Great New Grass Roots Environmental Action Develops at Border Between Middle Tennessee, Chickasaw Groups

By Keith Romig

Historically there has not been a strong Sierra Club presence in the communities along the lower Tennessee River. The area is a long way from both Memphis and Nashville. However, a few months ago, Middle Tennessee Group (MTG) Chair Keith Romig returned a call from Mike Melton, a Sierra Club member from Camden, Tenn., regarding a landfill about which his community had serious concerns. During the conversation Romig offered to contact Sierra Club members in his county to help address the concerns.

Melton replied, “You don’t need to do that. I’ve already got my neighbors and I already have plenty of people and the city council on our side. We could use some help getting the attention of state officials.”

Romig immediately contacted Chickasaw Group Chair Keven Routon so the two groups could coordinate activities.

The landfill in question handles aluminum dross, a material created when older processes for recycling aluminum are used; more modern processes do not create large amounts of waste. Aluminum dross is not officially classified as a hazardous waste, and as long as it stays dry it does not cause too many problems.

However when it gets wet, it gives off hazardous gases, including ammonia, acetylene and methane. Very high ammonia levels have been reported in Camden within a mile of the site.

“When I visited the site the ammonia smell nearly knocked me off my feet,” said Routon.

Technicalities Used

In addition to the problems with the material, the landfill operator used some technicalities of Tennessee environmental law to be able to get the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) to give it a permit for the aluminum dross without a public hearing.

At this year’s Earth Day celebration in Nashville, MTG collected hundreds of postcards addressed to TDEC demanding a public hearing on the landfill operator’s push to expand the site. Activists from Camden and from MTG contacted TDEC directly to push the point home. TDEC stated in May it would hold a public hearing on the landfill.

In May, Melton requested the Sierra Club Environmental Justice (EJ) office in Memphis be asked to work with the community on this project. Sierra Club EJ Organizer Rita Harris agreed quickly and traveled to the site the same week.

“Her involvement has really strengthened an already strong community effort,” said Romig.

Rita helped the Camden residents with a flyer to distribute all over town, acquired poster board for signs, and sent out media releases to local TV and newspaper outlets. Efforts paid off because the public hearing was covered by WBBJ-TV station and the Jackson Sun newspaper. Check out the coverage here:


Chickasaw Group members support Camden, Tenn., residents and rally for environmental justice at the Benton County Courthouse. (Left to right) Keven Routon, Matt Farr, and Sue Williams....unidentified man in foreground. Photo Rita Harris.

Public Hearing

The hearing was held July 26 at the Benton County Courthouse in Camden. About 150 community members attended the hearing, many wearing black as a sign of solidarity. Contingents from MTG and Chickasaw were there as well.

At the start of the hearing Sen. Roy Herron (D-Dresden) made a passionate statement in support of the community. Strongly supportive statements were made also by Rep. Tim Wirgau (R-Buchanan) and John Tidwell (D-New Johnsonville).

After the official presentations by TDEC and the landfill operator, the floor was opened for comments by the public. Numerous citizens spoke against the landfill expansion. They pointed out that the landfill may never have gotten properly approved by the city and county under Tennessee’s Jackson Law, which gives county and local governments veto power over new landfills in their jurisdictions. They also detailed the massive health and nuisance effects of the landfill and discussed the poisonous gases it emits.

“It is my hope TDEC heard this community and will not grant the operator a permit to expand this landfill,” said Harris. She joined many other local speakers against the landfill by giving strong oral comments, as well as submitting written comments.
Sierra Club Officers

TENNESSEE CHAPTER:
Chair: Katherine Pendleton (615) 943-6877
Vice Chair: Keith Romig (615) 714-2704
Secretary: Barbara Kelly (423) 718-5009
Treasurer: Michael Varnell (615) 867-3887
Conservation: Barbara Hurst (423) 866-9503
Outings: Donald Richardson (901) 333-6987
CCL Delegate: Kevin Routon (901) 485-3960

