



Board of Directors

President
Eugene Burr
Knoxville
Architect / urban planner

Vice-President
Marge Davis, Ph.D.
Mt. Juliet

Past President
Dr. Eugene J. Sanders
Winchester
Engineer (ret.)

Secretary
Suzanne I. Askw
Memphis
Garden designer;
Tennessee Federation of
Garden Clubs

Treasurer
Larry R. Rains
Memphis
A3p Business Solutions

Pamela Glaser
Chattanooga
Senior Planner
Planning & Design Studio

Leslee Dodd Karl, Ph.D.
Murfreesboro
Scientist (retired)
Tennessee Federation of Garden
Clubs; Col. Hardy Murfree
Chapter, DAR

Marie Zwolinski, AICP
Memphis
Urban planner

Advisory Board

Tobie Bledsoe
Mayor of Jonesborough

Duncan Callicott
Franklin
Callicott & Associates,
Landscape Architectural &
Horticultural Consultants

Doug Cameron
Sewanee

Marleen Kay Davis, A.I.A.
Knoxville
Professor and former dean,
UT College of Architecture
and Design; board member,
Scenic America

Jim Harter
Knoxville
Electronics engineer (ret.),
Oak Ridge National Labs

Charlotte Marshall
Clarksville

Patrick McIntyre
Nashville
Tennessee Preservation Trust

Mack Prichard
Nashville
State naturalist, Tennessee
Department of Environment
and Conservation

Joe Prochaska
Knoxville
Professor Emeritus, UT
Department of Urban Planning



In early April, I attended, in your behalf, the Annual Scenic America Affiliates and Board of Directors meeting in Austin, Texas.

This was the first visit for my wife Rosemary and me to Austin. With its impressive state capitol buildings, downtown

Message from the President

historic district and lively nightlife (Austin is known as “The Live Music Capitol of the World”), our experience in Austin exceeded our expectations.

As part of this gathering, Scenic America arranged for attendees to tour the Ladybird Johnson Wild-flower Center, a place that is interesting architecturally as well as botanically. The visit seemed particularly appropriate since the Highway Beautification Act inspired by Lady Bird 41 years ago was a subject of much discussion at the workshop.



The state capitol visitor center in Austin is in the restored 1856-57 General Land Office building. It is the oldest state office building in Texas.

Being in Texas also allowed us to witness firsthand the state's success in regulating signage. Knowing how few communities in Tennessee prohibit new billboards, I was impressed to learn that 300 towns and cities in the Lone Star State do not allow new billboards.

Houston is a success story by itself, particularly considering that the city has absolutely no zoning to regulate signs. In 1980, tired of the collective eyesore of 10,000 existing billboards, the city passed a law prohibiting new ones. Today, the total has been reduced by half—and the ones that are still standing will be removed by 2013!

Attorneys experienced in sign control have always said that it is more constructive to deal with future than existing signs. It was inspiring to see this truth come to life in a city like Houston.

It was also inspiring to meet the dedicated and well-informed executive directors of other state affiliates—though I have to confess it was also a source of envy. I couldn't help thinking how much

more effective Scenic Tennessee could be if we had leaders of their caliber coordinating every one of our programs statewide!

On the other hand, my confidence rose as soon as I met the newest Scenic America staff. Betsy Ensley is a gifted graphics, website and communications specialist who is now managing the organization's online communications; and Brad Cownover, a landscape architect with expertise in Scenic Byways, visual resource management and other scenic conservation issues, has come on board as director of scenic conservation services.

Both of these skills—communications as well as scenic conservation—are vitally important if affiliates are to continue to function effectively in the new century. I believe President Kevin Fry is squarely on target in building the strengths of the national staff in these areas. The challenge for us here in Tennessee is to make sure we watch for and seize each opportunity to work creatively with these good people, whose energies and resources, after all, must be shared among 10 state affiliates. ■

I'd like to take a moment to congratulate Scenic Tennessee board member Marie Zwolinski on her upcoming marriage (June 17) to William Edward Branch, in Memphis. Some of you know Marie as a highly respected city planner (she is currently assistant director of planning for the city of Olive Branch, Miss.), while others met her at this year's Scenic Resources conference at Cheekwood, which she organized. Weddings are always good news, but the best news is that, for now at least, Marie and William will stay in Tennessee!



