

Walker Valley

The newsletter of  
Great Smoky Mountains  
Institute at Tremont  
Spring 2007

# REFLECTIONS



## Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont 2006 Annual Report



...connecting people and nature in Great Smoky Mountains National Park

# Annual Report 2006

*From the Executive Director*



## What Are We Truly About?

How many of you feel like you spend more time meeting about what you should be doing than actually doing the work that needs to get done? At Tremont we work hard at balancing the need for planning, good communication, and doing the day-to-day tasks, while striving to remember our mission. It takes added work to remain focused on why we do what we do, why we are here, and what the real impact and value of all our hard work produces. Some days that is easier than others but I am thankful that at Tremont reminders of our mission confront us every day, even in the midst of meetings, paperwork, and all of those necessary day-to-day tasks.

Just this week a group of us were meeting in our library with representatives of the park and the University of Tennessee. I had a seat where I could see the river just outside of the glass doors of the Riverside Room. At some point during our meeting I noticed movement on the far bank of the river. We all moved to the windows on this wintry day to watch a river otter run along the bank, slide into the river and then climb on to a rock and devour a trout that it had just caught! Now how many people would have the opportunity

to witness such an event during a meeting at work? Yes we do realize that we have great jobs and work in a wonderful place. The otter was one of those reminders of why we do what we do, why we have a great job, and why our meetings, planning, day-to-day tasks and focus on mission are critical so that we get things right.

As we seek support for our programs it is essential that people understand our mission, the vision we have for the future, and the impact that our programs bring about. The information that follows in this "Annual Report" issue of our newsletter should give you a good idea of just that. Our successes are measured in many ways beyond the statistics that are provided here although we are proud of those as well. They are also measured in what we see in our participants as they explore the park with us and what we hear from them and those they touch long after they have left our little valley in the Smokies.

I sometimes hear from people that they don't think people really understand what Tremont is about and what we do. Because of that we want to find more ways to get our key messages in front of people, to build a wider base of support and understanding of the power that our programs have and how critical our work is in today's world. We are doing that in several ways and need

those of you who have been our supporters and understand the power of the Tremont experience to get the word out. We are working to organize a core group of those who care deeply about Tremont to work with us to spread the word and broaden our support. We have hired our first full time public relations and development director, Meredith Goins, so that we have someone whose primary focus is to find ways for us to build support and understanding of the Tremont mission. We will be more conscious about making sure that all of our Tremont supporters understand and can communicate our mission and key messages in a clear and consistent way (see sidebar Tremont Mission). Over the next year we will use this newsletter as well as our other outlets like our website, e-news, brochures, etc., to further describe and illustrate the various components of our mission.

2006 was an excellent year and I hope you will spend some time reviewing this issue and the successes that it celebrates. 2007 will be a critical year as we complete the Environmental Assessment on our buildings and lay the groundwork for our future. We have a number of important challenges and opportunities that face us in the near future and we feel well equipped to make the most of both. In 2009, we will celebrate our 40th anniversary as Great Smokies National Park celebrates its 75th! Watch for details about initiatives that will take advantage of those events and let us know if you would like to get involved.

This issue also honors and celebrates the many people that support Tremont in one way or another. Thanks to each one of you who gave your time, energies, money or materials to help us. Our mission is fueled and empowered by you!

Thank you. Please visit us if you can or drop us a line so that we can keep in touch. We want to tell the stories of how Tremont has impacted people so if you have a story to share we would love to hear it. Those stories are important reminders in the midst of all of our busyness of why we are here and that the difference we make is powerful.

In care of the earth,

*Executive Director*

## 2006 Successes

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont (GSMIT) continues to be an important part of the park's comprehensive resource education program. GSMIT is a private 501(c)(3) non-profit partner of Great Smoky Mountains National Park and provided \$1.2 million worth of educational services to the park in 2006. In-depth residential environmental education programs at GSMIT along with outreach and other visits reached 17,169 people. Attendance, program income and sales were all exceptional. During a number of months a record number of participants were served and attendance was up 10% from 2005.

Research has shown that in-depth experiences have a greater impact than short term visits. Teachers, students and program participants, as well as formal evaluation, continue to indicate that our programs are of signifi-

cant value and are important for increasing appreciation and understanding of GSMNP.

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont was selected in 2006 by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation from a large number of nominees to receive the Governor's Stewardship Award for our work in environmental education.

### *Staff and Board*

Our greatest resource is the people that do the work to make all that happens at GSMIT possible. We continue to maintain and work to attract the best staff possible. In 2006 we made several critical personnel transitions successfully with school program director, citizen science director, grounds and facilities manager, food service manager, senior teacher naturalist and creating a new position of public relations/development director. We are excited to have Meredith Goins serving in

that role and helping us as we move ahead in 2007. We also welcomed Katie Wilkinson to our staff early in 2007 as our new food service manager. We will miss Lori Flanagan in that role and appreciate her years of service. We are so proud of the group of people that currently help connect people and nature each day.

We also have a wonderfully qualified and committed board of directors that continue to help us think big and reach for our vision for the future that involves developing our program, site and facilities to be a widely recognized model of sustainable design, practice and instruction. In 2006 we were glad to elect two new and talented board members, Pat Atkins and Maribel Koella. Both Dick Ray and Patrick Roddy have completed two full terms and the board has chosen to honor them and continue to involve them as directors emeritus. Herb Handy has served faithfully on our board as secretary and head of the operations committee and has decided to rotate off this year. We truly appreciate Herb's dedication and help over the past six years.

## Goals for 2007

- Complete Environmental Assessment and gain decision on a preferred alternative.
- Give feasibility report to the park indicating our ability to raise the needed funds for site and facility "undevelopment."
- Expand our board and review structure.
- Review, adapt and expand curriculum guide.
- Continue to correlate school program with standards.
- Enhance and expand our efforts and effectiveness with cooperative teaching and preparing teachers.
- Increase school recruitment efforts and improve publicity for that program.
- Increase Citizen Science volunteers.
- Conduct Advanced Science Teacher Institute.
- Create a curriculum for a "Naturalist Training Course."
- Add new Citizen Science projects.
- Implement plan to remodel and expand science lab.
- Upgrade database to a more integrated and expanded system.
- Get fundraising plan approved for facilities and begin securing funds.
- Begin new facility design.
- Make positive progress toward fundraising goals.
- Continue to expand and fine-tune our evaluation program. Formalize and publish or create a presentation piece about results.
- Short-term facility improvements—pavilion roof, entryway awnings, solar array, etc.
- Promote and expand the Native Plant Landscape Certification Program.
- Build relationships through multiple channels; media, publications, Internet, etc.
- Develop key messages and build consistency in style, look, and message.
- Create a GSMIT support group that will plan an onsite event for fall '07.
- Improve and expand food service quality and environmental sensitivity.
- Update employee manual.
- Incorporate volunteers in the office and elsewhere.
- Explore educational partnerships with Maryville College and University of Tennessee in relation to college level instruction offered at GSMIT.
- Continue relationship with UT Archaeology Department through archaeology summer camps and outreach activities.