TN LOCAL GROUPS:
CHEROKEE GROUP
Chair: Gloria Griffith (423) 727-4797
glaz797@embarqmail.com
Vice Chair: Michael Varnell (615) 278-0987
rmvrm@gmail.com
Conservation: Gary Bowers (615) 714-3887
Outings: Greg Stothers (423) 727-4797
lbkrivers@comcast.net

CHICKASAW GROUP - MEMPHIS
Chair: Ron Shrieves (865) 922-3518
Conservation Chair: Scott Banbury
Treasurer: Bob Perlack (865) 675-7668
Chair: Robin Hill (865) 966-9435
Rita Harris, Field Organizer
TNT: c/o Rick Flowers, 5201 Forrest River Rd., Flowood, MS 39232

WATAUGA GROUP - CARTER, JOHNSON, SULLIVAN, UNICOI, AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES
Chair: Matt Farr (901) 517-8879
Conservation Chair: Davis Mounger (423) 877-4614
Treasurer: Susan Routon (901) 413-3888
Chair: Elizabeth Tallman-Gazaway (423) 619-6584
gazawayapartment@gmail.com

MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP - NASHVILLE
Chair: Keith Romig (615) 714-2704
Conservation Chair: Scott Banbury
Treasurer: Bob Perlack (865) 675-7668
Chair: Robin Hill (865) 966-9435
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Treasurer: Susan Routon (901) 413-3888
Chair: Elizabeth Tallman-Gazaway (423) 619-6584
gazawayapartment@gmail.com

NATIONAL SIERRA STAFF IN TENNESSEE:
Rita Harris, Field Organizer
Environmental Justice Program (901) 324-7757
ritaharris@sierraclub.org

Please notify the Editor when changes are needed

DEADLINE
Deadline for election ballots, candidate biographies, meeting and outings listings, and articles is October 1, 2011. Send material to Barbara Kelly at bktrivers@comcast.net and Lynne Baker at lbaker@usw.org.

Tennes-Sierran
The bi-monthly newsletter of the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club.

SEND CHANGE OF ADDRESS TO:
*Email: addresschange@sierraclub.org
*Snail Mail: clip the Moving? coupon below and mail to:
Tennessee Chapter, or the Sierra Club.

*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.

SEND ARTICLES TO:
Email: lbaker@usw.org
Snail Mail: Lynne Baker, Tennes-Sierran Editor
PO Box 1504, Antioch, TN 37011
(615) 831-6782

ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:
Submission DEADLINE is the 1st of the month preceding the new month’s issue.
1. Email and email attached files are preferred. Send to lbaker@usw.org either with embedded text messages, or attached files in PC-based formats. Attached files are prefered. Mac users should embed text in body of an email message only.
2. Photographs should be scanned in .jpg or .tif file format then either attached to email or mailed via US Postal Service (USPS) on a 3 ½ diskette or CD Rom. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like your diskette or photo prints returned.
3. Hard-copy handwritten or typewritten articles may be diskette or photo prints returned.
4. Any materials submitted via USPS mail cannot be accepted; however, pre-approval from the Editor is required.
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Executive Committee members will then have Sunday free to see if naturalist Randy Hedgepath, State Naturalist, will join us to lead the Sunday hike. Contact him at rmvarnell@bellsouth.net.

More than 58 miles of hiking trails meander through the wilderness of Pickett State Park and the surrounding forest. They vary in length and difficulty, from short day-use trails suitable for families, to longer multi-day backpacking trails. The trails afford views of sandstone bluffs, natural bridges, waterfalls and diverse plant life. The park is known for its geological, botanical, and scenic wonders. The park lies within the 19,200-acre Pickett Park is known for its geological, botanical, and scenic wonders. The park lies within the 19,200-acre Pickett State Forest and is adjacent to the massive 120,000-acre Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. Both areas contain prime wilderness country.

**Early Registration Price by October 15: $40**
- Regular Registration Fee: $50
- Single day only price with meals/no lodging: Sat-$20; Sun-$10 (children up to 15 attend free)

**SPECIAL:** ½ price for first-time attendees!

A limited number of partial scholarships are available by request to the Chapter Treasurer, Michael Varnell; contact him at rmv@bellsouth.net.

