



THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

December, 2013

Editor, Theresa Graham

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - FALL 2013

A very warm thank-you to the Warioto Audubon chapter in Clarksville for hosting TOS's Fall paper session and Board-of-Directors meeting. We had 3 very interesting presentations: "Monthly variation in the effectiveness of using silent counts and aural stimuli to detect Barred Owls in the area surrounding Reelfoot Lake, Tennessee"; "Avian malaria parasites in Eastern TN birds" (on average, 44% of our birds in east Tennessee have avian malaria!); and "Do sizes of mid-Atlantic birds change in response to global climate change?". All were presented well and enjoyed by the meeting attendees. The weather was wonderful, and we enjoyed several birdy field trips on Saturday and Sunday. A big thank-you to Donna Ward who filled in as secretary for Cyndi Routledge at the last minute.

The Board-of-Directors meeting was productive, and we discussed several issues. One of them was the idea to hold a competition for designing a new logo for TOS, to be initiated at the 2015 Spring meeting in Nashville. The winner of the competition will be determined by a vote of the general membership at the Spring TOS meeting next year in Chattanooga and will be awarded a \$1000 prize. The competition will run from November 1st, 2013 to March 30th, 2014.

Also discussed at the meeting was a second run at a Breeding Bird Atlas for Tennessee. The prospect of another full atlas project is daunting, and the costs will be high. There was a suggestion of re-sampling 1 out of every 10 atlas blocks to try to tease out population changes over the past 25 years. That may be an option that might result in meaningful information for a far reduced cost. I would like for TOS members to be thinking about this issue for discussion in the near future. If we attempt this project again, it will require a lot of volunteer time (out birding) from a lot of us.

One other item was the digitizing of the last 10 years of the MIGRANT to add to the ones we have already done. Chuck Nicholson is looking into this.

Bob Ford presented a thought-provoking talk Saturday evening about climate change. We all know this is happening as we speak. Citizen science will be a notable factor in making intelligent decisions. Bob made the statement that "no data is insignificant". This means that helping keep track of even the common birds in your backyard **IS** important. eBird is a great place to do this for birds (especially for early and late dates) and there are web sites where you can keep track of early and late dates for plants & trees blooming, butterflies and dragonflies, etc. Consider turning in eBird records from your patch or yard on a weekly basis.

NEAR-TERM MEETING SCHEDULE:

- Winter TOS meeting - no business; just birding. Pickwick State Park, Hardin Co., TN. February 7, 8, & 9, 2014.
- Spring 2014 meeting, May 2-4, 2014, Chattanooga, TN.
- Fall meeting - 2014 - October 3, 4, & 5. Paper Session and business meeting. Highland Rim Chapter hosting at Manchester.

Ron Hoff, TOS President

Winter TOS Meeting February 7, 8, & 9, 2014

Join other TOS birders from around the state at Pickwick State Park, Hardin Co., TN for the weekend. This is NOT a business meeting, just friends and birders getting together to do some winter birding, have fun, and tell tall tales!

There will be a field trip most of the day Saturday, trying to hit all the birding spots in the area. Sunday morning birding will be organized depending on how we did on Saturday.

Pickwick State Park Inn room \$70/night

7:00 a.m. breakfast buffet \$7.95; lunch buffet 7.95; dinner buffet 11.50.

Free use of board room that seats 20.

Hampton Inn, Counce, 1.3 miles from state park lodge \$89 double/\$99 king

6:00-10:00 a.m. free hot breakfast.

Free use of meeting room that seats 22.

(No other suitable motels at Counce/Pickwick.)

Many restaurant options at Counce/Pickwick:

http://www.tourhardincounty.org/?option=com_content&view=article&id=110&Itemid=77#Counce/Pickwick.

2014 TOS Spring State Meeting Chattanooga, May 2-4, 2014

The Chattanooga Chapter will host the TOS 2014 spring meeting. There will be registration Friday evening for the Saturday and Sunday morning walks. The walks will take you to some of our favorite birding sites and will be led by some of our very best local birders. Plans are in the works for a Saturday night get together.

We'll have more information coming later, but mark the dates on your calendars now. We hope to see you in the spring.