### *School Programs*

We began to see success from continuing efforts to recruit new schools. Ninety-four schools from 12 states brought almost 4,000 students for residential experiences. Local school systems have increased use. Maryville Intermediate is one local school that we have been working with to return to Tremont and they brought three groups for a total of over 250 students in 2006. We were able to provide \$32,724 in financial aid and scholarships, more than ever before, which assisted 339 individuals.

### *Evaluation*

The impact that our school program has had on students is now being documented as a result of our evaluation program that has been in place for over a year now. That program was made possible by a grant from the Alcoa Foundation. With data from over 1,000 student surveys and 75 teacher surveys we have compiled a very reliable data set with preliminary results showing positive impacts as a result of our programs. We also contracted with our evaluation team to assist us in analyzing our data and expanding that program this year. Results of the impact study will be posted on our website and published in 2007.

Our research shows students have a statistically significant increase in the following indices after attending a school program:

continued on page 4

## 2006 Successes continued from page 3

- Sense of place and a connection with nature ( $p < .001$ )
- Stewardship ( $p < .001$ )
- Interest in cultural history ( $p < .001$ )
- Interest in learning ( $p < .001$ )

Along with the findings in the indices, we also found statistically significant results in the following individual measurements:

- Increase in students who know how to read a topographic map after the Tremont program ( $p < .001$ )
- Increase in students who understand the definition of an exotic species after the Tremont program ( $p < .001$ )
- Increase in students who know how to use a field guide after the Tremont program ( $p < .001$ )
- Increase in students who know the range of diversity (represented in approximate number of species) that exist within Great Smoky Mountains National Park ( $p < .001$ )
- Increase in students' knowledge about the environmental role of Great Smoky Mountains National Park and its ability to protect species ( $p = .092$ ), preserve cultural history ( $p < .001$ ), help clean the air ( $p < .001$ ), and help keep the water clean ( $p < .001$ ).

## Other Programs/Initiatives

Successes and progress in other Tremont programs include:

- Hosted another Smoky Mountains Science Teacher Institute in partnership with National Park Service and Discover Life in America. Participant comments on the value and quality of that program were exceptional
  - Successful summer internships by six interns from four states
  - Hosted a variety of other programs with partners including Karst Quest-DLIA, Appalachian Celebration-Heritage Center, Experience Your Smokies, Leadership Blount, etc.
  - Hosted international intern Dixie Makwale, a park ranger and environmental educator from Malawi
  - Developed new Native American program
  - Our 3rd consecutive Palace Theater performance exposed Tremont to the larger community
  - Awarded grants from Knoxville Arts and Culture Alliance and Citigroup Foundation for Arts and Environment weekend '07 and Community Artisans
  - Community Artisan program reached 776 kids through the arts by bringing performing artists during residential school programs
  - Reached over 1,700 people through community outreach programs.

## Environmental Assessment for "Undeveloping Tremont"

Plans for improving the site and facilities at Tremont made significant progress as we began the formal Environmental Assessment (E.A.). Through that process alternatives were developed, comments were solicited from the public and stakeholders, and preliminary site studies were conducted. A decision on alternatives and approval should occur in 2007.

As the E.A. has progressed, we have also been meeting with environmental managers from a number of corporations to seek commitments for funding for this project. Our goal is to create a program, site and facility that are models of sustainable design, practice and instruction. To create a site and facility that will allow us to enhance and expand our program opportunities and outreach, we will raise \$25 million through a combination of funding from corporations, federal/state funds, and individual donors.

We were also able to accomplish a number of enhancements to our current site and facilities including:

- Improvements to the Activity Center to improve accessibility with assistance from NPS. This included paving and pouring a new sidewalk and improving entrances

## Tremont's Mission

*What does '...connecting people and nature' mean?*

Sustainability requires understanding and living as if people are a part of nature not apart from it.

*Vision statement:* Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont enhances people's connection to nature.

*Mission statement:* Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont provides IN-DEPTH EXPERIENCES through educational programs designed to nurture APPRECIATION of GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK, celebrate DIVERSITY, and foster STEWARDSHIP.

Any of you who have worked with a group to craft a mission statement understand that it is no quick and easy task. Ours is no different. The words are carefully chosen, and this version, adopted in 2000, represents the collective thought and ideas of many people over a significant period of time. Still, it is a mouthful, and the implications, actions, and intentions of a number of the words and phrases reach much further.

The words in capital letters in the mission statement above are the essence of what we are about. In following issues of this newsletter we will take time to reflect more deeply on what each of those key words have behind them. The elevator speech—that's what several board members have reminded me that we each need to have at the ready—expresses our key messages quickly and concisely. The elevator speech is simply:

- Tremont enhances people's connection to nature

- Tremont is a residential environmental learning center within Great Smoky Mountains National Park
- Tremont offers in-depth educational experiences with the national park as our vehicle, living and learning in the heart of the park.

With a primary focus on children and educators, Tremont's impact is:

- Increased appreciation for wild places and sense of place in their home ecosystem
- Heightened understanding of biological and cultural diversity
- Development of a stewardship ethic.

Connecting people and nature is more than exposing people to nature. It is about making a connection between people and nature. When we look at people as a part of the natural world, not apart from it, we begin to understand what living in a sustainable way means.

We have a strategic plan that outlines the actions we need to accomplish our mission and we review and revise that regularly. Our key vision statement for what we want to accomplish in the next two to three years flows from the other statements.

*Vision for next two to three years:* To develop Tremont's program, site and facilities to be a model of sustainable design, practice and instruction.

# Program Summary 2006

ATTENDANCE		FINANCIAL	
Total residential participants	5,572	Earned income	79%
Youth programs	4,739	Program fees	\$879,473
Adult programs	781	Net sales	\$63,646
Program user days	21,468	Other	\$25,244
Program user hours	170,582	Total earned income	\$968,363
Citizen Science	437	Support income	21%
Outreach	1,763	Program fees subsidized	\$40,629
Park visitors (in visitor center)	11,063	Other support income	\$217,362
Total impacts	18,835	Total support income	\$257,991
Number of groups	139	Total income (operating)	\$1,282,335
Financial aid	339-\$32,724	Expenses (operating)	\$1,158,444
Volunteer hours	1,378	Capital expense	\$53,094
		Endowment value	\$848,983

- Shower room improvements in Activity Center for participants using our tent platforms
- Overhead LCD projector installed in Cove Room
- Additional lights in lower dorm and dorm bathrooms and replacement of incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents
- New drop ceilings throughout dorm and dining hall lobby
- New Energy Star washer and dryer
- Remodeling and creation of a new office in the administration building
- HVAC system in the maintenance shop
- New anti-rollover van and replacement pickup truck
- Wireless (in process) and ethernet access at Activity Center
- Shower re-plumbing and partitions in dormitory.



## Native Landscape Certification Program

We launched our Native Landscape Certification Program (NLCP) to bring attention to the detrimental effects of invasive exotic plants in the park and surrounding region, as well as to promote the use of native plants in landscaping. The NLCP is a volunteer program for businesses and real estate developments in the Smoky Mountains region. Participants in the program will be certified as having native landscapes if they meet certain criteria such as using native plants in landscaping and eradicating invasive exotic plants on their property. In 2006, we began work with our first certification partner, the Estates at Norton Creek near Gatlinburg.