**Only for $40, you can enjoy:**
- Hiking - good food – a program on Big South Fork National Recreation Area, and a bonfire with ghost stories and a smores. Hikes are planned for both Saturday (short and long) and Sunday. Randy Hedgepath, State Naturalist, will be available to lead the Sunday hike.

**PLUS:** A silent auction to benefit our chapter's lobbying and legislative program.

The Executive Committee will be meeting on Saturday morning through the afternoon as an experience to see if business can be conducted in one day. Executive Committee members will then have Sunday free to recreate in the fashion of their own choosing. Those not on the executive committee may join in the activities, strike out on your own on nearby trails, or just enjoy the peace and quiet of a full weekend.

Lodging is in cabins that accommodate about 20, and family cabins (accommodating more than one family) will be available. Camping among the surrounding trees is another popular option (due to the week-end is the same for camping as for staying in the cabins).

- Bring your own bedding, towels and household. If you want additional beverages, you need to bring your own.
- Breakfast on Saturday and Sunday, and Saturday night dinner are provided. You are on your own for Friday dinner and Saturday lunch.

**Directions:**
- I-40 to Exit 317. Hwy 127 north (46 miles). Turn right on Hwy 154, travel 12 miles to the park entrance. OR, I-75 north from Knoxville to Exit 141. Hwy 63 to Huntsville. Right onto Hwy 27 north to Oneida. Left onto Hwy 297 through Big South Fork NRRA. Right onto Hwy 154, follow to Pickett State Park. The park’s office number is 901-879-5831.

**Registration Form**

To register, please clip out and mail this registration form by Saturday, October 15, to Harvey Broome Group
c/o Robin Hill - Chair
11504 Mountain View Road
Knoxville, TN 37934-3191

If you know you will attend but are unable in mail your registration by the deadline, please contact Robin at robin.hill8@gmail.com by the deadline date in order to be assured of meals.

**Contact Information**

- Name: ____________________________
- Address: __________________________
- Phone: ____________________________
- e-mail address: _____________________
- Number of adults @ $40: _______
- Number of children under age 18: _____
- Number of vegetarians: ______
- Number of omnivores: ______
- Total enclosed (Make check payable to Harvey Broome Group-Sierra Club): $_____

**Special Offer**

SPECIAL: ½ price for first-time attendees!

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**Special Offer**

SPECIAL: ½ price for first-time attendees!
HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

Strategy Meetings: Fourth Tuesdays of each month, 7:00 p.m., at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN. For more information contact Robin Hill, 865-966-9435, robin.hill8@gmail.com. All members are invited to attend to get the news on what’s happening in our Harvey Broome Group.

Complete Streets: Integrating Walking, Bicycling and Transit into a Greener Transportation Network. September 13, 7:00 p.m., at the Steed. Please be sure to attend this timely program to find out how you can help protect Sandhill and Whooping Cranes in Tennessee. Free and open to the public, and Club business is not conducted at these educational programs.

September 19 and October 17, 6:30 p.m. at the United Steelworkers Union Building, 3340 Perimeter Hill Drive, Knoxville, Tennessee 37121. Follow the signs to Elizabeth Tallman-Gazzaway at 423-619-0379, preferably a week ahead of our meeting.

September Program: Last Monday, September 26, 6:00 p.m. at GreatSpaces, 63 E. Main Street, Chattanooga, Topic: Watersheds: Why We Love Them and Why They Matter! A panel of presenters will be highlighting three watersheds in the Cherokee Crew, North Chickamauga Creek, South Chickamauga Creek and the Russell Cave Watershed.

Environmental Engineer Maureen Handler will cover the restoration of the Russell Cave watershed by the Tennessee Water Resources Agency (TWARA) and the SERA/KARST Task Force. The North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy, represented by Executive Director Gregory Vickery, and the South Chickamauga Greenway Alliance will highlight these wonderful recreation areas, the aquatic wildlife they are home to, their environmental benefits and the work that is being done to protect and enhance them. Open to the public; healthy snacks provided!

