

# Tennesse-Sierran

The bimonthly state newsletter for the Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club

Volume 41, Number 4 - July August, 2010

## Tennessee Wilderness Act of 2010 Introduced on Senate Floor

By Bill Hodge – Tennessee Wild

Tennessee Republican Senator Lamar Alexander introduced on the Senate floor June 9 the Tennessee Wilderness Act of 2010. This important piece of legislation would protect almost 20,000 acres of the Cherokee National Forest with the highest form of protection afforded to federal land—wilderness designation.

The lands protected by the bill range up and down the high mountains of East Tennessee. The largest tract would be a new stand-alone wilderness of almost 10,000 acres—the Upper Bald River Wilderness in Monroe County. This protection, along with the existing Bald River Gorge Wilderness, allows for virtually the entire Bald River Watershed to be protected.

There are significant additions made to the Big Laurel Branch Wilderness in northeast Tennessee and the Sampson Mountain Wilderness close to the Rocky Fork tract. The Big Laurel Branch addition means further protection for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Smaller, but no less important additions are made to the Big Frog, Little Frog and Joyce Kilmer / Slickrock Wildernesses.

This bill, co-sponsored by Senator Bob Corker, will need to pass through the Senate agriculture committee before consideration by both the House and Senate. After passing through the committee, the legislation would most likely become part of a larger omnibus lands bill before reaching the president's desk for signature. Introduction of this bill is only one step in protecting these special places, but it's an important step!

During his speech Senator Alexander spoke of the special role a long-time wilderness advocate and Sierra Club member played in getting the bill to this point. While specifically thanking Will Skelton for his efforts, the senator added, "No one had done more to help more families appreciate, enjoy and hike in the Cherokee National Forest than has Will Skelton."

The membership of the Club, both at a local and state level, has also played an important part in getting this bill to the Senate floor. The letters written by Sierra Club members, along with others from the conservation community, made an impression not only on Senator Alexander, but on his fellow sponsor, Senator Corker as well. The House members from Tennessee have also heard the vocal support for this bill.



Will Skelton in the Upper Bald River Wilderness Study Area. Photo by Bill Hodge

It is an important time for the Tennessee Wilderness Act of 2010, its sponsors and supporters. The two sponsors of this bill are working hard to make this protection a reality, and they need to hear your support and thanks. The Tennessee House delegates also need to hear

from the conservation community asking them to join our Tennessee senators in promoting and passing this legislation. The Tennessee Wild coalition has important information on reaching out to our legislators that can be found at [tnwild.org](http://tnwild.org).

### Tennessee Chapter Summer Meeting

#### Sterchi Lodge near Max Patch

July 23-25, 2010

#### Friday, July 23

- 4:00 p.m. Check In Begins
- 6:30 p.m. Cookout (hamburgers/veggie burgers) Side dishes, dessert, BYOB \$5/person
- 8:00 p.m. "The Sierra Student Coalition Working in Tennessee" (Presenter: Cliff Cockerham)
- 9:00 p.m. Film Fest Capitalism: A Love Story

#### Saturday, July 24

- 8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Hike led by Randy Hedgepath, Tennessee State Naturalist
- 11:00 a.m. Lunch on Your Own
- 11:00 a.m. Film about "Plastic" (Presenter: Margaret Sylvia Haun, Chapter Education Chair)
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. Committee Meetings
- 1:00-4:30 p.m. Conservation Agenda
- 2:00 p.m. Water Sentinels Student Project "Flora & Fauna"  
Limited to 12 Participants-Register at [Clifford.cockerham@mnps.org](mailto:Clifford.cockerham@mnps.org)
- 4:30-6:30 p.m. Free Time!
- 4:00-5:00 p.m. Video/Photo Scavenger Hunt  
Limited to 12 Participants-Register at [Clifford.cockerham@mnps.org](mailto:Clifford.cockerham@mnps.org)
- 6:30 p.m. Supper
- 7:30 p.m. Program "Valley of Fire State Park" by Gary Bowers
- 9:00 p.m. Night Hike to Max Patch and Astronomy Viewing

#### Sunday, July 25

- 7:30 a.m. Hearty Breakfast
- 8:30 a.m. Hike led by Randy Hedgepath, Tennessee State Naturalist
- 9:00-12:00 Administrative Agenda
- 11:00 a.m. Informal Ecumenical Service "Reflecting on Creation"
- 12:00 p.m. Clean Up/Pack Up/Depart for Home/Explore the Mountains on Your Own!

#### Camping Available

Children Age 15 and Younger FREE!

Registration By July 16, 2010 \$40

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(Registration includes lodging, Sat./Sun. Breakfast, and Saturday Supper)

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**So Join the Crowd  
and Go Paperless Today!**

# Tennes-Sierran

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

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## SEND ARTICLES TO:

Email: [lbaker@usw.org](mailto: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 10th of the month preceding the new month's issue.

1. Email and email attached files are preferred. Send to [lbaker@usw.org](mailto:lbaker@usw.org) either with embedded text messages, or attached files in PC-based formats. Attached files are preferred. Mac users should embed text in body of an email message only.

2. Photographs should be scanned in a .jpg or .tif file format then either attached to email or mailed via US Postal Service (USPS) on a 3 1/2 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 accepted; however, pre-approval from the Editor is required.

4. Any materials submitted via USPS mail cannot be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided.

The opinions expressed in the Tennes-Sierran are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Tennessee Chapter, or the Sierra Club.

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## TENNESSEE CHAPTER:

Chair: Katherine Pendleton (615) 943-6877  
[Katibug1959@aol.com](mailto:Katibug1959@aol.com)  
Vice Chair: Gloria Griffith (423) 727-4797  
[gla4797@embarqmail.com](mailto:gla4797@embarqmail.com)  
Secretary: Bob Hill (865) 966-9435  
Treasurer: Scott Kramer

Conservation: Gary Bowers (615) 714-3185  
[GB1Nature@aol.com](mailto:GB1Nature@aol.com)  
Outings: Judith Hammond (901) 276-2819  
[judithhammond@bellsouth.net](mailto:judithhammond@bellsouth.net)  
CCL Delegate: Don Richardson (901) 276-1387  
[donrich@juno.com](mailto:donrich@juno.com)  
CCL Alternate: Brian Paddock (931) 268-2938  
[bpaddock@twlakes.net](mailto:bpaddock@twlakes.net)

## TN LOCAL GROUPS:

### Cherokee Group

[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/cherokee](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/cherokee)  
Chair: Elizabeth Tallman (423) 619-0379  
[elizabethjamestallman@hotmail.com](mailto:elizabethjamestallman@hotmail.com)  
Vice Chair: Jamie Brown (423) 255-3014  
[jdbrown5188@yahoo.com](mailto:jdbrown5188@yahoo.com)  
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[barbaraduckhurst@hotmail.com](mailto:barbaraduckhurst@hotmail.com)  
Conser. Chair: Dr. Henry Spratt (423) 425-4383  
[henry-spratt@utc.edu](mailto:henry-spratt@utc.edu)  
Secretary: Barbara Kelly (423) 718-5009  
[rpyle@chattanooga.net](mailto:rpyle@chattanooga.net)  
Outings Co-Chairs: Jeremy Gazaway (423) 619-6548  
[gazaway\\_77@yahoo.com](mailto:gazaway_77@yahoo.com)  
Denis Kiely (423) 881-3620  
[dkiely@bledsoe.net](mailto:dkiely@bledsoe.net)