Gene Burr, AIA, AICP
Scenic Tennessee president

Encouraging words (and a little poetry) on the bottle bill

As we take a break from our (sometimes bruising but always worthwhile) campaign to clean up Tennessee's roadsides via a 5-cent deposit on bottles and cans, we've been gratified by the words of wisdom, support and encouragement forwarded by supporters and well-wishers not only throughout the state but from around the country and even the world. Some examples:

from Chattanooga:

"Aggressive fighting for the right is the noblest sport the world affords." —Theodore Roosevelt

from Massachusetts:

"Rome wasn't built in a day."

from Knoxville:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." —Margaret Mead

from Utah:

"It won't be long before TN has a BB!"

from Franklin:

"It ain't over till it's over ... and it's *never* over!"

from Nashville:

"It must be remembered that there is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success nor more dangerous to manage than the creation of a new system. For the initiator has the enmity of all who profit by the preservation of the old institution and merely lukewarm defenders in those who would gain by the new one." —Machiavelli

from Vancouver:

"This is a long process, yet when you reach a certain tipping point things will move very fast."

from Washington, DC:

"You may not have succeeded in getting out of committee, but you sure as heck got a lot of attention."

from Norway (yes, that one!):

"Wish your good look and hope the BILL will someday win!"

And finally, with thanks to Mary Lynn Dobson of Rockwood, these inspiring lines from "Easter Exultet," part of a collection called *Little Sermons of the Big Joy* by James Broughton:

EASTER EXULTET

Shake out your qualms.

Shake up your dreams.

Deepen your roots.

Extend your branches.

Trust deep water
and head for the open,
even if your vision
shipwrecks you.

Quit your addiction
to sneer and complain.

Open a lookout.

Dance on a brink.

Run with your wildfire.

You are closer to glory
leaping an abyss
than upholstering a rut.

There's little enough poetry in the legislature, so these postings are much appreciated.

A final note: Bottle-bill supporters, including several from neighboring states, will gather in Nashville on July 15 for an all-day strategy session. If you are interested, e-mail margedavis@comcast.net or call (615) 758-8647. ■

Viewpoints is published quarterly by Scenic Tennessee, an affiliate of Scenic America. Read it online at www.scenictennessee.org. Please direct submissions or calendar items to:

Marge Davis, editor
(615) 758-8647
(615) 754-0966 FAX
margedavis@comcast.net

Subscriptions are free with membership. To join, please send this form with your check to:

Scenic Tennessee
99 South 2nd Street, Suite A-166
Memphis, TN 38103-3025

Enclosed is my donation of :

- \$20 Individual \$40 Nonprofit Group \$250 Corporate Sponsor
 \$30 Family \$100 Sponsor \$500 Arthur Smith Society
 Other \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Scenic Tennessee is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your gift is tax-deductible.

Scenic Tenn joins amicus brief

Scenic Tennessee has joined the American Planning Association, the APA's Tennessee Chapter, the International Municipal Lawyers Association and Scenic America to support the city of Brentwood in its defense against a lawsuit filed by billboard company Prime Media, Inc. All of the legal work is being provided pro bono by lawyers in California, Florida and Minnesota.

At issue is whether Prime Media has "standing" to challenge the entirety of Brentwood's sign code after one of its sign permit applications was denied. According to attorney Bill Brinton, billboard companies have filed more than 100 similar lawsuits in recent years in an effort to collapse the entirety of a sign code by arguing that unrelated problematic provisions cannot be severed out of a code and that a court must therefore toss out the code in its entirety.

If successful, the billboard company then argues that all of its permits must be granted since there was no constitutional ordinance on the books when the applications were first submitted.

The brief was filed in the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in January. ■

A full slate of duties at the state beautification office

by Shawn Bible, coordinator of
TDOT's Beautification Office

While Tennessee's roads are consistently rated some of the best in the country, the Tennessee Department of Transportation is about a lot more than just road building.

As part of the department's Environmental Division, the Beautification Office encompasses a multi-faceted group of programs ranging from regulatory control to preserving, sustaining and enhancing the beauty of our Tennessee landscape.

Some of you know us through the business of outdoor advertising, some through our litter prevention and beautification programs, and still others through the grant opportunities we provide.



TDOT's Beautification Office oversees Tennessee's network of designated scenic highways and parkways. The latter are identified by the mockingbird symbol, such as atop this sign near Rogersville.

Three of our programs—Outdoor Advertising Control, Vegetation Control and Junkyard Control—are regulatory in nature and sanctioned by statute. The Litter Grant Program allocates funding for all 95 Tennessee counties for litter abatement and litter prevention education.