## Citizen Science

Our efforts in Citizen Science continue to grow and produce valuable data and rich experiences for participants. We believe that our Citizen Science programs continue to be critical, not because we believe that Tremont's mission is to produce research results (although the data and results we produce are valuable), but we understand that involving students in field-based scientific research is an excellent vehicle for engaging them. Tremont is creating citizens and students that

are more interested and equipped in the area of science and develop within them a significant understanding and appreciation for the park because of this direct interaction.

The following are some of the significant successes with Citizen Science in 2006:

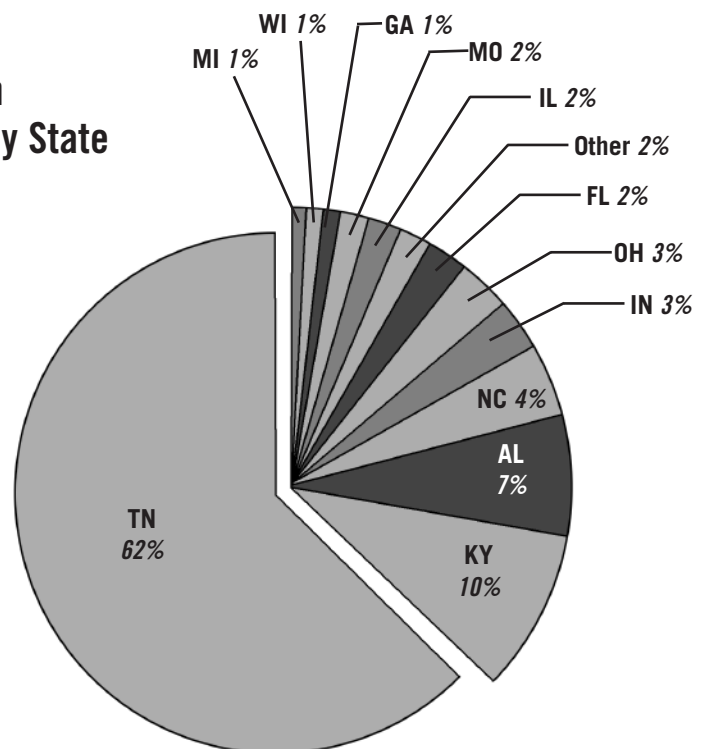
- The Raven Fork Expedition to a remote and little researched area of the park helped publicize Tremont and Citizen Science and provided much data for the park and ATBI, including new populations of the federally threatened Rock Gnome Lichen.
- Thousands of students in our school programs were exposed to citizen science activities.
- Hosted three Summer Youth Science Leadership interns (ages 16-20) from local high schools and colleges, furthering our connection to the local community. Each worked over 300 hours collecting data and assisting with citizen science programs, producing and giving presentations on individual research projects that they developed.
- Hosted an ATBI Teacher Intern
- Over 636 specimens from 163 sites in the park were entered into the ATBI database; several hundred invertebrate specimens were collected and sent to experts for identification
- 51 site visits were made to our stream salamander monitoring sites, now in its 8th year
- 121 Monarchs were tagged and released in Cades Cove

continued on page 6

## 2006 Program Participants by State

Other states include: CA, CO, DC, LA, MA, MD, MS, NJ, NH, NY, PA, SC, SD, TX, VA, WA

Four international participants from Canada and Ireland



**2006 Successes** continued from page 5

- 78 songbirds were netted and released as part of Tremont's bird banding project
- A Terrestrial Salamander Project was developed to both monitor terrestrial salamanders and to teach students about the scientific method.

**Business Efficiency**

We had an excellent year financially in 2006 with a total income of \$1,282,335. Our earned income represented 79% and support income 21%. Support income includes park designated funds from the Friends of the Smokies and Great Smoky Mountains Association (GSMA), donated profits from our store from GSMA, donations from many generous individuals and foundations, endowment disbursements, and grants. Grants were received from the Alcoa Foundation, Blount County, Citigroup Foundation, Cornerstone Foundation, Discover Life in America, GlaxoSmithKlein (indirect) and Warren Wilson College. In-kind services and donations also provided valued support as well.

Volunteers provided 1,378 hours of service.

Staff once again did an excellent job of controlling expenses and worked to make sure every dollar was stretched as far as possible. The number of participants in programs increased 10% over 2005. The result was a 12% increase in program fee revenue. In the spirit of good conservation and stewardship, staff managed expenses for a net revenue over expenditures that enabled us to purchase needed equipment items for programs, fund some serious facility maintenance issues, and complete several capital projects.

**Leadership**

Tremont continues to be viewed as a leader in the field and is often called upon to participate in meetings, conferences, consults and to serve on boards or advisory groups. These opportunities allow us to share what we have learned and developed at Tremont with others as well as provide staff with valuable professional development opportunities through interaction with other organizations and professionals. The following are some of the opportunities and initiatives that we were

involved with in 2006:

- Discover Life in America annual meeting and education committee
- Wilderness Wildlife Week
- Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage
- Southern Appalachian Man and Biosphere conference
- National Dialog on Children and Nature
- National Interpreters Association annual conference
- Association of Nature Center Administrators Summit and planning team for their residential Director's Summit
- Tennessee Environmental Education Association
- Georgia Alliance for Environmental Education
- North Carolina Environmental Education Centers conference and board of directors
- Tennessee Science Teachers Association
- Dragonfly Society of the Americas
- Peer consults with the Association of Nature Administrators with Kentucky PRIDE
- Visiting teams from Kentucky PRIDE, Camp MacDowell, Korean delegation, New River NRA, Lipscomb University



**As the Earth Rotates**

*2006 Walker Valley Weather Summary*

Weather, specifically wind, was the major story in Walker Valley this year. A freak October windstorm literally blew the doors off Tremont's weather station, and gusts over 100 mph were recorded at the Cove Mountain weather station. The storm wreaked havoc on park roads, facilities, and especially trails, some which were only recently re-opened to horses again. Fortunately the fierce winds were not enough to diminish the fall colors this year. September, normally one of the driest months, was the wettest month in 2006. Perhaps the ample September rains, coupled with a normal, dry October, were the factors responsible for one of the most colorful autumns in recent memory. —Jason Love, Citizen Science Director

Total Rain: 56.9 inches (average is 57.5 in.)

Total Snow: 11.3 inches (average is 8.8 in.)

	Average High F	Average Low F	Rain (in.)	Snow (in.)
Jan	55	35	8.3	0.8
Feb	46	28	2.0	10.5
March	67	41	2.2	0
April	78	51	5.9	0
May	76	53	7.6	0
June	87	61	3.2	0
July	89	63	6.0	0
Aug	90	67	5.4	0
Sept	78	57	8.6	0
Oct	70	45	3.2	0
Nov	61	36	3.1	0
Dec	58	31	1.4	0

**Spring  
for the  
Green  
Fundraiser**



**2007 Spring for the Green Raffle Postponed**

Tremont has postponed its 2007 Spring for the Green Raffle until 2008. This raffle offered ticket holders a 1 in 600 chance to win \$100,000.