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[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/chickasaw](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/chickasaw)  
Chair: Nancy Brannon (901) 829-4360  
[brannon.n@gmail.com](mailto:brannon.n@gmail.com)  
Vice Chair: Keith Hoover (901) 363-8299  
[hooverkw@yahoo.com](mailto:hooverkw@yahoo.com)  
Secretary: Emily Schwimmer (901) 240-5476  
[eschwimm@gmail.com](mailto:eschwimm@gmail.com)  
Treasurer: Susan Routon (901) 413-3888  
[suestreasure@msn.com](mailto:suestreasure@msn.com)  
Conservation: Keven Routon (901) 485-3960  
[kwratcs@mac.com](mailto:kwratcs@mac.com)  
Tabling: Keith Hoover (901) 363-8299  
[hooverkw@yahoo.com](mailto:hooverkw@yahoo.com)  
Outings: Matt Farr 901-517-8879  
[matt.tennessierran@gmail.com](mailto:matt.tennessierran@gmail.com)  
Membership: Keith Hoover (901) 363-8299  
[hooverkw@yahoo.com](mailto:hooverkw@yahoo.com)  
TV Program: Judith Rutschman (901) 767-5916  
[jcrutchman@gmail.com](mailto:jcrutchman@gmail.com)

### Harvey Broome Group - Knoxville/Oak Ridge

[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/broome](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/broome)  
Chair: Bob Hill (865) 966-9435  
[robin.hill8@google.com](mailto:robin.hill8@google.com)  
Vice-Chair: David Reister  
Conservation: Axel Ringe (865)387-1840  
[onyxfarm@bellsouth.net](mailto:onyxfarm@bellsouth.net)  
Outings: Ron Shrieves (865) 922-3518  
[ronaldshrieves@comcast.net](mailto:ronaldshrieves@comcast.net)

### Middle Tennessee Group - Nashville

[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/mtg](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/mtg)  
Chair: David Bordenkircher  
[dabordenkircher@mindspring.com](mailto:dabordenkircher@mindspring.com)  
Vice Chair: Don Scharf, 615-896-8338  
[d.scharf@comcast.net](mailto:d.scharf@comcast.net)  
Conservation: VACANT  
Membership: Betsy Garber, 615-668-1977  
[garberb@hotmail.com](mailto:garberb@hotmail.com)  
Outings: Katherine Pendleton (615) 943-6877  
[Katibug1959@aol.com](mailto:Katibug1959@aol.com)

### Watauga Group - Carter, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington Counties

[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/watauga](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/watauga)  
Chair: Gloria Griffith (423) 727-4797  
[gla4797@embarqmail.com](mailto:gla4797@embarqmail.com)  
Vice Chair: Sandi Cranford 423-727-5044  
[sunshine@highcountryonline.net](mailto:sunshine@highcountryonline.net)  
Conservation: Dean Whitworth (423) 727-7214  
Outings: Webb Griffith (423) 727-4797  
[gla4797@earthlink.net](mailto:gla4797@earthlink.net)

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[www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/ucg](http://www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/ucg)  
Chair: Mary Mastin (931) 268-2938  
[zeblady@twlakes.net](mailto:zeblady@twlakes.net)  
Vice-Chair: Josie McQuail (931) 372-6207  
[Jmcquail@ntech.edu](mailto:Jmcquail@ntech.edu)  
Treasurer: Ralph Bowden  
Secretary: Peggy Evans  
Conservation: Easton Evans  
Outings: Vacant

### National Sierra Staff in Tennessee:

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

Please notify the Editor when changes are needed



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet.



## With your help, we can clean up our water.

Over the last 30 years, we've made great progress cleaning up our water. But the Bush Administration is threatening that progress, proposing that "isolated" small streams, ponds and wetlands no longer be covered under the Clean Water Act. Work with us to strengthen the Clean Water Act and its enforcement. Together we can leave our children a legacy of clean water, air and wild lands.

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## Middle Tennessee Group Conservation Chair Needed ASAP!

Interested? Send an email outlining  
your related background & interests to

Dave Bordenkircher,  
[dabordenkircher@mindspring.com](mailto:dabordenkircher@mindspring.com),  
or Gary Bowers,  
[GB1NATURE@aol.com](mailto:GB1NATURE@aol.com).

Include a resume, if applicable.

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# TVA Resumes Renewable Energy Pilot Project

People are interested about what is happening with Tennessee Valley Authority's Generation Partners program. The TVA issued the following press release about the issue:

June 23, 2010

**KNOXVILLE, Tenn.** -- The Tennessee Valley Authority announced Wednesday that it is resuming new enrollments in its Generation Partners pilot project to encourage renewable energy use across the TVA service territory.

Qualifying solar, wind, biomass or hydroelectric projects of up to 200 kilowatts will be eligible for the Generation Partners incentives, which include a \$1,000 payment to offset startup costs. In addition, TVA will buy 100 percent of the green power that participants produce, paying the retail rate, plus any fuel cost adjustment, plus a premium per kilowatt-hour, depending on the type of renewable energy produced.

TVA briefly held up new enrollments last week to adjust to overwhelming customer response.

"TVA launched Generation Partners as a pilot project, with periodic adjustments expected along the way, to encourage customer interest in small to medium-sized renewable energy projects, such as rooftop solar panels," said John Trawick, senior vice president of Commercial Operations and Pricing. "The response has exceeded all expectations, prompting us to expand and enhance the

program to include additional projects and help support public interest in renewable energy."

Trawick said that of the 264 projects approved or completed through Generation Partners to date, 260 are 200 kilowatts or under.

"TVA is honoring all 264 agreements, and we are launching a process to evaluate additional projects totaling more than 200 kilowatts each," Trawick said. "Our goal is to encourage more widespread use of renewable energy resources across the TVA service territory."

Additional actions announced Wednesday include:

- Moving 33 additional customer proposals into the approval process;
- Evaluating various longer-term solutions aimed at transforming Generation Partners from a pilot project to a firmly established TVA program.

Earlier this year, TVA began approving participation in advance to make it easier for customers to finance projects. Since April 1, TVA and local distributors have received more applications than expected, necessitating modifications to accommodate the larger number of projects.

"It's a good thing when you realize that your program is increasing in popularity," Trawick said. "But like any other business that experiences unexpected demand, we need to take another look at the program's structure to make sure it accommodates

*Corner*  
*The Chair's*

**The Chapter Chair Column will be on hiatus this summer. Look for it next autumn.**

customer demand and stays within budget."

Trawick explained that TVA is encouraging increased use of renewable energy as a growing part of its power generation efforts for the future.

