



**January 25-29, 2022**

## **Meet the Experts**

**Jay Aldrich** is retired from the business world. He worked extensively within the commercial fresh cut flower industry, from growing, to importation, and distribution. He had the pleasure of working with Martha Stewart, whereby he developed her Martha's Flower Internet fulfillment business. He also worked with Hallmark Cards developing an initial test to sell flowers within the Gold Crown Stores. His career spanned 30 years in this field. Now retired, he is a Volunteer with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the National Park Service for 10 years along with his wife Sandra. He began as an Adopt a Trail Volunteer, working on the Trails Forever Projects, and currently volunteers within the Resource Education Department of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Both Jay and his wife, Sandra, have donated their time with the Friends of the Smokies and have donated over 1,400 hours to the park service.

**Sandra Aldrich** is a retired school teacher who taught special needs primary in Miami, Florida to 5th grade reading specialist and 5th grade language arts teacher. Now retired after 28 years of teaching, she has been a Volunteer with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the National Park Service for 10 years. She began as an Adopt a Trail Volunteer working on Trails Forever Projects, and currently volunteers along with her husband Jay, within the Resource Education Department of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. She is also a children's author. Both Sandra and her husband, Jay, have donated their time with the Friends of the Smokies and have donated over 1,400 hours to the park service.

**Jeff Alt** is a talented speaker, hiking expert and award-winning author. His Appalachian Trail book, *A Walk for Sunshine*, has won six awards including a Gold Medal in the Book of the Year Awards. Alt has walked the 2,160-mile Appalachian Trail, the 218-mile John Muir Trail with his wife, and he carried his 21-month old daughter on a family trek across a path of Ireland. Alt is a member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America (OWAA) and is the author of three books: *Get Your Kids Hiking: How to Start Them Young and Keep it Fun*, *Four Boots One Journey* (John Muir Trail) and *A Walk for Sunshine* (Appalachian Trail). Alt presents in and around the National Parks. His adventures and hiking expertise have been featured on ESPN, Hallmark Channel, Discoverychannel.com, CNN-Radio, Fox News, in the AP, USA Today, LA Times, Philadelphia Enquirer, the Knoxville-News Sentinel, Scholastic Parent and Child and many more.

E-mail: [jeff@jeffalt.com](mailto:jeff@jeffalt.com)

**American Eagle Foundation** is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization dedicated to the mission and vision of preserving the USA's majestic eagles and fragile environment for future generations to enjoy. They are also dedicated to caring for other birds of prey, many of which have been injured or orphaned. Their goal is to rehabilitate raptors for reintroduction into the wild, yet provide a home for those that are permanently disabled. At the Dollywood based facility, they are federally licensed caregivers to more than 60 resident birds that are non-releasable due to physical handicaps or accidental imprinting with humans. Some are trained for educational purposes, while others are placed in captive breeding projects. As a result of their reproduction efforts, they have released dozens of eagles into the Great Smoky Mountains.

E-mail: [aef eagles3@comcast.net](mailto:aef eagles3@comcast.net)

**Mark Armstrong** has been interested in birds his entire life and made it a career by working as the bird curator at Zoo Knoxville. He spent 36 years at the Zoo and retired at the end of 2015. He has been able to participate in numerous

Breeding Bird Surveys, Christmas Bird Counts and fall hawk counts. Mark is also an active birder and has been able to bird in Costa Rica, Belize and Kenya. While at the zoo, he became interested in doing more with native species and became a bird bander in 2003. Since then, Mark has banded over 10,000 birds including hummingbirds, songbirds and owls.

**Louise Bales** is a self-taught artist who lives “off the traveled path” in Gatlinburg, as her family has for generations. The quality of Louise Bales’ delicately detailed watercolors reflects her dedication to her craft. The scope of her subject matter and the rich and abundant wildlife of her mountain home are the expression of a woman whose roots are deeply planted in the rich soil her family has owned for generations.