Thank you,

Pixie Lanham planham@epbfi.com

Secretary, Chattanooga TOS

TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY LOGO COMPETITION

TOS will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2015 and it's time for a new logo. The prize for the winning design is \$1,000 and the deadline is March 30, 2014. The design requirements are listed below.

1. "Tennessee Ornithological Society" and the year "1915" must be included.
2. A Northern Mockingbird (the TN state bird) must appear in the design, but other species occurring in East, Middle, and West Tennessee may also be included. A list of the 100 most common species found in Tennessee can be found at <http://www.tnwatchablewildlife.org/birds.cfm>. Click on a species and scroll to Status in Tennessee to see if the species occurs statewide.
3. The design must be four-color but reproducible in gray-scale, and submitted as a "vector" file, a JPG, and a PDF.
4. The Tennessee Ornithological Society will retain all rights to the design.

The winning design will be announced July 1, 2014

Entries must be submitted by March 30, 2014 to:

Ron Hoff
 282 Hackworth Lane
 Clinton, TN 37716
ronhoff511@gmail.com

..... **FALL BIRD COUNT DATA DUE NOW**

Fall count data are due as soon as possible to allow me to get my report in to the editor of THE MIGRANT. Besides the actual count data, please be sure to include the effort data below:

- 1 - Hours and miles by car, foot, and any nightbirding
- 2 - Number of observers and parties
- 3 - Any feeder watching hours & names
- 4 - Start and end times for the count
- 5 - Weather data for the count
- 6 - Names of all the participants
- 7 - Anything else about the count, i.e. record high or low numbers, extraordinary weather, all-time species total for your particular count, etc.

If you do not have a local compiler, you can send the data directly to me at the address/email below.

TOS appreciates your efforts to record and track our bird populations and abundance. Thanks for helping us to archive this data for future generations and researchers.

Ron Hoff • TOS state bird count compiler
 282 Hackworth Ln. • Clinton, TN 37716 • 865-435-4547
aves7000@bellsouth.net

Discover Birds Activity Book Available on TOS Website

By Vickie Henderson

The Discover Bird Activity Book is now available as a free download on a new page featured on [Tennessee Ornithological Society's website](#). Chuck Nicholson has created an "education" link in the sidebar of the home page. This link takes you to a new educational resources page that gives information about the Discover Birds Program and makes the entire activity book available to download or print.

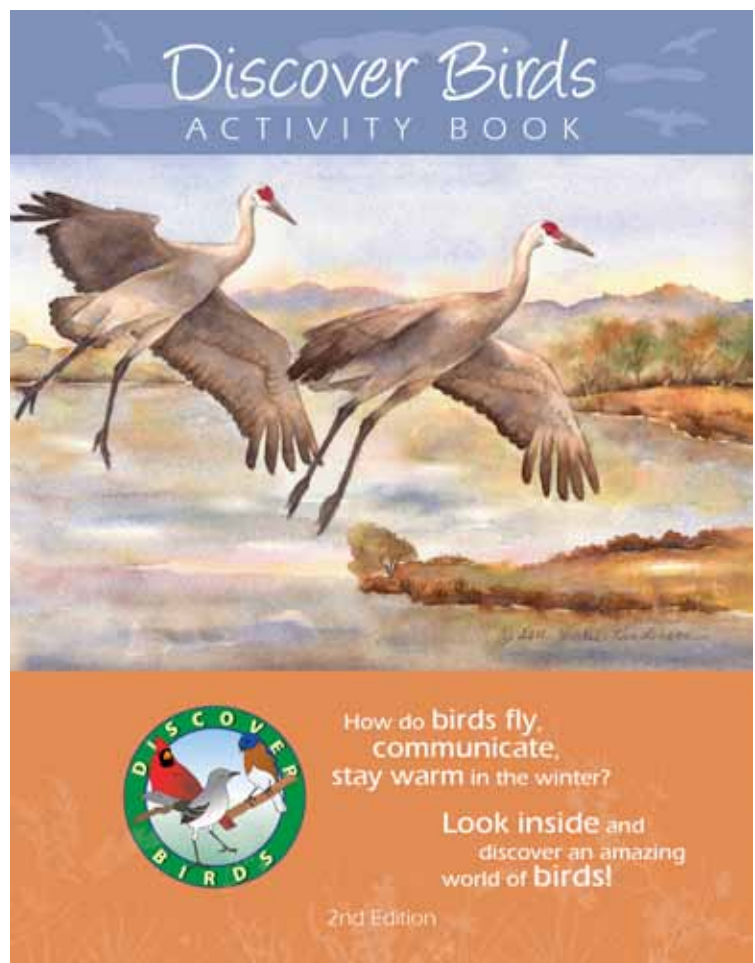
Cyndi Routledge initially suggested making the book available online as a resource for home-school educators, and we realized that free online availability is another good way to ensure that more children are introduced to birds. The web page visitor may choose to print the entire book or select individual activities and topics in the individual pages section.

