. We are working with the National Sierra Transportation Committee and T4America http://t4america.org/

**Global Warming, Energy, and Cool Cities**

Cookville Cool Cities—Tennessee Technological University students working on greenhouse gas inventory. City in contact with International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) regarding software to assist. Rain Barrel Festival April 25. Contact Mary Mastin, 931/268-2938, marymastin@twlakes.net

**American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)**

A block grant program to fund energy efficiency and conservation projects at the state and local levels. Contact Don Scharf, 615/896-8338, d.scharf@comcast.net to help. We need local contacts in cities/counties. See the article in this issue entitled Tennessee Chapter Joins Economic Stimulus Tracking Project.

**National Energy Campaign**—Contact Steven Sondheim, 931/761-1793, StevenSondheim@yahoo.com

National Sierra Club is working to build support for two critical clean energy bills in the House.

Markey-Platts Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) bill (HR 890) and the complimentary Markey bill for an Energy Efficiency Resources Standard (EERS) (HR 889).

Talk to your US Representatives about the importance of these two bills, an effective climate change bill and the upcoming Transportation Re-Authorization bill.

For up-to-date information/event dates go to the Energy Corner on the chapter website: http://tennessee.sierraclub.org/