October Program: October 17 (Board Meeting) 3rd Monday, 6:00 p.m., at the Brainery Bethlehem ReSource Center, 4413 Broad Road, next to the Balloon Factory. All members of the Group and interested people are welcome -- this is where and when we plan our actions! To place an item on the agenda, contact Elizabeth Tallman-Gazzaway at 423-619-0379, preferably a week ahead of our meeting.

PROGRAM—Walden’s Puddle: Helping Wildlife in Need. Thursday, September 8, 7:00 p.m., at Radnor Lake Visitor Center, 1160 Otter Creek, Nashville, TN.

Walden’s Puddle is well-known for its dedication to the rehabilitation of sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife in Middle Tennessee by providing treatment and care, as well as encouraging education which promotes a greater understanding and appreciation for wildlife and its habitat. Walden’s Puddle is unique in being the only professionally-staffed non-profit organization and wildlife rehabilitation facility in Middle Tennessee.

A representative from Walden’s Puddle will share information about the organization and how individuals can work with them to obtain help for injured wildlife and support their mission through education and enjoyment! In previous visits the speaker has brought an animal or two to demonstrate the work that Walden’s Puddle does. While we can’t promise that will be the case this time, children may enjoy seeing the animals, either “in person” or on the screen. Free and open to the public, and Club business is not conducted at these educational programs.

PROGRAM: Sandhill Cranes. Thursday, October 13, 7:00 p.m., at Radnor Lake Visitor Center, 1160 Otter Creek Road, Nashville.

Sandhill cranes are one of the most charismatic birds found in Tennessee. Virtually the entire eastern population of 60,000 birds either migrates through or stays for the winter in Tennessee. Recently, there has been a stormy controversy over a possible hunting season on Sandhills in Tennessee and Kentucky. Both the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Tennessee Ornithological Society (TOS), as well as other conservation organizations, have been very involved in this debate. Currently, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) has a two-year moratorium on considering a crane hunting season in Tennessee.

Melinda Welton, research associate with Gulf Coast Audubon, has been intimately involved with these discussions. She will share information about the biology of these magnificent birds, their history in Tennessee, and the status of the endangered Whooping Crane in the state. Please be sure to attend this timely program to find out how you can help protect Sandhill and Whooping Cranes in Tennessee. Free and open to the public, and Club business is not conducted at these educational programs.

Chickasaw Group (Memphis)

CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

Chickasaw Group (Memphis) is now on Facebook (www.facebook.com/ChickasawGroup). For more information, contact Susan Routon at susan.routon@me.com -- agenda items must be submitted at least three days before the meeting.

Thursday, September 29, 6:30 p.m. Refreshments & Networking, 7:00 p.m. – Presentation, Topic TBA, Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library, Meeting Room A, 3030 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN. Topic to be announced at a later date (see our Facebook page for updates; www.facebook.com/ChickasawGroup).

West Tennessee Group (Memphis)

Sierra Club members, activists and friends meet in a casual setting to talk about issues and interests.

Monthly First Thursday Gathering, Thursday, October 6, 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm, Otherlands, 413-3888.

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“Nature of Conservation” Sierra Club Chickasaw Group Cable TV Show on WYPL-TV 18 (Comcast).

Days and times vary – see http://www.memphislibrary.org/lich/schedule/ (or the Comcast on-screen guide) for the latest schedule. Topic changes every month. For more information, or if anyone has an idea for a future program, contact Judith Rutschman at jrutschman@gmail.com or (901) 767-5916.

Sierra Club Chickasaw Group is now on Facebook (www.facebook.com/ChickasawGroup). For more information, contact Susan Routon at susan.routon@me.com -- agenda items must be submitted at least three days before the meeting.

The Executive Committee meets on the second Monday of every month. This is a business meeting but members are welcome to attend. For more information or to place items on the agenda, contact the group chair Keven Routon at kwrcats@me.com -- agenda items must be submitted at least three days before the meeting.

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October Program: 4th Monday (not meeting on Halloween!), October 24, 7 p.m at GreenSpaces, 63 E. Main Street, Chattanooga. Presenters: Tom and Pat Cory, photographers.