Website: [www.louisebales.com](http://www.louisebales.com)

**Stephen Lyn Bales** is a native of Gatlinburg, Tennessee and is has recently retired from the position of senior naturalist at Ijams Nature Center in Knoxville. He is also the author of two books: Natural Histories and Ghost Birds, both published by UT Press.

**Dr. William M. Bass** is the founder of the University of Tennessee's Anthropology Research Facility, known worldwide as the Body Farm. A dedicated educator, Dr. Bass was honored as National Professor of the Year by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. In addition to teaching forensic anthropology, he is author or coauthor of more than two hundred scientific publications. Dr. Bass and his students have revolutionized the field of forensic anthropology and assisted law enforcement in solving countless cases. Dr. Bass is coauthor, with Jon Jefferson, of two nonfiction books about his career, Death’s Acre and Beyond the Body Farm. They also collaborated as the writing team of Jefferson Bass, which has produced ten novels about a fictionalized version of the Body Farm. For information about upcoming speaking engagements by Dr. Bass, or to inquire about booking a presentation, visit [BoneZones.com](http://BoneZones.com).

**Lew Bolton** has managed Jack Tales Storytelling Theater at [abgatlinburg.com](http://abgatlinburg.com) since 1987 (Facebook: Jack Tales Storytelling Theater of the Smoky Mountains). He has also taken on Wiley Oakley tales and is administrator of Wiley Oakley – Roamin’ Man of the Mountains on Facebook. Lew is a member of both the Smoky Mountains Storytellers Association and the Smoky Mountains Historical Society.

**Tom Brosch** owned and operated a popular hiking store near Great Smoky Mountains National Park for 15 years. His deep knowledge of history on the park, the people who lived there and the location of the many trail systems provides him with ample skill to serve as the Wilderness Wildlife Week Assistant Transportation Director.

**Fred Brown** is a retired Senior Writer for the Knoxville News-Sentinel and has been named to the Friends of Literacy East Tennessee Writers Hall of Fame for excellence in Journalism. He was a working journalist for more than 45 years. Besides his columns and stories for the News Sentinel, Fred has published numerous books and writes frequently for historical magazines and journals.

**Aurora Harrison Bull** is an award winning artist and painting instructor who will be displaying nature and wildlife paintings in oil. Her paintings hang in numerous corporate and private collections throughout the US and abroad. Her work has been featured in North Light Artist magazine. Aurora enjoys sharing her knowledge and experience with others by teaching and giving demonstrations.

**Cades Cove Preservation Association** was established to preserve the history, heritage and families that once called Cades Cove home prior to the formation of GSMNP. The “CCPA” volunteers clean the churches, repair trails to the old home sites and cemeteries and help the park service where needed in Cades Cove. The CCPA also maintains the Cades Cove museum located in the historic Thompson-Brown log house in Maryville.

Website: [www.cadescovepreservation.com](http://www.cadescovepreservation.com)

**Jack Carman** is a graduate of Mississippi State University and a retired aeronautical engineer. An amateur botanist and recipient of several photography awards, Jack is the author of Wildflowers of Tennessee, Tennessee’s first color

photographic field guide.

E-mail: [jcarman@WildflowersTn.com](mailto:jcarman@WildflowersTn.com)

**Kefyn Catley** is Professor of Biology at Western Carolina University. A naturalist, passionate photographer, and lifelong observer of the tiny creatures “that run the world”, Kefyn gives talks and workshops at photographic clubs and societies where he encourages photographers to become citizen scientists by documenting and sharing their local arthropod diversity online. A portfolio of Kefyn’s images can be found at: [www.hiddennatureimages.com](http://www.hiddennatureimages.com)

**Kendall Chiles** is a freelance nature photographer with more than 30 years of photography experience. His photographs have appeared in numerous books, magazines and brochures. He is an instructor for the University of Tennessee/Smoky Mountain Field School and is President of Southern Appalachian Nature Photographers.

