

# Down by the River

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## Annual Giving Campaign kicks off for ‘Giving Tuesday’

By Carol Doss, Executive Director

The year flew by very quickly with many projects and activities completed throughout the region. It’s hard to believe the Annual Giving Campaign for Upper Tennessee River Roundtable is upon us, just in time to kick off on “Giving Tuesday,” Dec. 1.

Take a few minutes to look over our major accomplishments as a reminder of the very worthwhile work that happens when you donate to the Roundtable. We send this information for you to think of us on “Giving Tuesday,” which is a “global day to give back,” according to the official website. I like to think of the day as a way to thank and recognize those organizations, such as the Roundtable, that work throughout the year on a significant cause that benefits everyone. In our case, it’s cleaner water. We want the waters of the Clinch, Holston and Powell rivers to be clean enough to use and to enjoy. We appreciate your continued support to achieve that mission.

“We are making a difference!!! We are getting closer to the day when every child in this region really knows the value of the Clinch, Holston, and Powell rivers.”

-Dr. Ed Davis,  
Treasurer



New costume characters, Pearly and Friends, performed at the Wise Fall Fling. At left, Dr. Ed Davis sings a tune as Henry the Hellbender salamander. Designers Linda Hinchey and Amanda McMullen created the costumes that were funded by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Other costumes are a darter fish, a damselfly and a mussel.

# Outreach, education results outstanding for 2015

By April Grace, Volunteer Educator

In 2015 the Roundtable reached over 5,791 students and 1,797 adults through environmental education events and projects.

One of the Roundtable's big events is Conservation Camp, held at Sugar Hollow Park in Bristol in collaboration with Keep Bristol Beautiful. It is a three-day event hosting all third grade students from Washington County schools and some fourth graders from Bristol City Schools. Students rotate through 10 stations learning about topics from water conservation to mammals to forestry. This year, the camp served 721 students.



Randy Short with TVA leads forestry activity at camp.



Happy rain barrel makers in Tazewell. Fifty rain barrels were made at six workshops.

The Roundtable organized Guest River Day, an environmental education event for fourth graders in Norton, a partnership with the City of Norton, and similar to Conservation Camp.

Over 23 events included trash treasures activities where discards are transformed into useful or decorative items. A booth at Cabela's Grand Opening served over 70 people. Funded by Tennessee Valley Authority, this work will continue into 2016.

Additional outreach included informative workshops, such as those where participants made rain barrels, and others where educators received training for Project Learning Tree lessons.

The Roundtable also organized various cleanups as part of the Regional Stream Cleanup, Great American Cleanup and Public Lands Day, all in collaboration with Keep Southwest Virginia Beautiful, TVA and Clean Virginia Waterways.

Other partners for this year's events are Southwest Virginia Environmental Education Team (SWEET), The Nature Conservancy, U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service, and many other agencies and foundations. Over 175 members and volunteers donated 1,348 hours of service to our events and projects making 2015 a very successful year. Thanks to all volunteers and partners for helping us make a difference.



Vicky Ho, a new volunteer, and April Grace, a volunteer from the Raymon Grace Foundation, helped 624 people turn old pop bottle caps into refrigerator magnets at Rhythm and Roots kids' day.



Upstream view before (above) and downstream view after with vegetated

## Extensive buffer establishment reduces sedimentation into Copper Creek

In partnership with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Roundtable received funds from various sources to establish .5 miles of stream restoration, 1.5 miles of streambank stabilization, a constructed wetlands, grey water treatment system and 10 acres of riparian buffer establishment. TVA presented an award to the Roundtable for this work. TVA and Virginia Environmental Endowment funded this work.



## Building an outdoor classroom

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable is assisting the town of Saltville create an outdoor classroom beyond the playground. With support from Tennessee Valley Authority, more work will be done. Emory & Henry's Service Plunge assisted with the project with Dr. Joe Lane's honors class.



VISTA Lilli Pickens and local resident Tabby Henderson identify and tag plants. Animal tracks station shown in middle. Photos by Carol Doss



Emory students helped. Plant station shown above.

# Septic work significant

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable recently completed two grants that provided funding for septic work in the tributaries that flow into the Guest River and ultimately the Clinch River in Wise County. Funding came from Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and Dominion Foundation. These grants also funded two rain gardens in Honaker, which the Roundtable completed this summer.

The Roundtable repaired or replaced eight failing systems and pumped 53 septic tanks during the past two and a half years, with repairs occurring this year.

Three repairs are lined up for future repair as soon as funds can be secured. Reducing the amount of raw sewage going into the tributaries is work that we hope to continue into the future.

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**Donate to us: You may give online with your credit card or mail a check to us or call us.**

## **Thank you very much!**

**We appreciate every person who helps us with the mission of the Roundtable:**

***Individual, family members***

***Annual giving donors***

***State agencies with grants***

***Federal agency support***

***Private foundation grants***

***Partnerships with nonprofits and other organizations***

***Our faithful volunteers***

***Citizens***

***Our AmeriCorps VISTA members***



## ***Beautifying Public Lands***

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable coordinated a Public Lands Day event at Stone Creek Outdoor Classroom and Community Park, thanks to support from Tennessee Valley Authority. Volunteers planted, picked up litter, went on a scavenger hunt, and had time for face painting, trash treasures and pizza.