A special thank-you to Chuck Nicholson for creating this new page and to Melinda Fawver for her assistance with updating some of the pages for online publication. We're excited to make the book available to the public in this new way!

The activity book is also now available on the [Tennessee Watchable Wildlife Website](#). Special appreciation goes to Scott Somershoe for giving the book this broader visibility. Additionally, NIMBioS (National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis) has published two of the book's activities on their website as [educational modules](#). We thank Kelly Sturner, NIMBioS Education and Outreach Coordinator, and Chris Welsh, NIMBioS Deputy Director, for giving the book this worldwide visibility to science and math research and education communities.

Printed books are available by contacting Cyndi Routledge at 931-648-0911 or by email: routledges@bellsouth.net Individuals interested in more information about the Discover Birds Program, arranging school visits in your area or volunteering with the program, contact Billie Cantwell at 865-567-4273 or by email: bfcantwell@gmail.com.

Also, watch for my Discover Birds article in the upcoming Jan/Feb 2014 issue of the [Tennessee Conservationist Magazine](#). The article features TOS, the Discover Birds Activity Book and the Discover Birds Program!



Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge Becomes Tennessee's First State Birding Park

By Vickie Henderson

At the Legacy Parks Foundation's annual fundraising luncheon held at Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge on September 20th, Governor Bill Haslam announced that Seven Islands will become the 56th state park in Tennessee and the first park with birding as its primary focus. "We see this as the flagship of a statewide birding tour," Haslam said, as he announced plans for the new park before a record crowd of 700 in attendance at the luncheon. The park's new name will be "Seven Islands State Birding Park."

Encompassing more than 410 acres on the Kelly Bend Peninsula of the French Broad River in southeast Knox County, this diverse riparian and open grassland habitat is planted with native grasses, wildflowers, and shrubby fruit-bearing plants and trees that provide homes and refuge to more than 150 species of birds and other wildlife. Wayne Schacher, a TOS Knoxville Chapter member, managed the refuge for eleven years before retiring and was present at the event to hear the announcement. Though many were aware state park plans were in the works, disclosure of the birding focus was saved for the special announcement at the luncheon.

The news is of particular interest to KTOS and the bird banding team of Mark Armstrong, who was also present for the announcement. Bird banding studies have been conducted on the refuge for the past nine years, and since 2006, Mark has been the Master Bander at the helm of the bird research. In addition to recording the history of bird activity on the refuge, Mark's banding station participates in the MAPs program (Monitoring for Avian Productivity and Survivorship Program) for the Institute for Bird Populations in Point Reyes Station, California. The MAPs program aims to collect and analyze data to understand how bird populations are changing over time. In the past seven years, Mark's banding team has banded over 3500 birds on the refuge and discovered interesting information about species longevity and site fidelity.

Having been introduced to the refuge after joining the banding team in 2009, it was a special honor for me to be asked to paint an original watercolor of a "Common Yellowthroat at Seven Islands" to commemorate this event for the Legacy Parks Foundation. The Common Yellowthroat, with its bright yellow plumage and black mask, is frequently seen and heard on the refuge and was a perfect subject for the painting. Additionally, I was introduced to this species at the banding table at Seven Islands, and my observations of the banding sessions became my first article for *The Tennessee Conservationist*: "Tracking the Birds of Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge" (2010).

The watercolor was made into a limited edition print and featured on the tables at the luncheon, and the original painting was presented to Linda and Pete Claussen for their visionary work in preserving the land and helping make the state birding park a reality.

