

## Roundtable honors groups, individuals for hard work

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable honored a variety of people at the May spring meeting for their dedication and hard work to help the environment.

Abingdon High School teacher Steve Ahn received the outstanding educator award for his work with students. Phil Shelton, of UVA's College at Wise, earned the citizen award for his years of dedication to environmental work. Jorge Hersel of the Clinch Ranger District of the Jefferson National Forest, received the agency award for contributions made as part of his work. The Clinch Coalition received the local group award for many years of environmental work. The City of Norton received the green locality award for a variety of work, including partnering with the Roundtable to install a rain garden at Clear



Creek Park where the city also hosts the Guest River Restoration Project's outdoor classroom. The city also operates a very successful downtown farmers' market. The City was the third locality to win green locality award since the Roundtable introduced that category.

Team Estonoa received a special appreciation award for their mussel work in the Clinch River and their environmental education focus through work at their learning center and wetlands.

Team Estonoa also assists in maintaining the green vegetated roof and rain garden that were installed in partnership with the Roundtable and Dept. of Conservation and Recreation.



Roundtable Chair Justin Laughlin presents award to Team Estonoa, above, and to Norton City Manager Fred Ramey, top photo, and to Carmen Cantrell, market manager.

## Conservation Specialist hired

Lisa Harris began working for Upper Tennessee River Roundtable in the spring to assist Coordinator Carol Doss with various grant projects. Lisa continues to work for the Daniel Boone

Soil and Water Conservation District in Jonesville. Lisa will assist with development of outdoor classrooms, pet waste stations and will help with septic tank pumpouts and a variety of other projects.



Lisa helped with Pennington Gap Trail Fest June 2.

### Items inside:



Stream pollution workshop successful. See Pg. 2.

Children learn about environment. See Pgs. 3, 4.



Educators study new teaching methods. See Pg. 2.

### Calendar of Events:

- SWEET (education network) meeting: Monday, Aug. 13, 10 a.m. at DEQ, Abingdon.
- Urban Team meeting: Tuesday, Aug. 21, 9 a.m., at Roundtable office, Abingdon.
- Clear Creek Outdoor Classroom Work Day: Wednesday, Aug. 22, 8 a.m., Norton.
- KSVB Meeting: Aug. 22, 11 a.m., Norton.
- Salt Trail 5K: Saturday, Sept. 1, Saltville.
- Conservation Camp (third graders from Washington County; fourth graders from Bristol): Sept. 5-7, Sugar Hollow Park.
- Muster Grounds Regional Stream Cleanup: Sept. 15, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Abingdon.

## Coordinator's Corner: Grants, projects and more of each!

We're busier than ever at the Roundtable office with lots of grants and projects. We're grateful for every grant because each one says people believe in what we do.



This issue covers many spring and summer events. Look for another newsletter edition prior to the fall meeting, set for Thursday, Sept. 20, at 6 p.m. at a place to be announced in Smyth County.

Since the last newsletter, I've welcomed back April Grace. April is on loan to us from Raymon Grace Foundation. This is the second time she's been available to help us. Her focus is education and outreach and she's in the office Mondays and Wednesdays. I've also welcomed Andrea Rocchio, a new OSM/VISTA, who moved here from Ohio to spend a year with us. Andrea's position is funded by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Her areas are Tazewell and Lee counties. Lisa Harris joined our staff as a part-time Conservation Specialist, assisting with a variety of

work. Crystal Berry, who graduated from Southwest Virginia Community College in May, worked with me for her second semester, saving the day many times. More about Crystal next time.

Upcoming: we're planning two fundraisers: 5K in Saltville on Saturday, Sept. 1, and our First Annual Three Rivers Art Auction on Saturday, Nov. 10, in Wise. Also: rain garden installations, regional stream cleanups, Conservation Camp, Public Lands Day event, rain barrel workshops and more. Let us know if you'd like to help!

## Workshop for festival focuses on stream pollution prevention

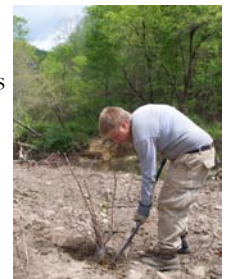
The Roundtable offered a stream pollution workshop this month for the Virginia Highlands Festival and funded by RiverWorks Discovery®. Volunteer Monica Appleby, at far right, conducted the session on macroinvertebrates, or tiny insects, that live in streams. The types and numbers of insects found are indicators of stream health.

April Grace, at immediate right, did a question and answer activity and led the "Preventable Journey," where participants track how litter travels through land, air and water.