The purpose of this raffle was to raise funds for Tremont's endowment, which supports our award-winning programs, helping us introduce thousands of school children, families, educators and nature enthusiasts to the wonderful diversity of life in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Keep your eyes open for information on the 2008 raffle, with details to be announced this fall! If you are interested in supporting Tremont's endowment through other means, please contact Meredith Goins at [meredith@gsmitt.org](mailto:meredith@gsmitt.org) or call 865-448-9732 ext. 24.

# Tremont Supporters

The following generous Tremont supporters made contributions in 2006, sustaining a legacy of connecting people and nature in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. We have worked to make this list complete and accurate, but if we have mistakenly omitted your name or have listed something incorrectly, please contact us at Meredith@gsmnt.org or 865/448-9732 ext. 24.

## DONATIONS & GRANTS

### \$50,000 or more

Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park  
Great Smoky Mountains Association

### \$10,000 - \$50,000

Alcoa Foundation  
Cornerstone Foundation  
Haslam 3 Foundation  
Wilma M. Maples

### \$5,000-\$10,000

Blount County Government  
The Cobble Family Foundation, Inc.,  
Bill & Donna Cobble

### \$1,000 - \$5,000

Cathy Ackermann  
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Tennessee Environmental Education Association  
Thunderhead Perk  
Warren Wilson College  
Woodpickers—  
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John Richardson,  
Ken Voorhis

### \$500 - \$1,000

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Barge Waggoner Sumner  
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### \$200 - \$500

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### \$50 - \$200

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Tennessee Federation of  
Garden Clubs  
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Larry & Cathy Wilkinson  
Nicholas Young

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continued on page 8

**SCIENCE RESEARCH  
AND OTHER  
VOLUNTEERS**

*January 1, 2006 to*

*January 31, 2007*

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*Matilde Arroyo*

*J. Ashcraft*

*Sara Ashcraft*

*Heather Bailey*

*Julian Baker*

*Bryan Barret*

*Gary Barret*

*Lori Barret*

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*David Behm*

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*Janet McCullough*

*Katherine McNeil*

*Paul McNeil*

*Danny Moore*

*Chris Mulenfant*

*Kevin Oakes*

*Rachel Oakes*

*Ricky Oakes*

*Liz Olivencia*

*Davis Parker*

*Kade Parker*

*Robyn Parker*

*Ida May Patterson*

*Pellissippi College*

*Group*

*Ph Beta Phi School*

*Students*

*Elaine Polisaastro*

*Aaron Riedel*

*Pamela Riedel*

*Taylor Rinehart*

*Mary Robinson*

*Jordan Rogers*

*Linda Rose*

*Kennedy Russell*

*Patsy Russell*

*Saint Mary's School*

*Students*

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*Ann Schlister*

*Gar Secrist*

*Keane Secrist*

*Richard Secrist*

*Spain Secrist*

*Jessica Seifert*

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*Sandy Sjrillo*

*Chris Smith*

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*Josh Stinnett*

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*Brynnan Webb*

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## Leave your calendars open for April 14th

Mark your calendars for April 14th! While this date may not be a national holiday, this year Americans from coast to coast will recognize it as a National Day of Climate Action. To mark this occasion, citizens will assemble in their own communities to ask congress to cut carbon emissions 80% by the year 2050. Global climate change affects everyone and everything on the planet. For example, the Great Smoky Mountains are an International Biosphere Reserve. There are species only found in these mountains and nowhere else in the world, so anything we do to protect this reserve is a step in the right direction. The first step in preserving the Smokies happened in 1934 when it became a national park, and the most recent step is happening on a much larger scale—the global scale. A group called Step It Up



was created by people who want to see congress literally step it up to take action and do something about the overabundance of our nation's carbon dioxide emissions. Outdoor rallies are being held outside churches, along cornfields, beaches, and forest, and on the steps of statehouses. At Tremont, we are planning to support this event by holding up a sign that reads:

***Step it up, Congress! Cut Carbon 80% by 2050.***

From Tremont to Mount Rainier, people will be holding up their signs, taking photos of their events and submitting them to [Step It Up2007.org](http://StepItUp2007.org). Step It Up will link photos from across the nation and have documentation of the largest protest by area in the U.S.A.

If you are interested in finding out how to participate in or organize your own event, contact Step It Up at [stepitup2007@gmail.com](mailto:stepitup2007@gmail.com), (866) 289-7010, or 12 North Street, Burlington, VT 05401.

—April Morris

# Hikers Paradise

*Favorite Hikes from Tremont Staff  
compiled by Michael Matzko*



Great Smoky Mountains National Park is a hiker's paradise. It offers majestic mountain peaks, forested valleys with abundant waterfalls, and of course 900+ miles of hiking trails. No matter what season one chooses to hike, the Smokies has something new and wonderful to offer, from a heart pounding bear encounter to an awe inspiring trip to an old-growth forest. The most difficult thing for most of us is finding time to get out there. Make time! The Smokies will not disappoint.

The Great Smoky Mountains Association publishes two great books to help you find your way, *Hiking Trails of the Smokies* and *Day Hikes of the Smokies*. Both provide in-depth knowledge of the trail, along with cultural and natural history related to your specific hike.

Hiking is part of the job description for the teaching staff here at Tremont, and we have covered a lot of ground in the Smokies. Let us share some of our favorite hikes in our favorite place. Don't forget to dress for all weather conditions and carry plenty of water. Get out there!

## Hike #1

**Staff:** Mary Silver, Teacher/Naturalist

**Trail:** Low Gap, Appalachian Trail (AT), Mount Cammerer Trail, Lower Mount Cammerer Trail Loop

**Why:** High altitude forest ecology, great views, and beautiful creeks weaving in and out of your hike.

**Difficulty:** Strenuous

**Length:** 16.1 miles if you do the full loop. Beginning at Cosby Campground, follow Low Gap Trail to AT to Mount Cammerer Trail. Continue on the AT until it meets the Lower Mount Cammerer Trail to loop back to Cosby Campground, or just turn around and retrace you steps.

**Elevation gain/loss to Mt. Cammerer:** +2800/-2900

## Hike #2

**Staff:** Jen Martin, Senior Teacher/Naturalist

**Trail:** Lead Cove Trail, Bote Mountain Trail, AT to Rocky Top

**Why:** Awe inspiring views all the way to the top. Refreshing uphill hike to warm you up on a cold morning. You also get an opportunity to hang out at one of the Smokies' most famous places, Rocky Top.

**Difficulty:** Strenuous

**Length:** 15.4 miles. Start at Lead Cove trailhead on to Bote Mountain Trail to Spence Field, then east on the AT to reach Rocky Top. Make sure to get an EARLY start.

**Elevation gain/loss:** +3400/-3200

## Hike #3

**Staff:** Michael Matzko, Teacher/Naturalist

**Trail:** Cooper Road Trail, Hatcher Mountain trail, Abrams Falls Trail, Wet Bottom Trail loop.

**Why:** It's an easy to moderate hike with cultural history along the way, including the Elijah Oliver homeplace. I hiked this last winter and didn't see a person. It is truly a beautiful hike with a different feel than other places in the park.

**Difficulty:** Easy to Moderate (due to length)

**Length:** 13.3 miles. Start at Cooper Road trailhead in the northwest corner of Cades Cove. Follow Cooper Road Trail until it connects with Hatcher Mountain Trail, then follow to Abrams Creek Trail past Elijah Oliver's Place to Wet Bottoms and back to trailhead.