It was exciting to see a bird species highlighted at this highly visible and well-attended event and to be a part of this celebration. We are excited about this new and progressive focus on birds in Tennessee and look forward to making contributions as the birding parks develop. Seven Islands is expected to change hands on July 1st, 2014.



left to right: Legacy Parks Foundation Board Chair, Chad Youngblood, Governor Bill Haslam, Pete Claussen, and Carol Evans, Executive Director, Legacy Parks Foundation. Photo credit: Jon Gustin



OPERATION MIGRATION 2013 -2014

In the August issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* it was noted that the eight Whooping Crane chicks dealt to Operation Migration (OM) had arrived by air on July 9, 2013, at White River Marsh, Wisconsin. From then until migration the OM Crew trained the chicks to bond with the ultralight (UL) aircraft that would escort them on their migration journey south, 1113 miles to St. Marks Wildlife Refuge in the Florida Panhandle.

The 2013-2014 migration started on Oct. 2, 2013. The first leg was a mere 5 miles from White River Marsh, Wisconsin, to Green Lake County, Wisconsin. Four colts flew all the way and four colts had to be captured, boxed and driven to their first stop. Then a record was broken for the longest down time at one stop...eleven days. On 10-14-2013, stop number two was reached at Marquette County, Wisconsin for a 14 mile trip and a total of 19 miles on migration in 13 days! Eventually on 10-25-2013, the migration reached the first stop in Illinois, Winnebago County, (34 miles flown for a total 120 miles. Stop number five). There are 23 scheduled stops on this migration.

Except for the fickle weather the migration appears fairly normal. The colts are performing well. The escort ground crew is getting acclimated to each other and their never ending chores while on safari from one point to the next. The equipment is holding up for the moment. From the outside all seems normal. You may follow their progress over the next two months by logging on to <http://operationmigration.org/> and clicking on "In The Field", the Official Blog/Field Journal for Operation Migration. It makes for interesting reading.

While on OM's web site you will notice the opportunity to contribute financially to their worthy cause. This year OM suggests donations of \$200.00 per mile or a fraction thereof. So far only 500 miles of the 1113 miles of migration have been sponsored. OM's budget for this year is \$257,000. It is an expensive venture to save Whooping Cranes. Hopefully you will read this and make a pledge or contribution. It would be awesome if all TOS clubs participated.

Certainly the best way to get revved up about the migration is to witness an early morning flight from one location to the next. The migration has two stops in Tennessee. One is in Carroll County, and one in Hardin County. The flyover sites are advertised on OM's website. By the time you read this the migration will either be close or may even have passed on to AL! To those who make the trip, goose bumps and tears of admiration are guaranteed. What a magnificent sight.

In conclusion the eight colts, when viewed up close, are cinnamon and white colored. In flight the color disappears. They look all white with black wing tips. A beautiful sight!

Bird on!

Tony King

Certified Craniac 865-988-6172

CHAPTER NEWS

Knoxville Chapter—The “Wonder of Hummingbirds” festival on August 24 was a huge success with over 1000 people in attendance. We banded 30 hummingbirds. Tennessee’s Wild Side came and filmed. <http://tnwildside.com/video/the-wonder-of-hummingbirds/> A big thank-you to Steve Routledge for his help and hard work. Mark your calendar for August 23 for the 2014 festival.

We celebrated our success at our September picnic at Ijams and awarded the WBIR Alive at Five at Four studio tour to Susan Davis. At our October meeting, Dr. Colin Sumrall was our guest speaker. His topic covered, “Why Reports of the Dinosaur Extinction are greatly exaggerated.”

JB Owen Award: The Award honors the memory of J.B. Owen, longtime TOS member known to thousands in East Tennessee through his columns in Knoxville newspapers. J.B. Owen Awards provide funds for projects that promote the welfare and conservation of birds in Tennessee. This year the award is being awarded to Clinch River Raptor Center for their work in rehabilitating injured raptors and to Mark Campen of The Tennessee Izaak Walton League which provides educational programs and water quality surveys such as the “Birds and Trees” program.

On October 12, KTOS members attended the Centennial Conservation Expo at Chilhowee Park. The Expo recognized the 100th anniversary of the 1913 National Conservation Exposition and celebrated a century of conservation in East Tennessee. The Expo showcased Knoxville’s heritage and ongoing commitment to conservation with historical displays, photographs and films, hands-on demonstrations and exhibits, children’s activities, live entertainment, athletic competitions, multimedia presentations, and events throughout the grounds of Chilhowee Park.