E-mail: [kchiles@knology.net](mailto:kchiles@knology.net)

**Tom and Pat Cory** have been professionally involved in photography for many years. They have taught and led numerous photo workshops and tours locally, nationally and internationally for more than 30 years. Their entertaining programs cover both the art and technique of photography and are enjoyed by photographers of all levels including non-photographers. Their images and articles have appeared in publications such as the Smoky Mountain Journal of Photography, Outdoor Photography, Nature Photographer, Blue Ridge Country, and Sierra Club calendars.

**Craig Cruise** is a Pigeon Forge police officer and a long-time resident of Pigeon Forge. He has a love of history and writing and has recently authored and published a book for all ages titled “Mussopo and His Great Adventure”.

**Anne Van Curen** is an actress who transforms into Emma "Grandma" Gatewood to describe what it was like to be the first woman to solo hike the Appalachian Trail in 1955. The dramatization is based off of the book "Grandma Gatewood's Walk", which was written from accounts of Gatewood's surviving family members, newspaper magazine articles and her own diaries and trail journals.

**Donna Cyr** has taught wild edibles for more than 45 years. She teaches how to turn weeds into food medicine and utilitarian items. Such items include weed ravioli, instant wound medicine and weaving mats out of cattails. Donna has taught workshops and classes across the United States and has called Tennessee home since 1998.

**Bill Deitzer** has hiked in 51 National Parks and in all 50 U.S. states. He is a member of the 900 Mile Club having hiked all 800 trail miles in the Great Smokies Mountain National Park. Bill has completed seven hikes to the bottom of the Grand Canyon. He is retired as CFO of Cincinnati State Technical & Community College.

**Rosemary Deitzer** is a retired association manager and meeting planner from West Chester Ohio. She is an active volunteer with the University of Cincinnati’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and Hospice of Cincinnati. Rosemary enjoys sharing stories of famous women and towns who have made a difference.

**The East Tennessee Historical Society** promotes, interprets, and preserves East Tennessee’s incredible history through our membership publications and services, popular educational programs, and through our award-winning Museum of East Tennessee History’s exhibits. Located in the East Tennessee History Center in downtown Knoxville, the ETHS serves all who walk through their doors, as well as reaching out beyond our walls to the rest of East Tennessee, the region and state.

**Jim Eastin** is a minister, photographer, performer, and storyteller who helps people share their joys with words, music and the visual arts. He has been performing in the area and teaching people to use cameras in the Smoky Mountains since 2000.

Website: [www.JimEastin.net](http://www.JimEastin.net)

**Judy Felts**, originally from Arkansas, graduated with a degree in music and later moved to the Nashville area to pursue her music career. She was a performer at Opryland as well as keyboard and vocalist for Grand Ole Opry star, Bill Anderson. Judy started an organization in Nashville in 1995 called "Christian Women Connect" and also serves on the board for ACT (Artist in Christian Testimony) and on the Community Resource Board for the TN Prison for Women. She has also served as a volunteer at the Tennessee Prison for Women since 1999. Judy has been utilized as a keynote speaker, worship leader and soloist for various churches, conferences and mission events. In addition to Judy's solo ministry, she also performs with Lee Porter as a duo with piano, guitar, string bass and percussion. They have performed together for the last eight years and are available for churches, conferences and events. Judy and her husband Mike have been attending Wilderness Wildlife Week since 2000 and have a love for hiking and the outdoors. Website: [www.judyfelts.com](http://www.judyfelts.com)

**Keith Garnes** lives in Gatlinburg and leads hikes for Smoky Mountain Outdoors and is the hiking director for Friends of Pickett State Park in Middle Tennessee. He is active in promoting Pickett State Park's new addition, the Pogue Creek Canyon. Keith will share Pogue Creek Canyon's secrets during his Arches and Natural Bridges on Tennessee's Trails presentation during Wilderness Wildlife Week 2017.