**Elevation gain/loss:** +1200/-1200

## Hike #4

**Staff:** Sheri Liles

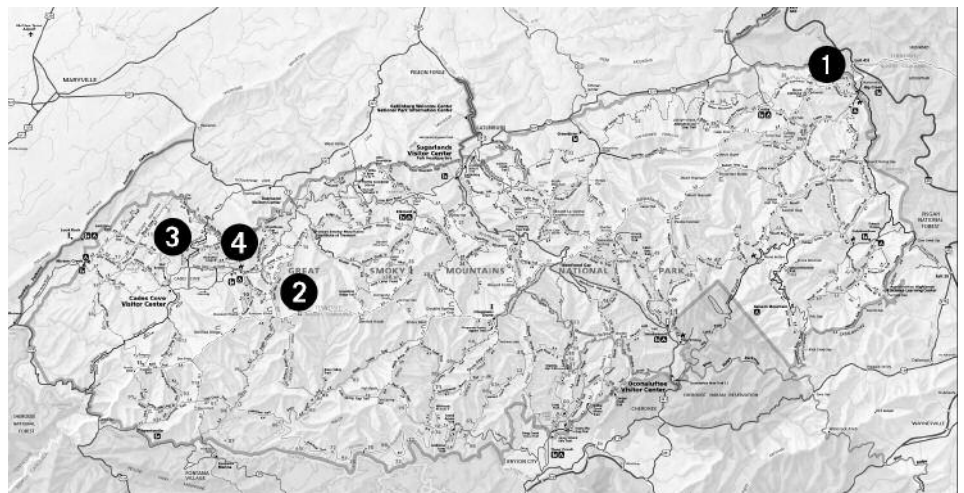
**Trail:** Turkeypen Ridge/ Finley Cane Loop

**Why:** Great low elevation ecology with opportunities to do some wildlife tracking.

**Difficulty:** Easy to moderate

**Length:** 8.5 miles. Park at Finley Cane/Turkeypen Ridge trailhead on Laurel Creek Road. Start on Turkeypen Ridge Trail and follow it until it connects with Schoolhouse Gap Trail and head down toward Laurel Creek Road. Cross road and meet with Bote Mountain Trail, then on to Finley Cane and back to your car.

**Elevation gain/loss:** +650/-500



# Soundscapes

*Preserving the sounds of nature*

*by Josh Davis*

It's the first night of the school's trip to Tremont, and the students have split into smaller groups for a night walk—one of my favorite activities, and one that nearly every student that comes to Tremont participates in. For the last 45 minutes, a dozen or so students, their teacher, and I have walked slowly through the darkness, stopping every so often for an activity, a discussion, or just to wait for the last few folks to catch up. We've talked about nocturnal (night-active), diurnal (day-active), and crepuscular (active at dawn and dusk) critters; we've learned about triboluminescence (light produced by friction); we've discussed rods and cones and how our color vision doesn't work very well in the dark.

The students have finally grown somewhat comfortable in the darkness of the forest. The nervous giggles and the whispers of "I can't see anything!" have stopped, and the group is relaxed enough for a final activity. "You've done a wonderful job already tonight, and we've got time for just one more activity before it's time to head back. What I want you to do is to stay completely silent for the next two minutes, and count the number of things you hear. Keep track, and we'll talk about what we've heard when the time's up," I say. "Ready? Okay, here we go."

After a few shufflings of feet and sniffs of noses, the students are as silent as you've ever heard 5th graders be (which, despite what you might think, is pretty darn silent). When the time is up, I ask how it went. "Good work everyone. Let's talk about what we've heard. If you heard more than two different things, raise your hand." Everyone's hand goes up. "Very nice. How about four different things?" A few less. "Good. How about six things? Eight? Twelve? Wow, how about fifteen different things?" Finally, no hands remain up. "Ok, now let's hear about some of the things you noticed. Raise your hand if you'd like to share a sound that you heard."

The answers I get run the gamut of nearly every response you can imagine (and some you can't), both natural and human-made: "I heard the wind." "I heard

the river." "Crickets." "A frog." "An airplane." "Somebody's coat crinkling." "Peyton farted."

Ok, so some responses were more valuable than others, but overall the students have learned an important lesson. There's a lot to be experienced in the outdoors, not all of it with our eyes, and sometimes it takes some effort, some focus to appreciate it. I usually wrap the activity talking about how important it is to pay attention to all of our senses when we're out in the forest, or we can miss out on a lot.

Most of us, by the time we reach adulthood, understand the peace that the sounds of nature can evoke. We've realized the value of taking some time just to sit down and appreciate the "noisy quiet of the forest" (as a volunteer naturalist I knew liked to put it). It's not just revitalizing, it's a huge part of the reason we see our natural places as refuges.

The National Park Service, too, has realized that sounds play an integral role in the wilderness experience. Just as the water, land, and air are park resources, so is the soundscape. Preserving the soundscape is of vital importance to the preservation of our national parks. In 2001, the Park Service added language to the Management Policy stating that, "The Service will take action to prevent or minimize all noise that...adversely affects the natural soundscape or other park resources." The Park Service created the Natural Sounds Program to help in implementing this newly stated policy.

One of the first tasks that the Natural Sounds Program must undertake is measuring baseline sound levels in every park. Once these baselines are established, managers can make decisions as to what practices are appropriate to preserve the soundscape, or, in some cases, to restore it to what it once was.

As with any resource management decision, many factors must be considered. Each national park is unique, and managers must decide what is appropriate for that particular park. While cannons and gunshots might be appropriate at



Gettysburg, they most certainly are not in other parks. And as they always must, managers try to maintain the delicate balance between “provide for the enjoyment” and “leave unimpaired for future generations.” Put simply, increased visitation may often lead to increased levels of noise, and this adds complexity to management decisions.

Additionally, weight must be given to the impact of the soundscape on the park’s other resources. Preservation of the soundscape is not solely for the benefit of park visitors, but also has serious implications for animals that live in the parks. Increased noise levels may have a detrimental effect on parks’ fauna, though to what extent is largely unknown.

What is known is how important the soundscape is to park visitors. According to the Park Service, “72% of visitors say that one of the most important reasons for preserving national parks is to provide opportunities to experience natural peace and the sounds of nature.” An unimpacted soundscape is critical to our students’ experiences as well. It’s difficult to imagine taking a night walk (or conducting many of our other programs, for that matter) with noisy traffic driving by.

So what can be done to help? Managers are looking for ways to reduce human-made noise levels, from introducing shuttle service, to building roads with materials that better absorb noise. Many parks have restrictions on helicopter and airplane flyovers.

A lot can be done as individuals, as well. As always, the decisions we make have implications far beyond ourselves. We talk to all of the students that come to Tremont about the importance of being quiet on the trails (and not just during night walks). Not only does it make the experience better for each of them, but also for their classmates. It betters their chances of seeing wildlife. And it means that we’re not disturbing other visitors to the park, with whom we share the trails.