There were birding field trips to Heritage Park in Oak Ridge, Foothills Parkway, Ijams, Seven Island, Kyker Bottoms and Rankin Bottoms.

On Sept 22, 2013, members joined Tom Howe for a field trip to the Foothills Parkway in Townsend. The weather was perfect following the passage of a front the day before. They tallied 32 species which included, among the raptors, both vultures, 1 Osprey, 1 Cooper’s Hawk, 4 Red-tailed Hawks, 491 Broad-winged Hawks (some kettles of over 50 birds) and 1 Peregrine Falcon. They also had 2 Common Ravens low overhead. This was between 9:45 and 11:45, “a truly exhilarating experience for us all,” Tom Howe.

Governor Haslam announced to a crowd of 700 people at the Legacy Luncheon that Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge will become Tennessee’s 56th state park and the first state birding park. Seven Island is a wildlife sanctuary with 183 species of birds residing here. KTOS member Vickie Henderson created a watercolor to commemorate this event for the Legacy Parks Foundation. The watercolor was of a beautiful Common Yellowthroat that is seen and heard at Seven Islands. You can visit Vickie’s blog to read about the event and see this beautiful piece of art. http://vickiehenderson.blogspot.com/2013_09_01_archive.html

We lost a dear KTOS member, Nancy Tanner, this summer. Nancy and her husband, Jim, were a great team and did a lot for the birding community. She will be missed.

Karen Wilkinson – KTOS Secretary



Watercolor, Common Yellowthroat at Seven Islands by Vickie Henderson

CHAPTER NEWS

Memphis Chapter - Members enjoyed fellowship and fine food at our annual August chapter picnic hosted by Knox Martin at The Midsouth Raptor Rehab Center. Our traditional September kickoff featured members' summer bird photos and a display and presentation by member Ken Webster of his extensive nest collection. In October State Ornithologist Scott Somershoe presented an exciting account of the Tennessee wintering Golden Eagles project. At the beginning of each month we are posting an invitation to upcoming Chapter events on TNbird. You can check out the entire 2013-2014 calendar of field trips and speakers on our website at <http://www.tnbirds.org/chapters/Memphis/Memphis.htm>

The Memphis Chapter held its annual Fall North American Migration Count on Saturday, September 14. Sixteen observers had a total of 100 species (slightly low). Best bird: Anhinga. 10 species of shorebirds and 13 warbler species were observed. Other notables included a Fulvous Whistling Duck, and 29 Black-bellied Whistling Ducks. Misses included Bobwhite, turkey, accipiters, Hairy Woodpecker, and Field Sparrow.

MTOS members have been active in supporting local festivals. Several members volunteered at Lakeland Outdoors Fest, the Strawberry Plains Audubon Center annual Hummingbird Migration Festival, and the inaugural Desoto Eagle Festival, an event of Mississippi Wildlife Rehabilitators whose goal is to build a nature and rehabilitation center at Arkabutla Lake.

Nine members attended the TOS fall state meeting and were treated to a delightful weekend of birding in and around Clarksville.

The project of entering our historic field cards is nearing completion. As of this writing over 7600 cards have been entered into eBird. This massive undertaking is well worth the effort. We understand that Tennessee now has the most extensive pre-2000 data of any state.

We are pleased to announce that the 4th edition of our detailed bird list Seasonal Occurrences of Shelby County, TN Birds is available. It is a color revision of the compilation of several thousand field cards and notes collected for Shelby County since 1929. The document indicates current possibility of sighting a species and is available for viewing or download from our website.

As an added service to assist folks with locating their desired species, our Rare Bird Alert Committee has

now compiled and distributed a master "wish list" from members. As with rare birds, sightings of and directions to these birds are also quickly relayed to interested individuals.

Over the summer long time member David Brown passed away. David and wife Rosemary had moved to Bowling Green, KY. David is missed.

Gaynell Perry – President

The **Nashville Chapter** Fall Count, held September 21st, was a success with 115 species found. Birds of interest included Bald Eagles, Osprey, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers, Golden-crowned Kinglets and several hundred Blue-winged Teal. Also of interest was the first documented record of an Ovenbird at Bell's Bend. Thanks to all who participated in the count.

Thanks to the efforts of Scott Block, Mary Zimmerman and others, NTOS has proudly unveiled our new website. Please feel free to visit it and give us your feedback. It can be accessed through the TOS website.