"Renewable generation produces no air emissions, which supports TVA's goal of providing a larger percentage of its electricity from non-carbon or low-carbon sources," he said. "The nation is moving toward requiring more low-carbon and non-carbon electricity generation, and TVA believes it prudent to begin finding ways to work toward this objective.

"Because many renewable electricity technologies are in early stages of development, and currently not cost-competitive for widespread commercial use, we hope that programs such as Generation Partners – which help subsidize early adoption of these new power sources – will help foster their further progress and make them more affordable for the future."

# Watershed Group Fights For Doe Creek

By Dennis Shekinah

Two years ago this reporter published a lament about the loss of a public appeal to ban the permitting of an asphalt plant yards away from Doe Creek in Butler, Tenn. The essay told about the futility Watauga Watershed Alliance (WWA) members felt in fighting Radford Quarries' asphalt plant and the initial sense of hopelessness the group suffered in being unable to stop asphalt production on a native trout fishery.

The hope did not diminish, however, but grew and soon inspired them to look closer at Radford Quarries' present crushed stone operation in Butler. Enlisting the help of Barry Sulkin, Renee Hoyos and Donna Lisenby, all professional water quality experts, they visited Doe Creek to find evidence of violations of the Clean Water Act, all federal offenses.

WWA employed the services of Gary Davis, one of the few attorneys with a degree in environmental law practicing in Tennessee, to study the feasibility of holding Radford accountable for polluting Doe Creek, something the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) had proven itself unable, or unwilling, to do.

They aligned themselves with three of the most powerful environmental groups in Tennessee: Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter, Watauga RiverKeeper at Appalachian Voices, and the Tennessee Clean Water Network (TCWN). With support from these groups and generous donations from many citizens of Johnson County, WWA and TCWN filed their intent to sue Radford for polluting public waters.

The action froze Radford's state application to produce asphalt and to expand their quarry's boundary. They continued business grandfathered under their old permit, but their asphalt plant sat idle. Months passed and deadlines for depositions and motions loomed on the horizon. Suddenly, a message came from Radford's attorneys: They wanted to avoid a day in court and negotiate a settlement.

WWA's board of directors decided on the main points they felt vital and fair for a settlement:

1. Protect Doe Creek from runoff from petroleum waste produced from the making of asphalt.
2. Gain protections for Doe Creek in the quarry's expansion plans.
3. TDEC-permitted discharges allowed from the quarry site will be 10-year, 24-hour, extreme rain events.



Group shot of WWA's board of directors. (L to R) Ron Rairigh, Webb Griffith, Rita Cowan, Dean Whitworth, Earl Taylor, Donna Lisenby and seated on the swing is Sandi Cranford. Photo: Dennis Shekinah.

Requests for leniency and compromise from Radford's attorneys rose to a fever pitch in the final days, but WWA's board of directors held firm. Finally, their attorney gave them the news: Radford owners had agreed to settle in lieu of going before a judge.

The news was met with cheers and tears of relief. As hands were shook, WWA members said they felt the same raw surge of community and purpose as they had nearly two years ago when faced with what they assumed was certain defeat. They had, legally and against all odds, protected Doe Creek.

Formed only five years ago to protect public waters from a proposed dairy concentrated animal feeding operation, WWA finds itself older and wiser, larger yet sharper in focus as they pursue other polluters in the local watershed. WWA members carry the torch for clean water to other community groups, churches and locally elected officials in Johnson County.

*Dennis Shekinah is the current president of the Watauga Watershed Alliance and can be reached at [wwa@me.com](mailto:wwa@me.com)*

## Take Action! Sign onto TENNESSEE-ALERTS Listserv

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# Meetings

## HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

All programs except August 10, 2010 program will be held at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN and will start at 7:00 PM.

**July 13, 2010 Program: "Candidate Forum"** Ms. Judy Poulson will moderate a "Candidate Forum" for Knox County legislative candidates.

**August 10, 2010: Annual Picnic** Annual Harvey Broome Group picnic. The time and location for this picnic will be posted later.

## MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

**PROGRAM: Thursday, July 8, 7:00 p.m. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center, 1160 Otter Creek Road, Nashville**

Most of us have heard a lot about the efforts of the Beaman Park to Bells Bend efforts to maintain the rural/agricultural/residential character of the area, but did you know that the viability of this initiative is being demonstrated by the success of the Bells Bend Neighborhood Farms?

Four community farms have come together to form a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) under the management of Eric Wooldridge, and organic food from the farms is available at local farmers' markets and through subscription. Eric will update us on how the CSA works, how theirs is different from others, and how, with several thousand acres of rich, fertile soil, the Bells Bend area could potentially provide Nashville with a large percentage of its food grown locally and in a sustainable manner.

Locally grown food allows us to know where and how our food is grown and reduces the negative environmental effects of transporting food across the country. Join us to learn how you can enjoy the fruits of the labors of the folks at Bells Bend Neighborhood Farms.

**PROGRAM: Thursday, August 12, 7:00 p.m. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center, 1160 Otter Creek Road, Nashville**

Program to be announced. Please be sure to check our website, which will have this program information by mid-July. <http://tennessee.sierraclub.org/mtg/Programs.htm>

**STRATEGY MEETING: Third Mondays, July 19 and August 16, 6:30 p.m. at the United Steelworkers Union Building, 3340 Perimeter Hill Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37211.**

Follow the signs to the conference area. If you arrive late, please ring the bell at the side door on the left, and someone will come down to let you in. Conservation issues are first on the agenda, and all members are invited to attend this conservation and administrative meeting to get the news on what's happening in our Middle Tennessee Group. We welcome you to be with us to learn about the group's conservation initiatives and community activities. If you have problems finding or accessing the building, call Katherine Pendleton at 615-943-6877.

## UPPER CUMBERLAND GROUP (Cookeville)

**MONTHLY MEETING: Every 4th Thursday at 7 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room of the Putnam County Library.** Alternating program meeting with planning meetings every other month. For more information, contact Mary Mastin at [marymastin@twlakes.net](mailto:marymastin@twlakes.net) or (931) 268-2938.

## CHEROKEE GROUP (Chattanooga)

*Directions: GreenSpaces is located at 63 E.*

*Main Street, Chattanooga. Going south on Market St from downtown, take a left onto Main. Go slow and look to your left -- 63 E. Main is a brick building at the end of that block. If you get to the fire hall on the right -- you've gone too far! GreenSpaces is kiddy-corner across the street from the fire hall. (If you get to Central, you've gone way too far.) If you can't find it, call Barbara Kelly 423.718.5009 -- we don't want anybody to miss our meetings!*

**JULY STRATEGY (Board Meeting): Wednesday, July 14, 6 p.m., at GreenSpaces, 63 E. Main Street, Chattanooga.** All interested members are invited to a meeting where the business of the club gets done!

**JULY PROGRAM: Monday, July 28, 7 p.m., at GreenSpaces, 63 E. Main Street, Chattanooga.**

**Davis Mounger** will talk about "DIY, DO IT YOURSELF SOLAR!" Davis, a vocational teacher at East Ridge High School, has had his students working on a variety of sustainability projects. He will give us how-to's on creating your own home solar system, photo voltaic, from buying solar cells, starting small and ultimately building your own DIY solar panels.