The students seem to get it, as well. Perhaps easier than many adults. In their world of video games and iPods, of near-constant sensory stimulation, middle school students seem, after awhile, almost to crave a little bit of peace. Providing a place and a time in which they can experience a little stillness is just one more way that Tremont connects people and nature.

## Community Artisans Receive Continued Support

*Arts Funding for School Groups to Continue*

Thanks to the Aventura Cabin Fund and Citigroup Foundation, Tremont will once more be able to provide funding for school groups wishing to host an arts presenter. More than merely to help cover costs, the Community Artisan fund exists for the purpose of helping schools host artists they would not normally be able to afford. Sparky and Rhonda Rucker are one such act. As a duo that tours nationally but is based locally, they cost \$400. Seven school groups were able to see the Rucker’s presentation musical and folklore presentation.

All in all, 14 different schools took advantage of the Community Artisan fund in 2005-2006, exposing nearly 800 students to the arts. A total of \$2,490 was dispensed. Other artists who students experienced included folkdancing guru Bob Grimalac, singer-songwriter Sean McCollough, and storyteller Faye Wooden. All are local artists who are trying to make a living through the arts.

Eight hundred students exposed to the arts is a real success. Consider how many studies exist showing that the arts improve academic performance—they are many! Consider too that the arts are commonly first on the chopping block in times of budget crises. Sadly, television is the limit of many kids’ exposure

to the arts. The home I grew up in was rich in the arts. This was largely thanks to a father who painted and played the oboe in a symphony orchestra. Most kids aren’t so lucky and need exposure by some other means. School is that means, and if they don’t experience it in their classroom then they probably won’t experience it at all.

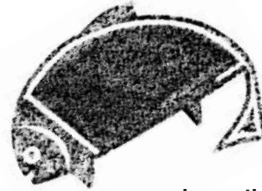
The arts are far more than finger-painting in the first grade. Sketching, painting, sculpting, weaving, and journaling are career avenues kids may not know exist for them. The same goes for performance arts such as dance, music and theater. No matter what one’s future aspirations, the arts greatly enrich the lives of anyone pursuing it.

Our goal for exposing kids to the arts here at Tremont is far more elementary. Our conviction is that the arts play an integral part in helping kids connect with this special place. With nature in general, and with Great Smoky Mountains National Park in particular, that is.

All schools are welcome to apply. However, we especially encourage current and past schools that have struggled to fund evening presenters.

Applications are available at [www.gsmit.org/schools.html](http://www.gsmit.org/schools.html).

—Jeremy Lloyd



## Tremont Congratulates Biodiversity Educators of the Year

*Two of our heroes are recognized for outstanding work*

At the recent 10th annual All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) Conference hosted by Discover Life in America ([www.dlia.org](http://www.dlia.org)), two individuals with strong ties to Tremont were recognized for their excellence in biodiversity education. *Marsha Sega*, from St. Mary’s School in Oak Ridge, was awarded the Outstanding Biodiversity Educator of the Year for her efforts exposing her 8th grade students to the natural wonders of the park. This summer, Marsha regularly led her students to Tremont where they sampled mosquito larvae, caught dragonflies, sampled salamanders, collected dung beetles, and netted butterflies as part of Tremont’s Citizen Science program and to support the ATBI. Marsha gladly gave up part

of her summer vacation, and even weekends, to ensure her students had the opportunity to immerse themselves in science and nature.

*Dr. Andrea Radwell*, from the University of Arkansas, was awarded the Outstanding Scientist of the Year for Biodiversity Education. In the spring, Dr. Radwell led a water mite workshop at Tremont on behalf of DLIA. Water mites are rarely studied in the park and little is known about their ecology or life history. With her contagious enthusiasm and willingness to educate others, Dr. Radwell ensures that the importance of biodiversity will be passed on to the next generation of citizens, scientists, and educators.

—Jason Love, Citizen Science Director



### Broaden Your Horizons

#### 2007 Brings New Lessons to Tremont School Programs

Hiking through diverse forests, investigating creatures whose homes are beneath the chilly water of the Middle Prong, and delving into not only the science but the sensory experiences have made the “Tremont experience” one that thousands of children and adults never forget. For almost 40 years students and teachers have experienced the Smokies through our award-winning curriculum. We recognize that there is still so much we can discover amongst these hills and waters! GSMIT is excited to broaden the scope of experiences by introducing several new programs to our curriculum. Our new programs strive to integrate the curricular language of science, math, social studies and language arts into authentic experiences.

Our new **Stream Physics** and **Salamander Monitoring and the Scientific Method** programs incorporate the use of basic mathematical functions and allow students to participate in the Citizen Science projects located on our campus. The data collected from these programs will be used by our Citizen Science

director, and other interested parties, to monitor salamanders and stream flow in Walker Valley. During the Stream Physics program, students will participate in the collection of data related to stream flow (volume, velocity, friction, etc.) and will determine the cubic meters per second for the Middle Prong (the river that flows through the Tremont campus). Students will also recognize that water as a force causes changes in landforms through weathering, erosion and deposition.

When you are the salamander capital of the world you can't go wrong with a salamander monitoring project! Students who participate in this program will have the opportunity to review the steps in the

scientific method, formulate a hypothesis, collect data, and come to preliminary conclusions. Students will check two types of cover boards (artificial habitat created for salamanders) and assess which cover board provides the best habitat for salamanders. Qualitative and quantitative data will be collected (and defined) and scientific tools such as thermometers, spring scales, and dichotomous keys will be used to gather information.

Understanding how humans affect their environment is an important curricular concept. We will learn how humans affect



the air they breathe during our **Air Quality** program. Through hikes, games and demonstrations, students will learn about particulate matter, ozone and how compromised air quality can affect our health and the health of the organisms around us. This program will be available starting this fall 2007 and can be a 3-hour day program or a one-hour evening program.

In addition to these great day programs we have several new evening offerings.

Take a look at the history, legends, and contributions of the Cherokee people during our **Native American Culture and History** program. This one-hour program includes a video, slide presentation, traditional games and stories. The program can

be extended to a two-hour program by learning how to make clay coil pots. There is an additional fee to cover the cost of clay.

**Your Wilderness, Your World** is the title of another one-hour evening program. This interactive PowerPoint program explores the history of land use in the Southern Appalachians gets students thinking about their role in conserving nature for future generations. Dennis Curtina, a retired forester, discusses the role Native Americans, geologic history and the industrial revolution played in our land management

decisions. This program does require an additional fee.

There are many opportunities to introduce your students to talented local artists and their crafts while visiting Tremont. If you want to gather around the campfire and listen to old-time bluegrass, schedule a program with The **Lost Mill String Band**. This husband and wife duo easily convey their love of music and their mountain home through their instruments (voice, bass, banjo, fiddle, harmonica).

This program does require an additional fee but funding is available through our Community Artisan Fund. Applications can be found at our website for this and many other art-based programs.

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont is always looking for ways to teach others about our incredible mountain home. If you have individual curricular needs or just want to get your students outside and appreciating wilderness, give us a call and we will do our best to help meet your needs. If you are interested in learning more about any of these programs please contact Jennifer Love at [Jennifer@gsmiit.org](mailto:Jennifer@gsmiit.org).