**Robin Goddard** is retired from a 32 year teaching career, and has received many educational honors. She has been a VIP (Volunteer in the Park) for more than 49 years where she is the interpreter (schoolmarm) at the Little Greenbrier School, and she continues to teach at Tremont. Robin was also a 2016 GSMNP Centennial Ambassador. She received the President's Highest Call to Service Award, and in February of 2013, she received the George B. Hartzog National Award for Enduring Volunteer Service for the entire National Park Service.

**Rhonda Goins** works as a Naturalist at Bays Mountain Park, where she has been employed for 14 years. She holds a Bachelor's degree from ETSU in Biology and many certificates in wolf behavior and wildlife rehabilitation. Rhonda is also a member of the National Opossum Society and The Defenders of Wildlife. Being from the southeast, her minors, Geography and Appalachian Studies, come in handy teaching the topography and our Appalachian ways. Rhonda has worked closely with wolves for over 14 years and has designed and implemented the socialization of the Park's captive wolves. In 2009, she led and directed the capture of the escaped wolves and again in 2010. Rhonda works with all the animals and heads the Herpetarium which houses East Tennessee reptiles and amphibians. When the Herpetarium underwent a total renovation, Rhonda was instrumental in the design and implementation of all animal exhibits and habitats. Most recently, she directed the socialization of the Park's addition of 4 gray wolf cubs, born in 2014.

**Kathy Gwinn** is a former History Teacher. For the past 15 years, she has been employed as a Tour Guide for Smoky Mountain Tour Connection. She and her husband Mike, also perform music and storytelling and are known together as "Hills & Hollows".

**Joey Holt** grew up in the foothills of the Smokies. Joey has been a lover of the outdoors all his life enjoying activities such as camping and hiking. He has been an avid hiker for several years. Joey is a member of Great Smoky Mountains Association and is a volunteer with Appalachian Bear Rescue. He has been presenting a hiking program at a local camp resort for the past few years where he also does guided hikes for their guests, church groups, and others who just enjoy the outdoors.

E-mail: [joeytodd@bellsouth.net](mailto:joeytodd@bellsouth.net)

**Nate Housley** is a Tennessee State Park Ranger and has been serving the State of Tennessee for seven years. Through his career he has worked at Huntington Beach and Charles Towne Landing State Park in South Carolina, Big Ridge, Harrison Bay, Hiwassee Ocoee Rivers, and Seven Islands State Birding Park here in Tennessee. His love of the outdoors began at an early age with camping and hiking trips in nature with his father. He was fortunate enough to incorporate his love of the outdoors into a career, and is more than happy to share his experiences and love of nature with others.

**Douglas Hubbard** has a passion for photography spanning more than 50 years. By the age of 13, he had contracted his first wedding which included the darkroom work. He progressed from film capture to digital capture by digitalizing film

and processing those files in Photoshop. Douglas has served as president of the Camera Club of Oak Ridge; has been successful in photography competitions; chaired major photographic competitions; and presented photographic programs.

**Marcia Nelson Huskey** is a Pigeon Forge native. Her family lived in what is now the Greenbrier section of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Marcia has been with the Pigeon Forge Public Library for more than 20 years.

**Jim Jenkins** graduated from Tennessee Technological University with a B.S. in Wildlife Management. Jim is very knowledgeable about plant and animal identification and has hiked extensively in GSMNP. Jim has been a tour guide for more than 30 years.

**Ken Jenkins**, professional photographer and creator of Wilderness Wildlife Week, is known throughout North America. He is an accomplished author of numerous books covering black bears, grizzlies and other wildlife. Because of Ken's vision 27 years ago, WWW is an award-winning event, having won prestigious awards from the International Festivals and Events Association for Best Environmental Program, Best Educational Program, Best Children's Programming and Best Community Outreach Program from among approximately 1,500 award entries.