The Adopt-A-Highway, Scenic Highways and Tennessee Roadscapes programs advocate environmental stewardship through partnerships and networking with community groups, individuals, civic groups, nonprofits, government agencies and businesses. These programs allow citizens to participate in preserving scenic vistas, building and maintaining new landscapes and cleaning up roadsides through litter pickup activities.

Tennessee Roadscapes is our newest initiative. This program provides opportunities for a variety

of environmental stewardship and beautification programs along the interstates and highways of Tennessee. One such opportunity will make federal funds available for roadside landscaping.

Thanks to this funding, TDOT will be able to partner with city, county and community organizations to create environmentally-friendly landscaping projects along roadsides throughout the state. (See the sidebar below for tips on doing your own "environmentally-friendly" gardening.)

Grant applications for Roadscapes partnership funds will be available on our website in July (go to www.tennessee.gov/tdot/roadscapes).

Other grant opportunities administered by the Beautification Office include National Scenic Byways discretionary grants for our Tennessee Scenic Highways Program. Each year, interested groups may apply for merit-based funding for byway-related projects. We'll be soliciting applications in July 2007 for the next round of grants.

Tennessee's Scenic Highways Program is

designed to recognize and showcase outstanding cultural, historical, archeological, recreational, natural and scenic resources along Tennessee's public highways. TDOT's Beautification Office supports local and regional scenic

highway organizations in their quest for National Byway funding and recognition. You can find a wealth of resources and information about the National Scenic Byways program, including information about Tennessee's programs, at www.bywayonline.org.

"Keep Tennessee Beautiful" is more than a phrase. It involves the dedication and effort of all Tennesseans to ensure that the pristine beauty found in Tennessee remains for the enjoyment of future generations. We hope you will learn about opportunities for service in your community and about the community benefits our programs provide.

To learn more about our programs, projects and services, please visit TDOT's Beautification Office website at www.tdot.state.tn.us/environment/beautification or contact us at (615) 741-2877. ■



TDOT's Shawn Bible has an extensive background in forestry, beautification and environmental education.

Nine principles of environmentally-friendly landscaping

Right plants, right places

select sites and plants that require minimal water, fertilizer and pesticides

Water efficiently

irrigate only when needed to conserve water and reduce runoff

Mulch

layer 2"-3" of mulch to retain moisture, prevent erosion and suppress weeds

Recycle

leaves and grass clippings add nutrients to the soil and reduce waste disposal

Fertilize appropriately

less is generally best

Responsible pest control

identify the pest, then find the lowest-impact method that will control it

Reduce stormwater runoff

design the site to retain soil and keep fertilizer and pesticides from washing away

Attract wildlife

use plants that provide food, water and shelter to birds and other critters

Protect lakes and streams

plant natural buffer strips to absorb runoff and minimize nonpoint water pollution

*adapted from Carolina Yards and Neighborhoods
(www.clemson.edu/cyn)*

Scenic Tennessee joins the Tennessee Preservation Trust in announcing
the 13th Annual Scenic Tennessee Photo Contest

VIEWING HISTORY:

CELEBRATING THE SCENIC CHARACTER OF TENNESSEE'S HISTORIC PLACES

CRITERIA & OBJECTIVES

The goal of this year's contest is threefold:
to celebrate Tennessee's historical richness
to recognize the degree to which historic sites add depth and meaning to Tennessee's scenic beauty
to honor the preservation ethic and its role in safeguarding our historical, cultural and scenic heritage

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS

Historic buildings such as the Carnton Mansion in Franklin or the Friends Church in Maryville
Historic districts such as Cades Cove in the Smokies or Beale Street in Memphis
Historic neighborhoods such as Old Westmoreland in Knoxville or Germantown in Nashville
Historic commercial or industrial sites such as Harms Mill hydroelectric station in Fayetteville or the Shelbyville Railroad Station
Historic towns such as Rugby or Jonesborough
Historic monuments such as Pinson Indian Mounds or the structures at Red Clay State Historic Park
...and any as-yet-unprotected treasures that might be lost forever if we don't act to safeguard them now!