Make home solar power a reality using these do it yourself solar panels and start living greener today. This is easy to do, and does not have to be expensive. If you choose your renewable energy projects carefully, it will cost little money and save a lot of money on energy bills. It will also save many tons of CO2 emissions.

The idea is to make sure that the projects you choose are the ones that will give you the best return for the time, effort and money that you put into them. Davis will supply suggestions for obtaining materials at reasonable prices. **Come with your questions!** The public is always very welcome; great refreshments will be served after the program.

**AUGUST STRATEGY (Board Meeting): Wednesday, August 11, 6 p.m., at GreenSpaces, 63 E. Main Street, Chattanooga.** All interested members are invited to a meeting where the business of the club gets done!

**AUGUST PROGRAM: Monday, August 30, 7 p.m., at GreenSpaces, 63 E. Main Street, Chattanooga.**

## CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

(Sign up for our monthly email events list on the calendar page <http://tennessee.sierraclub.org/chickasaw/>)

**Thursday, July 1, 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm, Monthly First Thursday Gathering & Beyond Oil House Party, Otherlands, 641 S. Cooper, Memphis, TN**

Sierra Club members, activists and friends meet in a casual setting to talk about issues and interests. We will be hosting a Beyond Oil House Party! We will view and discuss a 15-minute documentary from filmmaker Robert Greenwald—producer of *Outfoxed and Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price*—about the true effects that the BP oil disaster is having on the Gulf Coast and why we need to end our addiction to oil. For more information, contact Keith Hoover at [hooverkw@yahoo.com](mailto:hooverkw@yahoo.com) or (901) 363-8299.

**Monday, July 12, 6:30 pm, Strategy Meeting, Panera Bread, 4530 Poplar Avenue, Suite 101, Memphis, TN.**

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 Nancy Brannon at [nthechair@gmail.com](mailto:nthechair@gmail.com) or (901) 829-4360. Agenda items must be submitted at least 3 days (preferably 5) before the meeting.

**Thursday, July 22, 6:30 pm—networking & snacks; 7:00 pm—program. Presentation: TBA. Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library, 3030 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN.**

Details to be announced at a later date. For more information or to suggest a future presentation, contact Susan Routon at [susan.routon@gmail.com](mailto:susan.routon@gmail.com) or (901) 413-3888.

**Thursday, August 5, 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm, Monthly First Thursday Gathering Otherlands, 641 S. Cooper, Memphis, TN.**

Sierra Club members, activists and friends meet in a casual setting to talk about issues and interests. For more information, contact Keith Hoover at [hooverkw@yahoo.com](mailto:hooverkw@yahoo.com) or (901) 363-8299.

**Monday, August 9, 6:30 pm, Strategy Meeting, Panera Bread, 4530 Poplar Avenue, Suite 101, Memphis, TN.**

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 Nancy Brannon at [nthechair@gmail.com](mailto:nthechair@gmail.com) or (901) 829-4360. Agenda items must be submitted at least 3 days (preferably 5) before the meeting.

**Thursday, August 26, 6:30 pm—networking & snacks; 7:00 pm—program.**

**Presentation: "Smokestack Effect & EPA's National School Air Toxics Monitoring Program." Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library, 3030 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN.**

Sierra Club Environmental Justice Program Organizer Rita Harris, who is based in the Memphis area, will talk about the 2008-09 USA Today series that prompted the Environmental Protection Agency to initiate a national air toxics study that identified 60 schools across the U.S. deemed to be in the worst polluted areas in the country. She will discuss the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) pollution report for Shelby County and also the "Terrible Ten" report that her office releases annually. She will also share a 12-minute video her office produced on air pollution awareness here in Memphis for neighborhood groups. For more information or to suggest a future presentation, contact Susan Routon at [susan.routon@gmail.com](mailto:susan.routon@gmail.com) or (901) 413-3888.

**"Nature of Conservation" Sierra Club Chickasaw Group Cable TV Show on WYPL-TV 18 (Comcast):**

Days and times vary -- see <http://www.memphislibrary.org/tlc18/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 [jcrutschman@gmail.com](mailto:jcrutschman@gmail.com) or (901) 767-5916.

**Sierra Club Chickasaw Group is now on Facebook:**

<http://www.facebook.com/Chickasaw.Group/>  
This is a forum for public discussion, so please feel free to post comments, raise issues, and express environmental concerns.

## WATAUGA GROUP (Northeastern TN)

**PROGRAM MEETINGS: Every second Tuesday at 7 p.m.** Please contact Gloria Griffith at [gla4797@earthlink.net](mailto:gla4797@earthlink.net) or 423-727-4797 for more information.

# Outings

All participants in Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver before you participate, please refer to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/SignInWaiver> PDF, or call 415-977-5630 for a printed version. Transportation to the outing, including carpooling, ride-sharing or anything similar, is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel.

## HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

**July 11 (Sun). Canoe Float, Clinch River.** Put in about 2 miles below Norris Dam, take out at Highway 61, near Clinton. Distance 11 mi. This is a relaxing float, with good current but no whitewater. We'll start early so we can do most of the river at low flow, maximizing our chances of seeing wildlife. With luck we'll observe some waterfowl. So come along and learn about the ecology of a clear-flowing river. Bring a sack lunch and even a cooler if you want. Only very basic canoe skills are necessary for this trip. Sorry, but I cannot provide canoes. Check with local outfitters for rentals. Driving time from downtown Knoxville, about 40 minutes. Pre-register with Ron Shrieves at 922-3518 or [ronaldshrieves@comcast.net](mailto:ronaldshrieves@comcast.net) (email preferred).

**July 24 (Sat). Evening Full Moon hike, Clingman's Dome to Andrew's Bald on the Forney Ridge Trail, GSMNP.** We'll hike from the parking area at 6,300 feet about 2 miles out to Andrew's Bald to watch the sunset and hike back under the full moon with an elevation change of 600 feet both ways. Learn about the old growth virgin forest of red spruce and fraser fir and the balsam woolly adelgid insect that has destroyed these great trees. Great views of the night sky. Experience nature with nocturnal owls and other wildlife in their home. Bring your flashlight and extra batteries with a snack for this fun evening out. We'll be done about midnight. Rated moderate. Drive 70 miles one way. Please register with Linda Smithyman at [lsmithymanhbg@yahoo.com](mailto:lsmithymanhbg@yahoo.com) or call at 335-3559.

**July 23-25 (Fri-Sun). Chapter Meeting, TN Chapter of the Sierra Club, at Sterchi Lodge, Max Patch, hosted by Middle Tennessee Group.** Chair: Rachel Floyd, [rfloyd557@bellsouth.net](mailto:rfloyd557@bellsouth.net).