Tom and Pat will treat us to photographs of their recent trips hiking in Switzerland and Iceland, while sharing with us their tips and techniques on taking photographs while hiking. This couple lives on Signal Mountain, in-between their trips around the globe! Visit their website, www.tomandpatcory.com for a sneak peek at some of their travels and to learn more about their local classes and photographic travel tours. Their pictures have been in the Sierra Club calendars! Open to the public; healthy snacks provided!

Note: Our Program Meetings continue to be held at GreenSpaces, 63 E. Main Street, which is a non-descript storefront building with little-to-no signage -- it is last on the left in the first block off W. Main Street. It is kiddie-corner from the Fire Department across the street. Look for the Sierra Club banner!
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 associated with this travel

HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

Sept 17 (Sat). (This hike was originally scheduled for Oct. 29) Take-a-Hike, Day hike, Schoolhouse Gap/Turkeypen Ridge/Flinney Cane loop trail, GSMNP. This 9-mile loop will hopefully give us some great opportunities to view the low elevation fall colors in the park. Rated moderate. One-way drive: 45 miles. Contact BJ and Bob Perlack: perlacl@aol.com, 615-943-6877 or kdpendleton1@aol.com. Priscilla Watts is in charge of the event.

Sept 24 (Sat), Day hike, Honey Creek, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. A 5.6 mile loop trail. Originally, it was one of the 10 Bowwater Pocket Wilderness Areas. The trail is very rugged and requires crossing a number of small creeks. It is a series of ledges up and down the bluff, scrambling through boulders, and hiking up the Honey Creek drainage. The trail includes a number of waterfalls, a spectacular rock formation and one of the best views from an overlook 250 feet above the South Fork of the Cumberland River. Quite simply it is one of the best trails on the Cumberland Plateau. The hike is rated moderate. One-way drive: 70 miles. Contact BJ and Bob Perlack: perlacl@aol.com; 675-7656.

Oct. 9-5 (Sat-Sun), Backpack, Hyatt Ridge Trail, GSMNP. One of the very few high elevation campgrounds in the Smokies is Campsite #44, located in the high country above the Oconaluftee area. We’ll hike in on the Hyatt Ridge Trail to the McGee Springs campsite (4.5 miles), then out on the Beech Gap Trail on Sunday (3.7 miles). Get ready for a 4 to 7 hour hike. Two completely dependent on how much time is spent enjoying the trail. The driving distance is about 75 miles from West Knoxville. One-way drive: 70 miles. Contact BJ and Bob Perlack: perlacl@aol.com.

CHEROKEE GROUP

The Cherokee Group sponsors outings and is looking for new members. Plan to attend a monthly hike. Jerry Tallman-Gazaway serves as our outings chair and pointman for outings information for the Group. Our activities are always open to the public regardless of the Club from the across the state! We explore interesting and unique parts of Tennessee, gaining an appreciation of how wonderful, and sometimes dangerous, the outdoors can be while having a ball. Our outings are planned to take in the interests and skill levels of the participants. For more information, contact Jerry at 423-619-6548 or gazawaypainting@gmail.com.

Sep 10 (Sat) Hiwassee Canoe Trip @ 11 AM This is going to be a great time for a trip down the river with beautiful views of the Cherokee Forest. The Hiwassee State Scenic River is primarily Class I (moving water with small waves, few obstructions) and Class II (easy rapids with wide, clear channels; some maneuvering required). Certain sections may be considered Class III (some danger, powerful white water). This is a great introduction to the river! Please join us for a beautiful day hike down the river to the falls, so please pack one, and be sure to bring plenty of water. Difficulty: moderate. Distance: 1.2 miles. The trail from Signal Point to Ross Gap is a challenging trail. Some sections should still be quite pretty. Please register: contact Jerry Tallman-Gazaway 423-619-6548 or gazawaypainting@gmail.com. Please register 1 week in advance.