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Up to three submissions per entrant
Submissions must include the photographer's name, address, phone, e-mail (if available), a brief description of the photo, and the submission category from the list below (students should include the name of their school and teacher, if appropriate)
Print images may be black-and-white or color, no smaller than 4" x 6" and no larger than 8" x 10"
Digital images may be on CD, DVD or floppy disk, in JPEG or TIFF format, and preferably with at least 300 dpi resolution

SUBMISSION CATEGORIES & PRIZES

Student Group A (grades 5-8)	\$50 first; \$25 second; \$10 third; honorable mention
Student Group B (grades 9-12)	\$50 first; \$25 second; \$10 third; honorable mention
Adult amateur	\$25 gift card to Border's Books and Music
Adult professional	\$25 gift card to Border's Books and Music
Garden Club member	\$25 gift card to Border's Books and Music

JUDGING

Photos will be judged for originality, photographic quality and the degree to which the photographer has fulfilled the criteria and objectives of the contest. Winners will be announced at Scenic Tennessee's annual meeting in Nashville on November 5, 2006.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

October 21, 2006 (entries must be received by this date)

GENERAL INFORMATION

This contest is jointly sponsored by Scenic Tennessee and the Tennessee Preservation Trust. All photographs submitted may be used by either group in its ongoing scenic awareness efforts. Any photograph not meeting the contest rules will not be judged.

MAIL OR E-MAIL ENTRIES TO

Scenic Tennessee Photo Contest
99 South 2nd Street, Suite A-166
Memphis, TN 38103-6025
info@scenictennessee.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION

About the contest: info@scenictennessee.org or www.scenictennessee.org
About historic preservation in Tennessee: www.tennesseepreservationtrust.org

Notes From All Over

Post-Katrina amendment may gut HBA

adapted from the Scenic America website

On May 4, the U.S. Senate passed an amendment to the emergency supplemental appropriations bill that will effectively gut the only provision of the Highway Beautification Act that has proven useful in removing old billboards from our rural and scenic highways.

Current federal regulations say that if a nonconforming sign is knocked down in a storm (such as happened in Hurricane Katrina), it has to stay down and cannot be reconstructed. The amendment introduced by Sen. Robert Bennett (R-Utah) sidesteps that provision by permitting 13 states in the South and Southeast to rebuild demolished signs even though they could not otherwise be legally rebuilt due to their location, size or proximity to other signs. (Legal, conforming signs can be rebuilt no matter what causes their demise.)

The affected signs are mainly the old wooden billboards in rural and scenic areas that have been around for 30 years or more and have, by any reasonable measure, recouped the investment of the sign companies that erected them.

The emergency supplemental appropriations bill, with the billboard amendment attached, will now go before a joint Senate-House conference committee. Concerned citizens should contact their Senators and Congressmen in Washington, urging that the amendment be removed. ■

Columbia debates sign ordinance

adapted from the (Nashville)Tennessean

A proposed sign ordinance in Columbia, Tenn., could ban inflatable advertisements such as balloons and banners—even those promoting the town's annual Mule Day festival, an event that dates to the mid-1800s and generates major tourism dollars for the community of 33,000.

Supporters say the new law will improve the city's look. But some business leaders worry that too many restrictions may hamper growth and the tax dollars that come with it because companies will head for communities whose rules are looser.

Columbia is the latest Midstate city to wrestle with sign regulation. Others now have sign ordinances and several, including Spring Hill, Hendersonville and Ashland City, have amended or rewritten them over the past 10 years.

The goal is to get more control over the size, shape and content of signs that can dominate their landscapes. But it doesn't usually happen without a fight. Greg Smith rushed to replace two 25-year-

old, storm-damaged signs in front of the shopping center he owns in Hendersonville before aldermen approved a new sign ordinance in 2004. ■

State launches anti-litter campaign

adapted from the WSMV-TV website

When Tennessee first lady Andrea Conte walked 600 miles around the state promoting child advocacy programs, she kept noticing the trash and litter beside Tennessee roads.

"Walking gives you a special vantage point, but there was one lingering image that wasn't so pretty: all those pockets and miles of trash along the roadside," Conte said.

That's how Conte, wife of Gov. Phil Bredesen, took up a new cause and why she joined the Tennessee Department of Transportation in unveiling a statewide campaign to reduce littering.

"Tennesseans have reached the tipping point for frustration with litter in their communities," said interim TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely.

The Stop Litter campaign will use hundreds of television, radio and billboard ads over the next six months to focus on 18- to 34-year-olds who are mostly likely to deliberately litter, according to the state coordinator of Keep Tennessee Beautiful, Edith Heller. ■

Dumping on ex-Mainer's bottle bill

adapted from the Portland (Maine) Press Herald

If Marge Davis had a nickel for every bottle and can she sees lying along the roadside near her home, she'd be ... never mind. Down in her neck of the woods, it's not going to happen anytime soon.

"It didn't pass this year," Davis, who grew up in Portland and now lives in Mt. Juliet, Tenn., said of her beloved bottle bill. "These things are so incremental—it took California 10 years to pass theirs."