**The Knoxville Area Dulcimer Club** started 30 years ago with a few players gathering in a private home. Currently the group has over 150 members. The KADC is dedicated to teaching, sharing, and enjoying the playing of Appalachian and hammered dulcimers. Additional information may be found at [knoxvilledulcimer.org](http://knoxvilledulcimer.org) and on the KADC Facebook page.

**Bobbie Lamons Lovell** was born in the Lemons Hollow in the foothills of the Smokies. Her passions include art and poetry. Retirement has allowed Bobbie to paint daily and early morning musings gift her with subjects for poems. The Great Smoky Mountains provide Bobbie with subject matter for both. Her art and poetry reflect her love and memories of the mountains and its people and their traditions.

**Charles Maynard** has authored several books including *Churches of the Smokies* and co-authored *Time Well Spent-Family Hiking in the Smokies* and *Waterfalls and Cascades of the Great Smoky Mountains*. A children's family book, *Going Along to the Great Smoky Mountains*, was published in 2008. Charles also is the author of *Blue Ridge Mountains: Ancient and Majestic* with photographer Jerry Green and co-author of *Family Hiking in the Smokies*.

**Dr. Nancy McEntee** lives in Blount County with her rescued dogs and cats and a husband who keeps saying, "That's enough." She has reinvented herself as a Woman Marine, Academic Advisor, college professor, banker, pilot, clinical therapist, realtor, animal control officer and lately as an author. As a veteran, Nancy volunteers in the East Tennessee Veterans Honor Guard and Blount County Veteran Pantry. Mostly, she volunteers in the Cades Cove section of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

**Carroll McMahan** resides in Fountain City. He is the Special Projects Coordinator for the Sevierville Chamber of Commerce. Carroll is a contributing writer and coordinator of Upland Chronicles, a weekly column featuring mountain heritage stories in The Mountain Press. In 2010, he organized and continues to coordinate the annual Rose Glen Literary Festival at Walters State Community College, Sevier County Campus. A native of Sevierville, he moved back to East Tennessee after 25 years in Nashville and for one entire summer in Glacier Bay, Alaska. For the past seven years, Carroll has presented various heritage programs at Wilderness Wildlife in Pigeon Forge. He periodically conducts walking history tours of downtown Sevierville. Carroll is recipient of the 2012 Community History Award presented by the East Tennessee Historical Society and the Historic Preservation Recognition Award presented on behalf of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Spencer Clack Chapter. He is married to Michelle Ingolia McMahan who is a nurse at the Sleep Disorder Center of Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center. They are members of St. Albert the Great Catholic Church and serve together on the advisory board of East Tennessee Catholic Charities. His interests include hiking in the Smokies, history, folklore and storytelling.

**Harry Moore** holds both a BA (1971) and MS degree (1974) in Geology from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He retired June 30, 2009 from Tennessee Department of Transportation after 37 years where he managed the TDOT Geotechnical Engineering Office in Knoxville for the last 17 years. Currently, Harry works part time as a Senior Consultant with Golder Associates, Atlanta office. He has authored numerous technical papers dealing with karst, landslides, and other geotechnical issues related to highways. Harry has also authored numerous books including *The Bone Hunters: The Discovery of Miocene Fossils in Gray, Tennessee*. Now Harry resides in Knoxville, Tennessee with his wife Alice Ann, who retired in July of 2008 as the State Director of the University of Tennessee Extension 4-H program.

**Stephanie Mueller** is the seasonal ranger at Seven Islands State Birding Park in Kodak, TN where she has been volunteering and working since 2017. She received her BS degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences and a minor in Environmental Science from North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC. She received her MS degree in Natural Resources-Wildlife Concentration from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, where her research thesis was on the habitat relationships of songbirds in peatland swamps of Wisconsin. Stephanie is a Certified Interpretive Guide through the National Association for Interpretation and enjoys guiding hikes and programs for nature enthusiasts of all ages.