Sept 24 (Sat) ‘Future River Festival Connecting People and the River at Renaissance Park’ Volunteers needed (2 - 10 pm) as we table at the Festival, highlighting our river’s clean water needs. We’ll need both people willing to staff our table promoting clean energy and water, and others to help in the kitchen. Plan to attend! Contact Barbara Kelly for more information and to volunteer, 423-718-5009 or bk.rivers@comcast.net. Contact Matt Farr, outings chair, at 901-517-8879 for a list of other outings or go to the Group’s Facebook page, http://www.facebook.com/Chickasaw.Group/ Cooper Young Festival, Saturday, September 17, 9:00 am to 7:00 pm.

Join the Chickasaw Group at our booth for one of Memphis’ most exciting and eclectic outdoor festivals. If you would like to volunteer to help out with CKG’s booth, please contact Keven Routon at kwroutes@me.com.

ADVANCE NOTICE

The Tennessee Chapter’s winter Chapter meeting will be held January 20 – 22, 2012 at Cedars of Lebanon State Park. We’ll explore this beautiful park with day hikes, walks among the well-preserved groves of red cedar from naturalists, Plan now for a relaxed weekend and plan on meeting and making new friends. Prices are low, bunk house accommodations. Details will be in the next Tennes-Sierran, but mark your calendars NOW! -- sponsored by the Middle Tennessee Group.
Watauga Group (WG) Nominating Committee calls for ExCom Nominations for the 2011 Election Cycle

The following WG members constitute the Nominating Committee and Election Committee for the 2011 ExCom election cycle:

Carol Walker, 1-423-727-0792
Dennis Shekinah, 1-423-727-6497
Dean Whitworth, 1-423-727-7214
Webb Griffith, 1-423-727-4797

Any WG member may self nominate by contacting any Nominating Committee member before Tuesday, Sept 20, 2011.

A total of four ExCom members, each serving two-year terms, will be elected to serve 2012 through 2013. Successful candidates will join returning WG ExCom members Mike Wiles, Dean Whitworth, Dennis Shekinah, Gloria Griffith and Carol Walker.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORTS NOMINEES TO WG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** on Thursday, Sept 22.

* Deadline to Submit Candidate Petitions is Thursday, Sept 29 via file document email at dshekinah@centurylink.net or US Postal Service mail to Dennis Shekinah 900 Mining Town Rd Mountain City, TN 37683.

**Tennessee Chapter Call for Nominations for At Large Delegates (2012-2013 Term)**

The Tennessee Chapter will elect four (4) at-large delegates for a term beginning Jan. 1, 2012 and ending Dec 31, 2013. Chapter members are requested to give serious consideration to running for these important offices on the Chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) which manages the fiscal, legislative, environmental and other appropriate responsibilities for our Chapter.

Requirements of the office of at-large delegate are as follows:

- Commit to attending the four chapter ExCom meetings each year. Each of these meetings require an at-large delegate’s presence for a two-day meeting each quarter.
- Commit to study issues confronting the ExCom from a Chapter or statewide perspective.
- Commit, for the term of office, to vote electronically on email by on issues that require a Chapter ExCom vote.
- Serve on ExCom committees when appointed and as needed for the term of office.
- Participate in Group activities and attend strategy and program meetings regularly. The term for this position is two years.
- If you are interested, or know someone who might be, please contact Nominating Committee Chairman Robin Hill by email at robin.hill8@gmail.com or by US mail at 11504 Mountain View Road, Knoxville, TN 37934 or by phone at 865-607-4542.
- The office of at-large delegate will provide an opportunity to have an important role in the Chapter management of a large grass roots environmental organization having more than 6,000 members in the State of Tennessee.

**Middle Tennessee Group ExCom Nominations Sought**

The Middle Tennessee Group of the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club is seeking candidates for election to the Executive Committee (ExCom). The ExCom has oversight responsibilities for the Middle Tennessee Group to ensure it is carrying out our mission productively. If you know someone you wish to nominate or are interested in serving, contact any member of the Nominations Committee by September 28, 2011.