**July 24-25 (Sat-Sun). Backpack, Highlands Of Roan.** This is perhaps the most scenic high elevation trail in Tennessee, as the Appalachian Trail winds over a succession of grassy balds that often tower over 6,000 feet. Clumps of spruce trees and granite rock outcrops amidst the grassy ridges, acres of wildflowers, and unparalleled vistas are some of the attractions. Our hike, which the Sierra Club has frequently done over the years, starts at Carver's Gap on TN 143 near the City of Roan Mountain and ends at US 19E; we'll learn about efforts to maintain the grassy balds along the way. Hiking distance is about 13.7 miles total and it is rated moderate. Pre-register with Will Skelton: H 523-2272; Cell 742-7327; email [whshome@bellsouth.net](mailto:whshome@bellsouth.net).

**July 30-Aug 1 (Fri-Sun). Car camp, Balsam Mtn. or Mile High campground in GSMNP. In the Balsam Mtn. area.** This outing will include at least one day hike on Saturday in a fairly remote area of the park. Pre-register with Priscilla Watts: 966-4142; email [sigmatngirl@earthlink.net](mailto:sigmatngirl@earthlink.net).

**Aug 7 (Sat). Evening event, Shakespeare Play in Market Square, downtown Knoxville.** Free to the public although a donation is requested. Bring your own chair and refreshments. Maybe we will have dinner somewhere prior to the show. All ages welcome. The comedy "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare

Abridged" is the play. Please register with Linda Smithyman at [lsmithymanhbg@yahoo.com](mailto:lsmithymanhbg@yahoo.com) or call at 335-3559.

**Sept 5 (Sun). Day hike, Ijams Nature Center.** This protected area has been expanded to include a second quarry with several interesting features including a cave and overlooks. Learn about quarrying and its impact on the environment. Hike 3-4 miles including the boardwalk along the river. Rated easy and good for beginners. Drive 15 miles. Please register with Linda Smithyman at [lsmithymanhbg@yahoo.com](mailto:lsmithymanhbg@yahoo.com) or call at 335-3559.

**Sept 11 (Sat). Day hike, Cataloochee area of GSMNP.** A 5.9 mile (requiring a car shuttle) hike on Pretty Hollow Gap trail to Little Cataloochee Trail in the Cataloochee area. Afterwards we will do some elk viewing. This may be the weekend that the apple butter demonstration is usually held. This is rated easy to moderate for some elevation gain. Drive: 80 miles each way. Pre-register with Priscilla Watts: 966-4142; [sigmatngirl@earthlink.net](mailto:sigmatngirl@earthlink.net).

## MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

**August 15 (Sun.) Day hike on Brady Mountain edge of Grassy Cove on Cumberland Trails, SE of Crossville.** I will try to leave Nashville by 8:00 a.m. to reach the trailhead by 10:30 a.m. Take the Fairfield Glade Crossville exit on I-40 at St Rt. 101. Go toward Crossville and turn right on St. Rt. 392. Then turn right on Rt. 127. Go straight when the road becomes St. Rt. 68 and go for 4.6 miles to the trailhead.

If you come from Chattanooga, take Rt. 27 to Spring City and then take Rt. 68 to the western side of Grassy Cove.

The trail is 7.8 miles long. Learn about geology and how conservation plays into sustaining a rock house, an arch and many overlooks of Grassy Cove. Bring your lunch and water. We will hike for a few hours, eat lunch and then return. Please register with Dave Bordenkircher at [dabordenkircher@mindspring.com](mailto:dabordenkircher@mindspring.com) or call 615-333-3377 or cell 615-429-6927.

**August 21 ( Sat.) Day Hike, Caney Fork River Float, 10:00 a.m.** Escape the heat with one of Middle Tennessee's coolest floats. We will put-in just below the dam on the Caney Fork River around 10 a.m. and float down to Betty's Island in a leisurely sort of way. Naturally we will stop along the way to observe and learn the identity of wildflowers in bloom, count herons and kingfishers encountered for cookie rewards, and maybe take a quick swim in a cool pool or two along the way. Kayakers or canoeists with some basic experience are welcomed. No children please. Group size is limited and pre-registration is required by contacting Rachel Floyd at [rfloyd557@bellsouth.net](mailto:rfloyd557@bellsouth.net) or 615-406-9204.

**October 16 ( Sat.), Radnor Lake Sunrise Owl Prowl, 6:00 a.m.** This will be a sunrise hike in search of Barred, Eastern Screech or Great Horned Owls and other awakening fine furry friends that stand out against the autumn changing fauna. We'll meet in the Nature Center parking lot at 6:00 a.m. and stroll around the Lake Trail and up to the Ganier Ridge Trail identifying as many trees as we can. Once we reach the top of the hill we'll stop to enjoy hot coffee or chai tea and organic breakfast treats, which will be served by your trip leader. Hiking distance will be approximately 4.5 miles with some strenuous, but short climbs. For more venue information visit: <http://www.radnorlake.org/welcome.html>. Pre-registration is required by contacting Rachel Floyd at [rfloyd557@bellsouth.net](mailto:rfloyd557@bellsouth.net) or 615-406-9204.

## Ten Essentials for Hiking



Sierra Club outings offer a variety of wilderness and near-wilderness experiences. It is important to realize that while all trips are guided by a leader, it is ultimately the responsibility of the individual to operate in a safe manner. To this end, the following is a list of essential items which should be modified according to the particular type of outing. These are:

1. Adequate map
2. First aid kit
3. Compass
4. Rain gear
5. Extra clothing (it is a good idea to always have a wool hat)
6. Matches
7. Knife
8. Flashlight
9. Extra food, water
10. The tenth essential: You decide what is the most important thing to bring!

## CHEROKEE GROUP

**Jeremy Gazaway, outings chair** for the local Cherokee Sierra Group, leads outings and hikes at least one or two weekends per month. Our activities are always open to the public. To register, or for more information, contact Jeremy at 423.619.6548 or [gazawaypainting@gmail.com](mailto:gazawaypainting@gmail.com)

**Sunday, July 18: River Gorge Trail, 9am - 12pm.** This trail is very nice. It offers it all: a waterfall, mountain stream, interesting rock and tree formations that we can learn about, and many rock ledges providing panoramic views of the Tennessee River Gorge.

**Saturday, August 21: Sunset Rock Picnic & Hike, 10am - 1pm.** Meet @ Bi-Lo in St. Elmo. Open for discussion: Picnic at top of rock or hike into the valley to learn about the area? Call Jeremy with questions or suggestions and register with him at 423.619.6548, [gazawaypainting@gmail.com](mailto:gazawaypainting@gmail.com)

**OUTINGS LEADERS WANTED: All you need is First Aid certification and a short course on Sierra Club policies! We'll set up First Aid classes with the Red Cross if we can get enough people interested. Please contact Jeremy if you are interested.**

## CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

Chickasaw Outings Chair Matt Farr, (901) 409-3067, [matt.tennesierran@gmail.com](mailto:matt.tennesierran@gmail.com) said no outings have been scheduled for July and August due to the extremely hot weather.

Check the Cherokee Group's web page, <http://tennessee.sierraclub.org/chickasaw/>, and Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/Chickasaw.Group/>, for the latest updates.

## Political Forum Slated in Knoxville

The Harvey Broom Group will host a political forum of Tennessee State Senate and House candidates from districts that include Knox County to answer questions concerning environmental issues facing our state. This forum is open to the public and the press. Refreshments will be provided.