**Chris Ogle** is a native son of Sevier County, Tennessee. He works as a Wildlife Surveys Manager for the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) within their administrative Region IV and covers the 21 eastern counties. Chris' job is to inventory nongame wildlife on the agency's Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and provide technical assistance to private landowners for issues concerning nongame species. He specializes in rare, threatened, and endangered species. Chris holds a B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Science from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and a M.S. from East Tennessee State University where he conducted a project on tiger salamanders in East Tennessee. He is also heavily involved in the local community. For the past few years he has taught the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Hunter's Education class at Caton's Chapel Elementary School. Chris also attends and works with many ministries at Richardson's Cove Baptist Church, and serves as Assistant Scoutmaster for Boy Scout Troop 211.

**George Owen** has led hikes and done intensive trail work in the Southern Appalachians for the last half century. He has served as trail maintenance director and trail construction director for both the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club and the Benton MacKaye Trail Association, serving also as president of the latter. George provided the layout and supervised much of the construction of the Benton MacKaye Trail in Georgia. He has also served as conservation director for three trail clubs, and is a recent past president of the Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition. For 10 years he served part summers as an alpine guide for two companies in the Swiss Alps following his occupational retirement in 2002. In addition, George has led hiking group adventures from Virginia to California. He now has years of exploring and leading hikes on trails in the Smokies, beginning with his children decades ago. Currently George serves as a leader in a southeastern regional project to provide accessible trails for the mobility impaired, mainly on public lands.

**Sherra Owen** is a retired Home Economics/Character Education Teacher of 33 years, mother of two sons and grandmother of six. In addition to being an Audubon Master Naturalist, Sherra is a Master Gardener, a member of the Garden Clubs of Mississippi, the Mississippi Native Plant Society and curator of the William Faulkner Literary Garden. Sherra is a Garden Lecture Series speaker and has been a popular native plant educator, tour guide and speaker since 1986. She and husband, Ken, maintain a backyard native woodland garden and a mile trail through a mature riparian forest which they open to the public in April where she educates about food, fun, folklore, medicinal value and sustainability of native plants. When asked how she would like to be introduced, she says simply, "I love God. I love my family. I love people. I love plants and nature and I love sharing stories about all of them."

**Mary Phillips** is a local artist, author, and illustrator, whose career has evolved from drawing children, to native plant studies, to storytelling. Combining the inspiration of her talents has led to creating keepsake nature books for children that focus on science, and watching the natural world around us come alive with the wonder of spinning a good yarn. Mary also owns/operates the Boogertown Storytelling Place.

**Jacki and Janis Proffitt** are craft artists who continue to draw from their rich history and cultural heritage of Appalachia. Woodworking has been in their family for several generations dating back to some of the first settlers in Sevier County.

Proffitt's Woodworks was established in 1979 in the town of Pittman Center, Tennessee by their father, Ellis Proffitt. Jacki and Janis grew up helping their father in his shop learning their woodworking skills from him. For more than 20 years they have been running the family business carrying on traditional Appalachia turnings such as wooden fruit and bowls, candle holders, bud vases and many on-of-a-kind pieces using woods native to the area.

Website: [www.proffitts-woodworks.com](http://www.proffitts-woodworks.com)

**Jeff Rennie** has amazing stories and knowledge to share. Crawling into the dens of hibernating black bears in Colorado, river rafting in China, exploring Antarctica on a Russian research vessel, climbing Africa's Mount Kilimanjaro, Jeff has traveled the world for more than 20 years as a writer for such prestigious publications as National Geographic Traveler, Reader's Digest, Backpacker and others. His writing on destinations on six continents has twice been awarded gold medals for excellence by the Society of American Travel Writers and includes over 250 magazine articles and 10 books such as Treasures of Alaska: Last Great American Wilderness published by National Geographic Books and Spirit of the Hills: Black Bears of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. His photography, known for its creative artistry, has been featured in publications such as Reader's Digest, National Geographic Traveler, and Backpacker and was included in an exhibit honoring the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act in the American Museum on Natural History. He teaches Wilderness Literature and Nature Photography at Conserve School in Wisconsin's northwoods.