## NCCC team tackles kudzu, plants trees

An AmeriCorps National Civilians Community Corps Team spent two days helping the Roundtable this spring by removing kudzu and planting trees in conjunction with a stream stabilization project at Pennington Gap. Board Chair Justin Laughlin, who works with Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, instructed the team on the project, which took two days.



# New OSM/VISTA encourages people to volunteer for events

Attention: Southwest VA volunteers!

Hello, my name is Andrea Rocchio—I am the Americorps OSM/VISTA for Upper Tennessee River Roundtable. I have been part of the staff since February and I'm enjoying my time in our cozy office. As a VISTA, I work heavily on capacity building, including expanding the volunteer base for the organization. This is where you all come in. Wonderful events are fast approaching and Upper Tennessee River Roundtable needs your help! Events include Clear Creek Outdoor Classroom Workday in Norton on Wednesday, August 22; Muster Grounds

Regional stream Cleanup on Saturday, Sept. 15; Public Lands Day Cleanup Saturday, Sept. 22; and much more! If you or anyone you know are interested in any of these events or future events, please do not hesitate to call me at the office at (276) 628-1600 or shoot me an email at [andrearoc](mailto:andrearoc).

## Teaching about the environment

At right, Andrea talks with children at June 2 Trail Fest about the need to take care of the environment, particularly the future Pennington Gap Greenway. Tree vandalism occurred at the future trail site just before Trail Fest, an event coordinated by the Roundtable with support from Tennessee Valley Authority and Pennington Gap.



# RiverWorks Discovery ® grant funds many education events

A RiverWorks Discovery ® grant funded many education and outreach events this year, including four education workshops. Staff taught classes at 4-H camps for Tazewell, Lee, Washington and Dickenson counties and worked three booths for Abingdon Go Green Earth Day Faire, including compost bin make and take workshop, trash treasures booth where children made creations from discards and Roundtable booth where children played a pollution prevention game, planted seeds and learned about barge travel. Roundtable hosted a rain garden tour for the Mid Atlantic Garden Faire and



created a rain barrel booth. TVA funded Trail Fest highlighting future plans for Pennington Gap Greenway. Other results will be featured next time.



At top, teacher Terry Vencil shares discoveries found on workshop field trip around Estonsa. Just above, OSM/VISTAs Heather Jeffreys and Katie Commender participate in Project WET activity. To their right, Trail Fest participants make soil babies. At left, April Grace shows how to make compost bins. At right, Crystal Berry helps children plant seeds.



## Mission

To achieve clean water throughout the watershed with the involvement of citizens in planning, educating, coordinating, attracting funding and serving as an advocate for our water resources.

## Vision

We envision the citizens within the watersheds of the Clinch, Holston and Powell rivers practicing conservation and good stewardship thus insuring water quality and quantity so that the waters are fishable, swim able and sustain a healthy and diverse ecosystem.

## Upper Tennessee River Roundtable Board of Directors, Executive Council, Staff:

### Board of Directors:

**Agriculture:** Carmen Cantrell

**Aquatic Resources:** Ernie Barker

**Citizen "At Large:"** Amanda Duncan

**Coal:** Bill Bledsoe

**Conservation Groups:** Neal Kilgore

**Education:** Dr. Ed Davis

**Environmental Groups:** Vacant

**Forest Industry:** Greg Gambrel

**Industry:** Karen Gilmer

**Planning Districts:** Lynn

McKinney

**Real Estate Development:** Jim Barker

**SWCD:** Mike Altizer

**Small Business:** John Ross

**Tourism:**

Sarah Love McReynolds

**Recreation:** Justin Laughlin

**Local Government:**

Bonnie Aker, Wise County

Clegg Williams, Smyth County

Shawn Morris, Lee County

Kenneth Dunford, Tazewell County

John Lentz, Washington County

Smyth and Scott counties:

Vacant

**Local Watershed Groups:**

Bob McKinney, Holston

Diana Withen, Clinch

Stan Botts, Powell

### Executive Council:

Justin Laughlin

Ed Davis

Bob McKinney

Amanda Duncan

Diana Withen

Kelly Miller

### Staff:

Carol W. Doss, *Coordinator*

### Volunteer Staff:

Andrea Rocchio, *OSM/VISTA Member*

April Grace, *Assistant to Coordinator Thanks Raymon Grace Foundation.*



#### Learning about soil:

Roundtable staff demonstrated how to make soil babies, using chive seeds, soil and knee highs, at the Norton Best Friend Festival (left) and Abingdon Farmers' Market (right). OSM/VISTA Andrea Rocchio is at far right.