**When: Tuesday, July 13 at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Where: Tennessee Valley Unitarian Church at 2931 Kingston Pike in Knoxville**

This forum will again be moderated by Judy Poulson. As of now nine candidates have agreed to attend.

# Renewal Documentary Showcases Faith Community's Commitment to Preserving Our Environment

By Josie McQuail  
Upper Cumberland group

The whole world is watching the devastation from the Deepwater Horizon spill and many may feel hopeless about our ability to counteract such wholesale environmental degradation. But there may be hope in already well-established faith-based organizations which the Sierra Club can draw on.

For instance, the Right Reverend John Bauerschmidt, Episcopal bishop of the state of Tennessee, has established a commission for the environment, designed to preserve God's creation, for which I was selected to be representative for the Parish of St. Michael's (each Episcopal Parish in Tennessee is represented on the bishop's commission). Through my involvement in the bishop's Environmental Council, I receive educational materials and notices about what is happening in Episcopal parishes throughout the state.

Accordingly, the Tennessee Sierra Club Upper Cumberland Group showed a DVD called "Renewal" at our regular May meeting held, unusually, at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Cookeville. Renewal consists of a series of segments of reactions to environmental issues of all kinds from the efforts of people of many faiths. The focus is on people of faith working to create a sustainable future.

Many different religious denominations are emphasizing the importance of preserving the environment for the sake of God, nature and/or humanity. Religious organizations can be valuable allies in the fight to preserve the environment.

*Renewal* is the first feature-length documentary film to capture the vitality and diversity of today's religious-environmental activists. From within their Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim and even nondenominational traditions, Americans are becoming caretakers of the Earth.

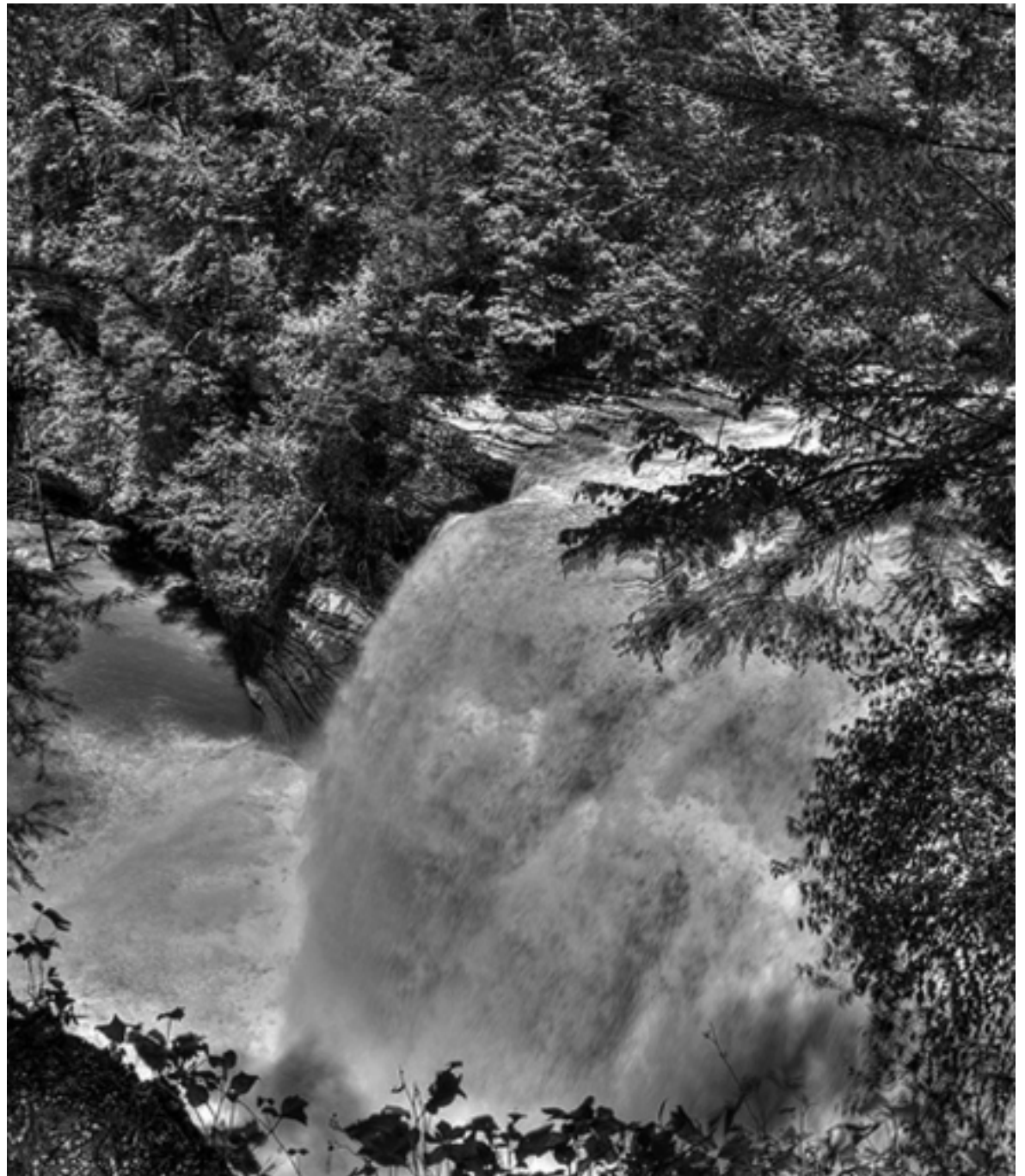
With great courage and dedication these women, men and children are re-examining what it means to be human and how we live on this planet. Their stories of combating global warming and the devastation of mountaintop removal, of promoting food security, environmental justice, recycling, and land preservation, and of teaching love and respect for life on Earth are at the heart of *Renewal*.

Thomas Berry, a leading scholar of the world's religions and author of *The Sacred Universe: Earth, Spirituality, and Religion in the 21st Century* (Columbia University Press, 2009), asserted, "*Renewal* offers a comprehensive overview of what different religions are doing about the awesome devastation of Earth's life systems now taking place. The filmmakers' vision of the problem and understanding of viable solutions show rare depth of perception and are matched only by their sense of the urgency of action if we are to realize our hopes for the future."

TV journalist Bill Moyers commented, "I watched this film with admiration and hope millions of others will have the chance to see it. You will be stirred to discover people of different faiths who are engaged in an exhilarating stewardship of the earth that offers our best chance to yet save creation."

Our audience at the viewing in Cookeville consisted of a mix of community members and parishioners of St. Michael's, and we had a lively discussion after each segment of *Renewal* we watched.

The evening was capped by a wonderful announcement by former Cookeville mayor and Chairman of the Board of Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation Dr. Charles Womack, who announced that a beautiful waterfall with surrounding acreage near Cookeville called Cummins Falls was successfully purchased provisionally, subject to paying back a loan required to bid on the property which came up for auction in May.



Cummins Falls at flood stage, Jackson Co, TN. Photo by Chuck Sutherland.