—by Jennifer Love



## Putting Minds Together

*A summary of the Residential Environmental Learning Center Director's Conference*

The airplane landed with a loud thud as we pulled up to the Jackson Hole airport. I tried to sneak a peek past the passengers beside me, hoping to catch my first glimpse of the spectacular view outside—the Tetons. We had finally arrived, and my stomach was swimming with excitement, nervousness, and eagerness to learn as much as I could in the next five days.

Ken Voorhis, our executive director, had asked me to accompany him to the Residential Environmental Learning Center (RELC) Director's Conference, which occurs every two years and is co-sponsored by the Association of Nature Centers and the hosting organization. This January it was held at the Teton Science Schools in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Directors and environmental educators from Alabama to Washington state would be attending and sharing their ideas and knowledge with each other. The Tetons served as the perfect inspirational backdrop for the next several days.

Teton Science Schools consists of two residential campuses: the Kelly campus, located in Grand Teton National Park, and the Jackson campus, located a few miles away from the town of Jackson. The Jackson campus was just recently completed and built using “high performance” design, enabling the buildings to not only be environmentally efficient, but also to be used as a teaching tool and model for conserving energy. Among the many high performance elements were structures specifically designed to take advantage of the sun,

which was evident from the solar panels throughout the buildings on the campus. The sloping roofs also allowed for natural cross ventilation, eliminating the need for an air conditioner, as well as providing ample natural lighting.

We toured the Jackson campus on a cold, foggy winter morning with Jack Shea, executive director of Teton Science Schools. The first things we noticed was the interior of the buildings. The walls were constructed of untreated plywood. Paint was not used in order to limit volatile organic compounds and the off-gassing odor that occurs with a newly painted room. The insides of the buildings looked raw, natural and beautifully simple.

An abundance of recycled materials were used in the construction process. Carpeting in the mudrooms was made from recycled tires that lined the floors. The concrete floors contained fly ash (ash from burning coal in power plants) as a substitute for cement. Carpets with 100% recycled-content backing were used in many of the meeting spaces. The substitutions enabled the facilities to be very comfortable and much more environmentally sound than the traditional approach.

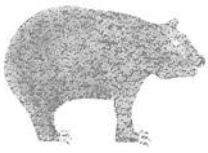
The focus of the conference continued in an “open space” format with all the participants meeting together and presenting our topics of interest, concern, or questions that were relevant in the life of a residential environmental education center. These topics were organized into a schedule and our

sessions began. The open space format allowed us to talk through issues, and discuss what we have found to work for us, and what we may have experienced difficulty with in the past. The collaboration of minds from centers all over the country offered a refreshing perspective. Session topics ranged from fundraising to programming to staff training opportunities. This was also an opportunity to collaborate with fellow centers about Tremont's student evaluation and assessment process. In this session we discussed the importance of evaluating the environmental education impact, especially as a tool for teachers and administrators. In the future we hope to have more centers interested in evaluating their impact so we can compile our results.

A highlight of the conference was a presentation by Kendra Liddicoat, a PhD candidate from Cornell University, entitled “45 Years of Outdoor Education: Assessing the Long Term Impact.” In this study, she interviewed adults who, as fifth graders, had attended Bradford Woods, a residential environmental learning center in Indiana. What the adults remembered was amazing, even twenty years later—from the program specifics to the interactions with their fellow classmates and teachers. It was obvious from her interviews that a residential experience has a long lasting impact. This study re-emphasized the importance of how experiencing nature first-hand cannot be replaced. It is exciting to think that the students who come to Tremont may have similar memories, and retain those even when they are adults.

There is nothing like being surrounded by people who share similar passions. The dedication, energy, enthusiasm and ideas rub off on each other and recharge the soul. I came back from the RELC Conference feeling so strong about what Tremont offers, and could not wait to have the next school bus of students drive across the bridge and unload. As Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont looks into the future of developing new and more environmentally friendly facilities, strengthening our programs, and educating more participants, it is refreshing to know that we are part of a larger group, each hoping to make a difference, one step at a time.

—by Jen Martin



# Looking Ahead

Upcoming Events

SPRING!!! Hurray!!! Yippee!!!! After a long winter, there is nothing better than spring with its wildflowers, birds, warm breezes, and tiny leaves on trees. The classes and workshops being offered this spring are crafted to highlight the spring wonders that abound throughout the park. We hope you will join us as we celebrate the turning of the season. Read further to learn about our spring and summer adult workshops.

## Name Changes

If you are a past participant you may be wondering about some of our name changes. Has Spring Naturalist Weekend or Naturalist Week disappeared? Not exactly, but their names have. Recently, several people have remarked that they would like to take part in Naturalist Week but that they aren't a naturalist and therefore didn't think that they could. Of course they can!

We use the term "naturalist" to describe the activities that are in a workshop, not necessarily the profession of the people participating in that workshop. Everyone can aspire to be a naturalist by taking classes and workshops that increase their natural history skills. In order to avoid any confusion about who can attend our workshops (everyone, of course!) we have changed some of the titles to be more inclusive. We hope you will join us for the upcoming Spring Wonders Weekend and Smoky Mountain Retreat. They are just as wonderful as ever. After all, "a rose by any other name..."

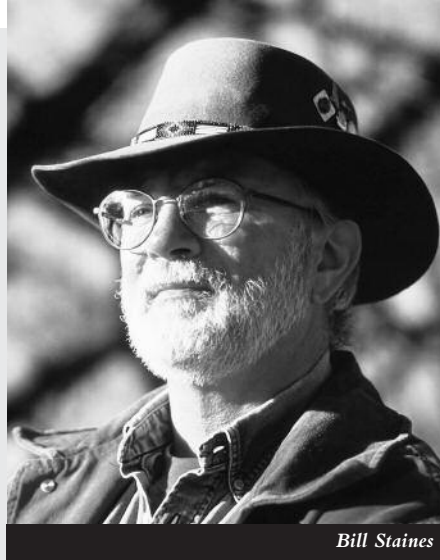
## WORKSHOPS

### Spring Photography Workshop

April 20 - 23

Join nationally recognized photographer Bill Lea for an exciting weekend of nature photography. Bill tailors the program to the skill level and interests of each participant with plenty of one-on-one instruction. Visit our website for a schedule of weekend events. Program lasts Friday supper to Monday mid-morning.

Cost: \$520 (includes instruction, meals, and lodging).



Bill Staines

## Arts and the Environment

April 27 - 29

This spring weekend brings together a wide variety of adults who are interested in exploring the connection between the arts and the natural world through educational workshops. Legendary singer-songwriter BILL STAINES will kick things off with a Friday evening concert at the Palace Theater in Maryville.

Tickets may be purchased solely for the Bill Staines family-friendly show on Friday, April 27 at 8 p.m. for \$15 or for the entire weekend by calling 865-448-6709.

Bill has recorded 25 albums over a career that has spanned four decades. His songs range from traditional folk to contemporary country ballads and have been recorded by Nanci Griffith, Jerry Jeff Walker, Grandpa Jones and Peter, Paul & Mary. He has been featured on *A Prairie Home Companion*, *Mountain Stage*, and *The Good Evening Show*. To learn more about him, visit [www.acousticmusic.com/staines](http://www.acousticmusic.com/staines).