Contact:
John Pigg, j.t.pigg@comcast.net or 615-851-1192
Adele Wood, adellevintn@juno.com or 615-665-1010
Deanna Bowden, deannabowden@netscape.net or 615-584-0567

*Oversight Responsibilities*
- Understand and promote the mission of the Sierra Club
- Attend Executive Committee and general meetings as necessary
- Attend programs when possible
- Lead and provide educational training and conservation opportunities to the general membership
- Promote group and chapter outings
- Participate in long range planning
- Actively assist in fundraising activities
- Ensure financial stability and solvency
- Modify and allocate resources consistent with the opportunities, the abilities and the commitment of the group and chapter
- Monitor, question and evaluate club activities
- Provide leadership and vision for the group and chapter
- Contribute a sense of camaraderie and teamwork

Here’s your opportunity to make a difference. Make your nomination today!

**Cherokee Group Nominations Sought for 2012**

The Cherokee Group Nominating Committee is looking for nominations for Executive Committee Members for 2012. We will have four (4) openings.

What does an Executive Committee member do? They serve as our “Board,” providing the leadership and vision of our Group while helping us promote the mission of the Sierra Club.

Members attend both program and strategy meetings, promote the Outings program and conservation activities, participate in long-range planning, actively assist in fundraising activities or contribute financially, and contribute a sense of camaraderie and teamwork. A tall order to fill—but a rewarding one!

Please contact any one of the Nominating Committee to volunteer yourself as a candidate or to suggest a candidate: Barbara Kelly, chair, 423-718-5009 or bk@rivercom@comcast.net; John Doyal, 423-304-7467 or baldie052@yahoo.com; Scott Kramer, 423-598-9516 or sk1.mtns@gmail.com. Nominations must be received by 9/26/11 for consideration.

**Call for Nominations to Chickasaw Group Executive Committee**

Have you ever wanted to be more involved in the environmental movement? Willing to volunteer your skills to help explore, enjoy, and protect the planet? Chickasaw Group seeks to fill a number of seats on its Executive Committee and welcomes your nominations.

Candidates should be interested in promoting environmental issues, willing to learn and develop action plans within Sierra Club policy, participate in Group activities and attend strategy and program meetings regularly. The term for this position is two years.

If you are interested, or know someone who might be, please contact Nominating Committee Chair Scout Anglin at langlin@memphis.edu.

Our elections will take place by ballot in the Nov./Dec. issue of the Tennes-Sierran, with terms to begin in January 2012.

**Take Action! Sign onto TENNESSEE-ALERTS Listserv**

If you want to take action on the environment, join this TENNESSEE-ALERTS listserv. To subscribe, send an email to:

LISTSERV@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG

Put in the message area:

SUBSCRIBE TENNESSEE-ALERTS YourFirstName,YourLastName

(Substring your actual first and last name in the places indicated.)

You will receive a maximum of two alerts per month.
Chickasaw Group Lends a Hand in McKellar Lake Clean-up

By Keven Routon

In two short hours, about 40 volunteers, lead by Colton Cockrum, assistant director of the Hardin honors program at the University of Memphis, picked up two truckloads of recyclable plastic, glass, aluminum and other non-recyclable trash that washed up on the shore of McKellar Lake during the high waters this past May.

Joining Cockrum was the Helen Hardin Honors Student Council, Cyndy Grivich Tucker with Memphis City Beautiful, and James Baker, Scout Anglin, Keven Routon of the Chickasaw Group. Special thanks to Amelia Mayahi (University of Memphis sustainability coordinator) for coordinating the efforts to get as much of the material recycled as possible. A few days after the event, Amelia reported that 1,240 pounds of plastic was recycled.

McKellar Lake is positioned on the east side of Presidents Island and prior to closing of the Tennessee Chute (narrow area of water between the island and the city of Memphis) in the late 1940s, Presidents Island was an actual island. Today it is a peninsula and the lake no longer receives flows from the north end of the island to aid in emptying its contents.

Nonconnah Creek flows from east to west along southern Shelby County and with a watershed of roughly 280 square miles, roughly half the storm water from Memphis and Shelby County flows out into McKellar Lake from this body of water. The storm water carries litter that was careless tossed out onto the streets or otherwise improperly disposed and deposits it into the lake. The litter—mostly plastic and glass bottles—remains there until it is picked up by volunteers or slowly flows with the water out into the Mississippi.