A developer bid on the property, which is currently undeveloped, but fortunately through the help of a private (though contingent) donation to Tennessee Parks and Greenways the developer was staved off for the moment.

According to Tennessee Parks and Greenways: "Tennessee ranks 7th in the nation in loss of open space to roads and other development. We lose 80,000 acres each year. Tennessee is rich with native plant and animal life, with more than 4,000 species. We are one of the top ten richest states in America for biological diversity; yet, we are ranked among the most threatened in the nation due to loss of natural areas. Our quality of life and economy depend on protecting 'the greenest state in the land of the free.' It's what we're famous for. Businesses, new residents and tourists come to Tennessee because of the beauty of our homeland and it's at risk -- partly due to road-building."

We can easily imagine, based on news photos of the spill, the sort of devastation which the Gulf States and its people are threatened with due to the Deepwater Horizon debacle. But we in Tennessee must work locally to preserve our own treasures.

It is time to call up all the forces for a fight of epic proportions to counter corporate interests and private greed which threaten nature.

You can help in several ways: by showing the film *Renewal* to faith-based groups, community organizations, schools and universities, or at Sierra Club meetings in order to increase the number of people willing to get involved in the fight to preserve the environment; by supporting the Sierra Club and/or Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation and similar organizations; by going down to the Gulf States or other polluted areas yourself to volunteer in cleanups or to protest destruction of our environment; and/or by

raising hell about environmental devastation in any way you can, including, but not limited to, writing your state, local and federal representatives.

The only good thing that may come from the Deepwater Horizon disaster is that people will no longer tolerate such terrible threats to the environment. One place to start is, as President Obama emphasized, to end our addiction to oil, coal and fossil fuels.

We must truly change our way of living, along with our thinking about nature—Who can give permission to drill in those offshore waters? Who do those waters belong to anyway?—before we have nothing left.

Spirituality offers one way that we can see nature as not just a resource to be exploited for human benefit, but something that is alive and holy, and which humanity has no right to plunder.

The *Renewal* DVD can be ordered for \$19.95 at <http://www.renewalproject.net/dvd> or by calling 626-388-7974.

To contribute to the Tennessee Parks and Greenways Commission, you may go to <http://www.tenngreen.org/howtohelp.htm>

If you are interested specifically in helping with the preservation of Cummins Falls be sure to specify that by contacting the commission directly at (615) 386-3171 (ask for Steve Walsh).

Come visit Cummins Falls, a spectacular waterfall that rivals any in Tennessee, though it is not as high as Fall Creek Falls or Burgess Falls. It is unique, though, in being totally undeveloped right now. Leave Cookeville on SR 135 North & drive 10.25 miles. Turn left at Cummins Mill Road. Continue West on Cummins Mill Road 3.0 miles to pull-off. Cummins Falls is about 80 feet high. <http://www.panoramio.com/photo/2276598>, [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

# Inner City Outing at Historic Mansker's Station Lets Teens Experience 18th Century Life

By Joy Mayfield

Monroe Harding is a residential campus for teens that partners with at-risk youth and families to provide a bridge toward independence. One of its goals is to introduce teens to healthy choices in recreation and relaxation—a perfect match for Sierra Club's Inner City Outing (ICO) group.

Last July, Betsy Garber and I spent three hours with eight energetic, fully engaged teens (after removing their iPods) touring 18th century Mansker's Station in Goodlettsville, Tenn., as well as the Bowen Plantation House. I don't know anybody who doesn't love to play "fort" and these teens were no different. Bill Maddox (fort manager) let them don clothes of the period, had them haul water using burden yokes, gave them an early Tennessee history lesson, had them raise the flag and then fired his musket for them out in the field.

The tour terminated at the fort's 18th century vegetable garden where Bill encouraged the young men to pick corn and green beans for their supper since they confessed to him they had to cook for themselves in their cottages. Most of them never had the pleasure of picking their own produce before and couldn't wait to get back to put the corn on the grill. What a lively, talkative, happy bunch of young men they were when we saw them off on their van! As Betsy said profoundly as we waved our good-byes, "They are just BIG kids."

Betsy Garber took so many excellent, descriptive photos of this trip that I wish we could have shared them in this newsletter; however, we did not have permission to use their photos in any publication. I have selected some to share that I think will not violate anyone's privacy.

## Male Hike Leaders Needed

We are in need of more hike leaders, especially



Above: Teens pick corn for their supper. Right: Teens raise the fort's flag. Photos: Betsy Garber.

men. The Monroe Harding facility presently houses male residents only. I couldn't help notice how these young men gravitated toward Bill Maddox at the fort and realized again how direly we need men as ICO volunteers. You don't have to be a leader if the process of becoming one seems too daunting to you. You can simply volunteer as a helper. Contact garberb@hotmail.com if you'd like to share in this rewarding Sierra Club outreach program.



## The Green Review Summertime Reading Picks for Tennes-Sierrans

By Amy Lou Jenkins



**Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet, by Bill McKibben, Times Books, 2010, 210 pages.**

Twenty years ago, Bill McKibben declared in *The End of Nature* that nature had been forever altered by human acts. He was right. He foretold of a dangerous tide of change that was likely to follow.

Although his book was well-received, sold a lot of copies, and remains a popular environmental standard, McKibben admits: It did no good. Fossil fuels continue to be burned; forests obliterated; oceans over fished; stuff manufactured to replace last year's model; CO2 levels rose; climate changed.

McKibben now tells us our old Earth has morphed. We have a new planet, a new version—*eaarth*, formed within a "crescendo of cascading consequences." Over a billion people are hungry or at risk of hunger (more than 1 in 6). Massive swarms of jellyfish bloom in warmer acidic oceans, devouring native species. Extensive blobs of *E. coli* filled mucus, up to two-hundred kilometers long, float on the warmed seas, aggregate on piles of garbage or open ocean, and suffocate sea life by clogging their gills. Droughts, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, insect swarms, and pathogenic viruses and bacteria are all on the increase. Species extinctions mount on a daily basis. The diatribe of devastation is lengthy. However elegant his prose, this is uncomfortable to face, so many avoid it.

Climate change skeptics are unlikely to pick up this book. If you read his book—or even this review—you are under recruitment. We've

changed our light bulbs, ridden our bikes, and limited our beef intake. We now need system changes, better thinking. The theme "bigger is not better" seems antithetical to capitalistic thought, but McKibben makes it seem plausible.

McKibben joins the voices calling for smarter high and low tech solutions and a stop to our obsession with growth. It's time to retool. A time for each community to find solutions that are best for their circumstances, while supporting and integrating their solutions into the small and big governmental plans.

McKibben calls us to re-imagine our life on this new *eaarth*. He asks us to halt our vision of an ever-expanding economy; to support small farms, which as it turns out have higher yields and use less fossil fuel even before we take the food transport cost into effect; to retool our economies; to end our addiction to the fossil fuels that destroyed the Earth we knew; and to use the abundant renewable energy sources at hand.