Concurrent hands-on sessions (see below) will run Saturday. Our annual Open Mic Night will commence Saturday evening in a relaxed coffee shop setting, giving everyone an opportunity to share their talent with others. Sunday activities are traditionally reserved for spontaneous ideas that emerge over the course of the weekend from the collective creative juices of the group. Program lasts from Friday supper through Sunday lunch.

Cost: \$220. One hour of graduate credit is available for an additional fee (includes instruction, meals, and lodging).

Cost for people wishing to attend Saturday sessions alone: \$125 (includes meals). Group rates are available.

### CONCURRENT HANDS-ON SESSIONS INCLUDE:

- *"Songs from the Heart"* with **Bill Staines**  
You don't have to be a musician to explore your creativity through song with this legend who created "The River," "Place In the Choir (All God's Critters)" and many other memorable songs.
- *"Installation: Solar Possums"* with **Gerry Moll**, public artist and educator  
Create a solar-powered ice sculpture in this collaborative art project that will culminate with an installation outdoors on the Tremont campus.
- *"Writing from the Outside in"* with **F. Lynne Bachleda**, Nashville-based author  
Explore the self and the natural world through the written word.
- *"Sense-sational Snakes"* with **Jeff Menzer**, Asheville-based artist  
Invent your own personalized specie through drawing, sanding, and painting, while learning some natural history about our reptilian friends.
- *"Delight is in the Details"* with **Wren Smith**, Bernheim Forest, Kentucky  
Weaving together art, history and science, this workshop offers you opportunities to hone and integrate observation skills, reflection and creation—plus a visit to the land of "fairy folks."
- *"Following the Thread: Handwork from Fleece to Fiber"* with **Carolyn Rogers & Sheri Liles**  
Card and spin sheep's wool and other fibers. Make your own knitting needles or drop spindle and learn how to knit a simple hat or scarf so you can hand the joy of this creative experience down to our children.

Visit [www.gsmiit.org](http://www.gsmiit.org) for longer descriptions as well as other sessions as they are added.

Funding for this event is provided by grants from Citigroup Foundation, the Arts & Culture Alliance of Greater Knoxville and the Tomato Head. Come join us and explore your personal creativity at the height of springtime!

### Spring Wonders Weekend

*April 27 - 29*

Spend a lovely spring weekend naturalizing around the national park. Our focus will be on spring events (wildflower blooms, arrival of neotropical migrants, etc.) and getting you into the wonderful Smoky Mountains spring landscape. Visit our website for a schedule of weekend events. Program lasts Friday supper to Sunday mid-day.

Cost: \$220 (includes instruction, meals, and lodging).

### Smoky Mountains Science Teacher Institute

*June 17 - 22*

Immerse yourself in the biological diversity of the Smokies and return home with exciting new ideas for involving your students in hands-on science. Program lasts Sunday supper to Friday lunch.

Cost: Funding is provided by GlaxoSmithKline and Alcoa Foundation. Visit our website for more information.

### Smoky Mountain Retreat

*July 9 - 14*

Join us for a well-deserved retreat that focuses on learning more about the natural resources around us and exploring your connection with nature. Program lasts Monday supper to Saturday lunch.

Cost: \$355 (includes instruction, meals, and lodging). Visit our website for more information.

### Hiking Week

*July 9 - 14*

Each day of Hiking Week features three carefully chosen hikes led by experienced educators who will offer insight into the wonders of the national park. Program lasts Monday supper to Saturday lunch.

Cost: \$355 (includes instruction, meals, and lodging). Visit our website for more information.

## SUMMER CAMPS

### Discovery Camp

*June 11 - 16 and June 25 - 30*

One of our longest running programs for children ages 9 to 12, we will explore nature, learn about plants and birds, frogs and snakes. We swim in the river every day, take hiking adventures into the best wilderness and spend a night camping out in the woods.

This year we welcome puppeteer HOBEY FORD as our first ever Discovery Camp Artist-In-residence! Hobey is the winner of puppetry's highest honor, the UNIMA Citation of Excellence, and recipient of three Jim Henson Foundation grants. Hobey will conduct his Shadow Puppetry Workshop, which combines storytelling with shadow puppetry bringing a variety of cultures to life through folktales. During the workshop, each student will construct their own shadow puppet, while working with Hobey learning shadow puppetry performance techniques.

\*\*Cost: \$415.

### Wilderness Adventure Camp

*June 11 - 16 and*

*June 25 - 30*

A 3 night/4 day backcountry excursion for teenagers who might never have backpacked before and want to test the waters. This is a favorite for many campers, who return year after year before "graduating" to Teen High Adventure.

\*\*Cost: \$440.

### Field Ecology Adventure Camp

*June 11 - 16 and July 16 - 26*

Teenagers aged 13 to 17 get the opportunity to work with real scientists! Past campers have conducted studies of salamanders, insects, birds and plants. Climb a mountain and ford a river while doing real science.

\*\*Cost: 5-day camp, \$440;

10-day camp, \$835.

### Teen High Adventure

*July 16 - 26*

This is a 6 night/7 day trek for teens and is our premier backpacking offering designed to give each participant a rewarding experience growing in the areas of backcountry skills, nature appreciation, and personal development. This year, a day of whitewater rafting is included!

\*\*Cost: \$835.

### Smoky Mountain Naturalist Expeditions

*July 16 - 26*

Kids ages 12 to 14 get the opportunity to immerse themselves for 10 days studying amphibians, black bears, forest ecology or primitive skills. This deep immersion will allow campers to explore areas all over



*Hobey Ford*

the park and interact with professional land and wildlife managers. Evening campfires and afternoons spent in the river too! Fun for all!

\*\*Cost: \$835.

### \*\*SCHOLARSHIP/FINANCIAL AID TO SUMMER CAMPS IS AVAILABLE UNTIL APRIL 1, 2007!

Call us at 865-448-6709 or e-mail [mail@gsmiit.org](mailto:mail@gsmiit.org) today to learn more!

To see what a week at one of Tremont's summertime youth programs look like, visit [www.gsmiit.org](http://www.gsmiit.org). These programs fill quickly, so sign your child up early to avoid being put on a waiting list.

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont is operated in cooperation with Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

## STAFF

### teachers/naturalists

Josh Davis  
Sheri Liles  
Mike Matzko  
April Morris  
Mary Silver

### sr. teacher naturalists

Jeremy Lloyd  
Jen Martin

### part-time naturalists

Betsy Booth  
Emily Guss  
Courtney Lix  
Jaimie Matzko  
Carrie McElroy  
Carole Olson  
Gar Secrist  
Corey Shubert  
Jaque Stivers

### school program director

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### citizen science director

Jason Love

### education director

Amber Parker

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Lois Tipton

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### food service manager

Katie Wilkinson

### grounds and facilities

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### assistant office manager

Julie Brown

### public relations

Meredith Goins

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### sales

Gary Carpenter

Linda Vananda

### finance manager

Mike Gross

### office manager

Kathy Burns

### executive director

Ken Voorhis

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Program brochures are available  
by contacting our office:

[www.gsmit.org](http://www.gsmit.org) • 865-448-6709

[mail@gsmit.org](mailto:mail@gsmit.org)

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Great Smoky Mountains Institute at



# TREMONT

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