That's right, folks. Three decades after Maine decided to put its money where its empties were—and in the process cleaned up its roadsides virtually overnight—many states continue to trash returnable bottles and cans. States like Tennessee, where Davis has lived since 1979.

"I had a news crew out at my house last spring and we went out to the road and started counting empties," she recalled. At 5 cents per container, "I had up to \$2 without even moving my feet."

Davis' Tennessee Bottle Bill Project recently held a "Message in the Bottle(s)" photo contest. The winners (posted at www.tnbottlebill.org) look

like the aftermath of a Maine charity bottle drive—minus the big check and smiling faces.

Davis has tried to cite Maine as an example that Tennessee would do well to follow. She and the bill's sponsor, state Rep. Russell Johnson, even traveled here in December to see how we do it, starting with those "reverse vending machines" that gobble up empties and spit back receipts.

But alas, Davis and Johnson so far are no match for the beverage industry. Year after year, the beer and soft-drink lobbyists have crushed bottle bills in Tennessee and the 38 other states that still lack them—just as they tried in the late 1970s to thwart returnables here in Maine.

Davis tells Tennessee lawmakers how many times she's asked people in Maine if they'd do it all over again—and how they universally respond that the bottle bill is the best thing that ever happened to the Pine Tree State.

Along with, of course, the ban on billboards.

"We have those too," lamented Davis. ■

Going underground with utility wires

adapted from Scenic Overlook, the newsletter of Scenic America

Electric power generation and telecommunications are supported by a network of more than 2 million miles of electrical wires, 190 million telecommunications lines and 100 million utility poles. Yet unsightly as the hardware might be, the utilities they support are vital to serving the infrastructure needs of a growing country. The challenge is how to site and build them in a manner that mitigates their visual impacts.

One solution, encouraged by Scenic America, is to bury the utilities in a process referred to as "undergrounding." Much of the discussion so far has been limited to burying *distribution* lines—the wires that deliver power to individual residences and businesses. However, there is also potential for undergrounding *transmission* lines—the large cables that transmit electricity from power plants to primary substations across the country.

While excessive cost and technical infeasibility are often cited by utility companies and others as reasons for why transmission lines cannot be buried, examples are popping up across the country that demonstrate that the technology does indeed exist and that the costs are not necessarily prohibitive. The potential social costs of not burying these lines, including the destruction of the visual environment and the loss of sense of place and community character, outweigh the discrepancies in costs for construction. ■

Dates Worth Noting

- July 15** **Bottle bill strategy meeting**
Mt. Juliet. Contact Marge Davis, (615) 758-8647 or margedavis@comcast.net for agenda or directions.
- July 22** **Scenic Tennessee board meeting**
Nashville, 10-2. geneburr@comcast.net for agenda or directions.
- Aug 15** **Submission deadline**
Viewpoints Fall 2006 issue. Send stories or calendar items to margedavis@comcast.net.
- Sept 13-16** **Crossroads in Heritage Conservation:
When Modern Becomes Historic**
International Annual Conference, Association for Preservation Technology. Atlanta Hilton. www.apti.org.
- Oct 5-7** **S.A.R. 2006: Design Fitness**
Annual conference of the South Atlantic Region, American Institute of Architects. Chattanooga Convention Center. Contact Kathryn Goodwin, (404) 222-0099 or kgoodwin@aiaga.org.
- Oct 21** **Photo contest submission deadline**
See page 4 for details.
- Nov 5** **Scenic Tennessee Annual Meeting**
Nashville; details in fall newsletter

Useful Websites

- General scenic resources issues**
www.scenic.org (Scenic America)
www.scenic.tennessee.org
- Forestry & horticulture**
www.tufc.com (TN Urban Forestry Council)
www.gardenclub.org
- Urban design & planning**
www.planning.org (American Planning Assoc.)
www.aia.org (American Institute of Architects)
www.asla.org (American Society of Landscape Architects)
www.tclf.org (Cultural Landscape Foundation)
- Bottle bills & litter**
www.tnbottlebill.org
www.container-recycling.org
www.bottlebill.org
- Preservation & land trusts**
www.nationaltrust.org (historic preservation)
www.railtrails.org (Rails-to-Trails Conservancy)
www.landtrusttn.org (Land Trust for Tennessee)
www.conservationfund.org
- General environmental issues**
www.tnconservationvoters.org
www.techtn.org (TN Environmental Council)
- Legal guidance**
www.southernenvironment.org
(Southern Environmental Law Center)



an affiliate of Scenic America

99 South 2nd Street
Suite A-166
Memphis, TN 38103-3025

www.scenic.tennessee.org