The new NTOS officers for 2013-2015:

Steve Routledge – President

Cyndi Routledge – 1st VP – Programs

Chloe Walker – 2nd VP – Field trips

Amy Potter – Secretary

Susan Hollyday – Treasurer / Curator

Board of Directors: Barbara Harris, Tony Lance, Chloe Walker, Ed Schneider, and Amy Potter

NTOS has been invited to participate in the Adventure Science Center's "Twelve Days of Science" Dec. 27th and/or 30th. We plan to have an educational booth present so bring the family out for a fun-filled day.

Lastly, Team Tennessee, comprised of Chloe Walker, Chris Sloan, Cyndi and Steve Routledge won the grand prize for the second year in a row during the International Crane Foundation's Bird-a-Thon. The prize was for the most birds found in a 24 hour period (151) and the most money raised (nearly \$2200). A total of nearly \$25,000 was raised by all participating. Thanks to everyone for their generous support for this very worthy cause.

Steve Routledge – President

CHAPTER NEWS

Stephen M. Russell Chapter (Bristol) - Tom Hunter again coordinated the Annual Hawk Watch at the Mendota Fire Tower in Mendota, Virginia. He along with many observers and visitors spent 190.5 hours on the mountain in September and October. During the season they counted a total of 4256 raptors, including 4098 Broad-winged Hawks. They had a total of fourteen species during the official count period. The results are reported to the Hawk Migration Association web site at www.hawkcourt.org.

The annual Bristol Bird Club Banquet was held on September 20, 2013, at Addilynn United Methodist Church. The speaker was Dr. Stephen Wallace, a paleontologist with the Department of Geosciences at East Tennessee State University and with the East Tennessee State University & General Shale Natural History Museum in Gray, TN. Dr. Wallace gave a history of the fossil site and an up-to-date account of finds there.

In October club members participated in the Wildlife Weekend at Steele Creek Park in Bristol, TN. We helped with bird banding, led a bird walk and set up and manned a display of birding information. We also had a program on Sunday, October 20, for the public on backyard birding in conjunction with the Bristol Public Library. Tom Hunter presented a PowerPoint program about birds that people could see in their yards. John Hay told how to attract birds to your yard.

One of our members, Kevin Blaylock, presented the program on Birds of the Brazilian Pantanal at the regular October meeting. Kevin is a board member of the Phoenix Landing Foundation which is active in the preservation of bird habitat in Brazil. On November 19, member Wallace Coffey discussed Eagle Breeding in Northeast Tennessee.

Lois Cox – President

MIGRANT EDITOR STEPS DOWN

Dr. David Aborn at UT Chattanooga has stepped down as editor of *The Migrant*. TOS thanks Dr. Aborn for his time and efforts.

All future materials sent to *The Migrant* for publication should go to both of the following:

Martha Waldron, 1014 Murray Hill Lane, Memphis, TN 38120; martha.waldron@gmail.com

Susan McWhirter, 1760 Rayburn Walling Rd., Rock Island, TN 38581; snmcwhirter@gmail.com

ROUNDTABLE NOTES

Please consider publishing your short, interesting bird notes in the Roundtable section of *The Migrant*. These short notes can be related to unusual numbers, odd behavior, unusual nesting habits or predation, albinism, early and late dates of migration, etc. These sightings can be as scientific or non-scientific as you wish. This is the section where people can publish their casual, interesting bird sightings or notes, but is not for full-on peer-reviewed papers (which would be published elsewhere in the journal). Please send your sightings to both of the following people:

Martha Waldron, 1014 Murray Hill Lane, Memphis, TN 38120; martha.waldron@gmail.com

Susan McWhirter, 1760 Rayburn Walling Rd., Rock Island, TN 38581; snmcwhirter@gmail.com

Ron Hoff

FEBRUARY 28TH DEADLINE

The deadline date for the April issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is February 28th. Please submit all articles, announcements, reports and items of interest by this deadline date.

Submit Material To:

Theresa Graham, Editor
 PO Box 366, Oakland TN 38060
 (901) 465-4263 (home)
 (901) 748-9324 (fax)
 e-mail: 2graham@bellsouth.net



SEND CORRECTIONS & CHANGE OF ADDRESS REQUESTS TO:
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