The litter could be significantly reduced before it is released into and dispersed throughout the lake. The City of Memphis/Shelby County could make major efforts in reducing litter at its source: through environmental education in the schools from pre-K to 12th grade, using various incentives to increase the level of recycling, increase awareness of and enforcement of existing anti-litter laws and city council/mayoral support for container deposit legislation. The Shelby County Commission is already on record as supporting container deposit legislation.

Dr. Marge Davis has proposed legislation year after year that could greatly assist in reducing litter in our state. Do you remember as a child how you collected bottles and turned them in for a refund? In the simplest terms that’s what Dr. Davis has proposed. Customers routinely spend a dollar for a bottle of water; would anyone even notice the increase resulting from the deposit? The Tennessee legislature has yet to approve this simple bill to reduce litter across the state and especially at McKellar Lake. See the following webpage for more information: www.tnbottlebill.org.

Chad PreCracke of Living Lands and Water visited Memphis with his crew for a month in March to assist in cleaning McKellar Lake and plans to return to Memphis for the next three years to continue cleanups here. Dr. Cockrum plans to continue leading cleanup events at McKellar Lake each month. And James Baker, director of the TN Water Sentinels, has been calling for actions on this issue for years and continues to sound the alarm.

Get involved in whatever way you can to reduce or collect litter.

If you are able and willing to assist in cleaning McKellar Lake please monitor Chickasaw Group’s Facebook page for scheduled cleanups:
www.facebook.com/Chickasaw.Group

Fracking Rules Sought for Tennessee Oil, Gas Drilling

(From Channel WBIR TV-10 in Knoxville)

The Tennessee Sierra Club and its allies are pushing for “fracking” rules to protect the state’s residents and its waters from the controversial oil and gas drilling practice.

“Fracking” is a common term for hydraulic fracturing, also known as hydrofracking. It is a process used in drilling for oil and natural gas where companies drill deep below the surface and then horizontally through areas of shale. A pipe is then filled with about 98 percent water and a few other chemicals at a very high pressure to fracture the earth below to allow small bubbles of natural gas to be released and flow back up the water pipe.

The chemicals in the other two percent concern many people, since the Environmental Protection Agency has stated the practice sometimes includes carcinogens, acids, and other toxic materials.

One of the primary concerns is potential pollution to groundwater. The drilling process penetrates the water table en route to the shale deep below. Fracking generally includes several protective layers around the pipe to prevent leaching into groundwater. However, there are still concerns about the water that comes back up the pipe and how it is then disposed of via land application.

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation estimates the process for proposing and approving new “fracking” rules could take another six to eight months. It usually takes a year or two before state environmental rules and regulations are complete.

“But in the meantime, there is a lack of regulation and oversight for hydrofracking,” said Axel Ringe with the Sierra Club of Tennessee. “Once we do get regulations in place, we are concerned the state will still fall short in terms of overseeing drilling companies. There will only be three employees overseeing every drilling operation in the state.”
Upcoming Fall Events

September 24: Moving Planet—a day for moving beyond fossil fuel
http://connect.sierraclub.org/project/Moving_Planet/blog or http://www.350.org/ Find an event near you  www.moving-planet.org/map

October 1: National Solar Tour of homes and buildings
See how solar energy, energy efficiency, and other sustainable technologies reduce monthly utility bills and help tackle climate change. http://nationalsolartour.org/location/directory/TN

October 28-29: Tennessee Sustainable Economy Summit
www.tectn.org

November 5: Memphis Environmental Justice Conference
Hold the date November 5th for our all-day environmental grassroots conference! There will be a dozen workshops on a wide variety of subjects including two workshops about the radioactive waste threats to our Tennessee communities. Come and join us to celebrate our 10th annual conference with expert presenters. As always, lunch will be compliments of the Sierra Club. Pre-registration is required and once all details are final a brochure will be distributed on the listserv and via email. The public is invited to this free learning event. For more information contact Sierra Club Field Organizer Rita Harris at the Environmental Justice Program office in Memphis, rita.harris@sierraclub.org, (901) 324-7757.