**Gudrun and Peter Seifert**, stem from Germany and lived in Switzerland for two years, before coming to the United States in 1964. Initially, they wanted to stay only two or three years in the USA; however, the tremendous welcoming spirit and security during the world's East-West conflict, as well as the opportunity to work, helped them to make the decision to reside permanently in the USA. The Seiferts have learned the language while an accent remains. Perhaps you can detect it even in their writings. "We thank you, America."

**Kathy Sherrard** has served as a member of the Board of Directors and an educator for Appalachian Bear Rescue. Since her initial experiences with bears in the mid-90s, Kathy has studied the animals extensively. She has presented programs about bears for the more than 15 years at WWW and numerous other venues, including schools.

**Mark & Janet Snyder** are retired school educators who reside in Townsend, Tennessee. Both are members of Cades Cove Preservation Association, with Mark serving on the Board of the CCPA. Both Mark and Janet serve as Board Members of the Little River Railroad and Lumber Museum. They also maintain a section of the Appalachian Trail north of Newfound Gap. Mark is a driver/interpreter of the Great Smoky Mountain Heritage Center's 'Cades Cove Heritage Tours'. He also works part-time at the Townsend Visitor Center. Janet's love of hiking is evident in her quest to hike the entire AT. She was going to hike with or without Mark, so reluctantly he joined her. They completed their five-year section hike in 2014. Both Mark and Janet are 900 mile hikers having completed all the park trails. They really enjoy off trail hiking looking for history prior to the creation of GSMNP.

**J.L. Stepp** is the co-author of the best-selling Smoky Mountains hiking guidebook The Afternoon Hiker, featuring 110 trails descriptions and over 300 color photos, and the recently published Discovering Tennessee State Parks guidebook (2019) offering full descriptions of all Tennessee's 56 state parks with over 500 illustrative photos. A native East Tennessean and UT grad, Stepp owns S & S Communications, established in 1990, which publishes a monthly outdoor magazine called Tennessee Fishing & Hunting Guide and his background includes over 45 years in sales, marketing, management, and publications. [magazine website: [www.tnfhg.com](http://www.tnfhg.com)]

**Dr. Lin Stepp**, a New York Times and USA Today Best-Selling international author, is a native Tennessean, businesswoman, educator and the author of eleven Smoky Mountain novels, including the most recent Lost Inheritance (2019) set in Gatlinburg, a novella in one of Kensington's Christmas anthologies, and she is the co-author of both a hiking guidebook and state parks guidebook with her husband. Stepp writes engaging, heart-warming contemporary Southern fiction with every novel set in a different location around the Great Smoky Mountains.

Website: [www.linstepp.com](http://www.linstepp.com)

**Lee Stetson** has portrayed John Muir in several productions in Yosemite National Park for more than a quarter of a million visitors since 1983. He is passionate about promoting the performing arts in the national parks. Stetson founded the Hawaii Performing Arts Company, served as the artistic manager of both the Hawaii Theatre Festival and the Antique Theatre Festival of Idaho, and has been a freelance director. As an actor, he has performed more than 50 major roles from Shakespeare to Neil Simon, and his television credits include a dozen episodes of Hawaii Five-0.

**Alan Sutterfield** has been an actor and playwright for many years. Recently, he has played leading roles in James Joyce's *The Dead*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*. He is gratified to add Theodore Roosevelt to his acting credits, which include historic characters General Custer, Captain James Cook and John Merrick (*The Elephant Man*). Sutterfield's latest play, *King Kalahkaua's Poker Game*, was produced in May 2013 in Honolulu.

**Joe Taft** is a Retired Senior Naturalist having worked at Bays Mountain Park in Kingsport for more than 25 years. He is also a retired USAF navigator. Joe has presented more than 20 years at Wilderness Wildlife Week. In addition to his work at Bays Mountain Park, he has presented programs at Calloway Gardens in Georgia, Roan Mountain State Park, Warriors Path State Park and a variety of civic clubs. Joe enjoys wildflowers, photography and hiking.

**Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning**, an Oak Ridge-based environmental advocacy organization, was established in 1966. The organization empowers citizens to help our natural lands and waters through informational outings and programs and science-based comments on environmental issues. The bi-monthly TCWP Newsletter is acclaimed throughout the state as an outstanding informational resource on environmental issues. Enroll for free e-alerts at [www.tcwp.org](http://www.tcwp.org).

**Rick Turner** has been a VIP (Volunteer in Park) since 2004 working at the Sugarlands Visitor Center where he enjoys meeting, greeting and directing visitors to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Rick enjoys learning about and explaining the rich history of the land that forms GSMNP and what led up to the formation of the Park. From 2005 to 2012, Rick served as president of the Little River Railroad and Lumber Company Museum in Townsend, Tennessee which led to his developing programs about logging and railroads in what is now GSMNP. Prior to his volunteer work in GSMNP, Rick enjoyed a career as a software developer and is retired from the U.S. Navy.

**Becky Weaver** is a native of East Tennessee and has always enjoyed working with her hands to create useful items. She has been weaving baskets since 2005 and is a teacher at heart. She loves to share her skills with others, especially those who may not think they are not creative. Her style of basketry ranges from traditional Appalachian to rustic variations using local vines. Becky is a member of the Tennessee Basketry Association and the Foothills Craft Guild. She can be found demonstrating her craft at various historical events in the local area.

**David Weaver** is a native and lifelong resident of East Tennessee. He grew up watching his grandfather use his hands to make useful objects and continues the same by chair seat weaving. Because this is a dying art, David wants to share his skills with others. He is a member of the Foothills Craft Guild and can be found demonstrating his craft at various historical events in the local area.

**Don Wells** is President of the Mountain Stewards. The Mountain Stewards, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, formed in 2003 launched in conjunction with others in three states, the National Trail Tree Project to locate, document and preserve Indian Trail Trees which are part of the heritage of Native Americans. In late 2007, the Mountain Stewards launched the Indian Trails Mapping Program to more precisely map Indian Trails from old survey maps of the 1700 and 1800's era. In 2011, Mountain Stewards published their book, *Mystery of the Trees* and produced the documentary *Mystery of the Trees* in 2015.



**WildOnes®** is a national non-profit (501c3) organization with the national office in Wisconsin. With about 50 chapters and a membership of over 4,000, the major goal is to encourage homeowners and businesses to include native plants in the landscape to promote local biospheres.

**Wings of America** is an up-close look at America's magnificent Birds of Prey. This educational program features non-releasable birds including eagles, hawks, owls, falcons and vultures, some in amazing free flight. The program is a dramatic and effective way to learn about wildlife, environmental and ecological concerns.

**Christina Wolfenbarger** is the historian at the Pigeon Forge Public Library. She has fond memories of growing up in the Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge area.

**Jean Woods** is the Past President of the North Carolina Native Plant Society, leads wildflower walks, and gives talks on Botany-related subjects at Botanical Gardens and other venues. In addition, she has served on the board of the Catawba Lands Conservancy in Charlotte, NC as well as the Board of the Friends of Plant Conservation. Jean is a graduate of the Certificate in Native Plant Studies program at UNC-Charlotte, and was involved in its establishment. Jean learned to love plants and gardening from her father and grandmother and comes from a long line of ancestors who like to dig in the dirt.

**Joel and Kathy Zachry** are the owners and guides for Great Outdoors! Adventure Travel and completed the 2,175 miles of the Appalachian Trail in 2005. They have been instructors for the University of Tennessee/National Park Service *Smoky Mountain Field School* since the early 1980s and are the current directors of the award-winning program in its 36<sup>th</sup> season.

Website: [www.gowithgoat.com](http://www.gowithgoat.com)

E-mail: [joel@gowithgoat.com](mailto:joel@gowithgoat.com)