*Eaarth* calls for a new vision. Citizen-activists and voters must drive change because mega corporations entangled in fossil fuel business will continue to use their dollars and power to obstruct the required retooling. *Eaarth* has given us factual ammunition, insight and hope. *Eaarth* is a recruitment brochure. Find current action plans and get started at McKibben's site: [www.350.org](http://www.350.org). He has not just thrown his hands in the air; he's thrown them out to us.

## Announcement about the Green Review columnist

Amy Lou Jenkins' debut book has been released with an impressive list of endorsements.

**Every Natural Fact: Five Seasons of Open-Air Parenting, by Amy Lou Jenkins, Holy Cow! Press, 2010, 184 pages.**

"Any reader drawn to the outdoors will cherish

Every Natural Fact and its author's sensual intelligence potted in the fertile soil of a boundless curiosity for the world. Amy Lou Jenkins is the Anna Quindlen of the north woods, the Rachel Carson of the good land of Wisconsin, bequeathing to her son and to all of us an indestructible sense of wonder." — Bob Shacochis, National Book Award-winning author of *Easy in The Islands* and *The Immaculate Invasion*

"Braiding together history, memoir, gentle parenting guidance, and superb nature writing, Jenkins' prose illuminates the details of ordinary life."—Susan Cheever, author of *American Bloomsbury*

"If you combined the lyricism of Annie Dillard, the vision of Aldo Leopold, and the gentle but tough-minded optimism of Frank McCourt, you might come close to Amy Lou Jenkins, a writer who obliterates the distinction between regional writing and actual, honest-to-god writing. I, for one, would follow her anywhere."—Tom Bissell, author of *The Father of All Things*

"What makes this book such a marvel is the way the human and the non-human are kept in perfect balance: the psychological dance of a mother and son, with all its funny, touching, realistic two-steps, intersects with the desire to be opened up to the mystery and rapture of the natural sublime. It is a splendid fusion, as much about



parenting and education and generation gaps as it is about patient observation of landscapes in flux. Jenkins' polished literary style makes it, sentence by sentence, a joy to read."—Phillip Lopate, author of *Waterfront*

More at [www.AmyLouJenkins.com](http://www.AmyLouJenkins.com)

# Middle Tennessee Group Social A Success

By Adelle Wood

The Middle Tennessee Group (MTG) welcomed about 60 members and friends to the May social at the home of Betsy Garber and Steve Vining. The food, provided by Craig and Marcia Jervis of the Mad Platter, was fabulous with an assortment of delicious finger foods based on local and organic products. Our hostess was thrilled with how Craig and Marcia took care of everything and that all of the dishes and flatware were washed for re-use!

Dr. Cliff Cockerham, chair of MTG's Environmental Justice Committee, provided a continuous slide show and program information to a number of interested attendees while others chatted, learned more about the Sierra Club, and enjoyed the offerings on the buffet table. Thanks to all who came and all who contributed, including our roving photographer, John Pigg.



Photos: John Pigg

## “Happy Hour” July 15

We invite you to join us for our “happy hour” member social on Thursday, July 15 from 6:00 to

8:00 p.m. at the United Steelworkers building, 3340 Perimeter Hill Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37211 (very near the intersection of Harding Place

and I-24). We will serve finger foods and wine, and we look forward to seeing you there.

# National Forum on Radioactive Waste Policy Sets Recommendations

By Steven Sondheim and Don Safer

Seventy-eight activists from 26 states, Canada and Australia, including members of the Nuclear Energy Information Resource Service, Nuclear Information Resource Service and the Sierra Club met in Chicago June 4-6 to consider actions to deal with the spread of radioactive waste from current and future nuclear power plants.

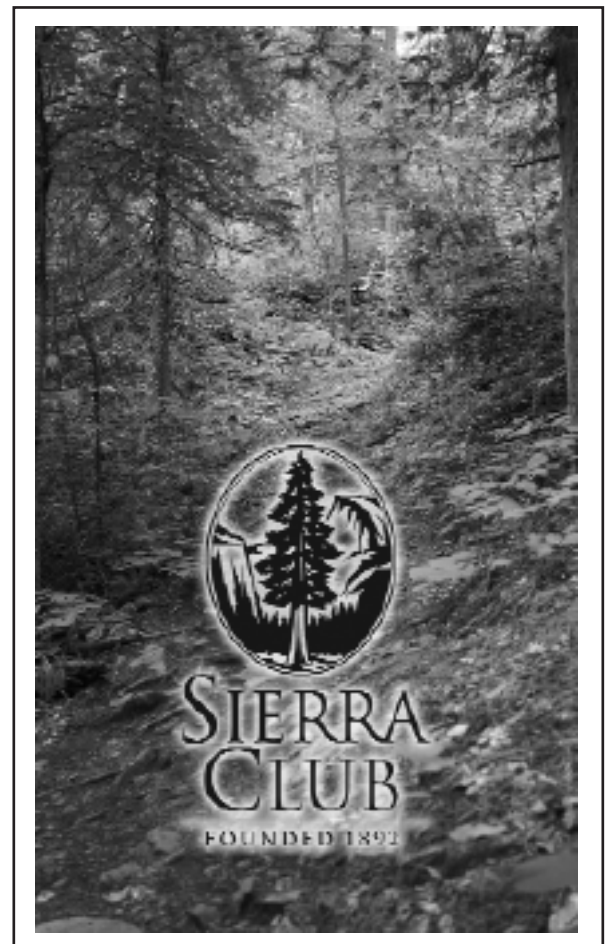
Groups met around national issues and geographic/regional alignments. The southeast group included Steven Sondheim of the Tennessee Sierra Club, Don Safer of Tennessee Environmental Council and Susan Corbett of the South Carolina Sierra Club.

In the discussions about “hot spots” around the country it became clear that Tennessee stands alone in its role as the nation’s destination for “low-level” radioactive waste processing and disposal. This role is currently expanding rapidly with proposals or plans for a seventh radioactive waste incinerator, importing Italian radioactive waste, and accepting the Class B and C waste (more radioactive than Class A) from the reactors in 36 states for processing.

A Green Ribbon Nuclear-Free Commission was formed to give feedback to the national Blue Ribbon Commission on America’s Nuclear Future.

## Recommendations:

1. Stop making new nuclear waste—no new nuclear plants.
2. Prohibit reprocessing of irradiated fuel which has not solved the radioactive waste problem and actually exacerbates it by creating numerous additional waste streams and increases nuclear weapons proliferation threats.
3. Current storage preferred is hardened on-site (HOSS) dry cask storage until a safe and secure long-term repository can be established.
4. Storage should be maintained on site.
5. Not in favor of transporting waste to central storage sites.
6. Nuclear power is not a solution to global warming. It’s too carbon intensive, too dangerous and costly, and there are insurmountable waste pollution problems.
7. Instead use efficiency to keep from building new power plants in the short term and use the tremendous resources that nuclear would take to build up renewable energy.
8. As renewables come on board, retire dirtiest and oldest coal and nuclear power plants.



## Moving?



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Mail to:

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P.O. Box 52968 Boulder, CO 80322-2968

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**Tennes-Sierran**  
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