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ADVOCATE

ORSSAB Considers Fall Oral Histories Workshop

One of the best ways to learn and study history is to hear the stories told by the people who lived it. Capturing these stories in the form of oral histories allows you to see and hear the people who were part of the major events of their time.

To that end, about 275 oral histories of scientists, engineers, community leaders, and residents who were part of the Manhattan Project and the continuing missions of Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Y-12 National Security Complex have been recorded.

But these oral histories are not easily retrievable by researchers and the public. They are not housed in one location, nor are they catalogued in a comprehensive manner.

In an effort to solve this dilemma, the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) Oral History Subcommittee and the Oak Ridge Public Library would like to sponsor a workshop that will bring together many groups and individuals interested in preserving Oak Ridge oral history. They will try to determine what can be done to develop a comprehensive oral history program.

“Oral histories are a well-accepted method of capturing historical aspects of people, events, programs, and organizations that are of interest to people today and in the future,” says Steve Stow, chair of the Oral History Subcommittee. “This fact is recognized widely and is one method that DOE has recommended as part of its efforts to document and describe histori-

cal information related to the Manhattan Project and the ensuing Cold War.”

Stow said it is not ORSSAB’s intent to take charge of an oral history program and manage it. “We’re just trying to be the catalyst to consolidate far-flung efforts,” he said. “It would be beyond the board’s mission to manage something like this. But much of the work done on the Oak Ridge Reservation has an environmental management component, such as the cleanup of Melton Valley and the take-down of the K-25 building at East Tennessee Technology Park. How those projects were

done and are being done has historical significance. It’s taking much longer to demolish K-25 than it did to build it, and I think that’s historically relevant. So in that regard I think it’s within the realm of interest

for ORSSAB. We can at least do something to try to kick-start the program.”

Stow’s interest in history led him to form the ORSSAB subcommittee, composed of board members and former board members, plus Kathy McNeilly and Susie Stooksbury of the Oak Ridge Public Library, to study how current oral histories could be consolidated in one location and how to continue to systematically gather oral histories.

“We hope to get representatives of the major players in oral history to come and explain where they are with their respective programs,” said Stow. “They would include

“Oral histories are a well-accepted method of capturing historical aspects of people, events, programs, and organizations that are of interest to people today and in the future.”

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The Advocate is a publication of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB)—an independent, nonpartisan, volunteer citizens panel providing recommendations and advice to DOE’s Environmental Management Program

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Oral History Workshop *Continued from page 1*

Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Y-12 National Security Complex, Bechtel Jacobs for K-25/East Tennessee Technology Park, Oak Ridge Heritage and Preservation Association, and Oak Ridge Associated Universities.”

The workshop is intended to help resolve several issues, including:

- What is the definition of an oral history?
- Should all oral histories be housed at one location along with the transcripts and other relevant files?

“It is not ORSSAB’s intent to take charge of an oral history program and manage it. We’re just trying to be the catalyst to consolidate far-flung efforts.”

- What existing regulations and legislative acts control or influence an oral history program?
- Who are the individuals who need to be interviewed in the future?
- What format of the end product will be the most desired and easy to access by interested parties?
- What organizations will handle transcribing oral histories that have not yet been transcribed?

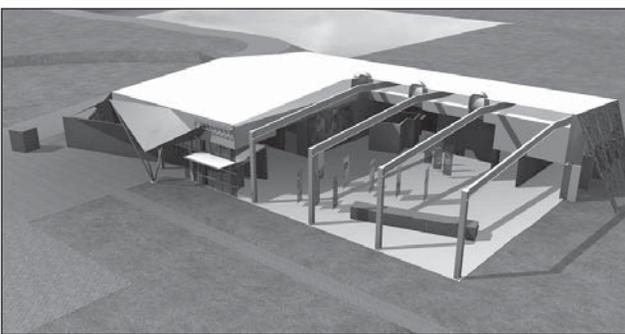
- What are sources of funding?
- Should a “permanent” administrative group or advisory committee be formed to oversee the oral history program, and if so, who?

“Once we understand the current status of the oral histories handled by the major players, we plan to break the group into subgroups to discuss at least some of the issues we’ve identified and come up with ideas for addressing them,” said Stow. “We’ll go from there. I foresee another workshop or two to really get the program going.”

Home for Recorded Histories Being Built at Ohio DOE Site

An oral history program similar to the one ORSSAB has looked into establishing is underway at a former DOE site 18 miles northwest of Cincinnati.

The Fernald Community Alliance is taking steps to establish a center that will house interviews with people



Conceptual design for the Fernald visitor’s center.

associated with DOE’s former Fernald Feed Material Production Center, which produced weapons-grade uranium. The site has been cleaned up and was closed in September 2006.

In 1997 the Fernald Living History Project was started to preserve all aspects of the site’s history. A large part of that effort was recording more than

100 interviews with former workers, citizens, and government officials who were involved with Fernald’s history.

With the completion of the Fernald cleanup, the Fernald Living History Project evolved into the Fernald Community Alliance, which will continue to work on the historical aspects of Fernald but will also include ecological and educational components.

When Fernald was closed, all but two of the 300 buildings on site were demolished. One of those, a fairly new warehouse that was built during cleanup operations, will house the recorded histories. It will also be used as a visitor’s center and community meeting facility. The DOE Office of Legacy Management will establish a site office there as well. In the meantime, all the oral histories conducted thus far are on the Fernald Community Alliance web site (www.fernalddcommunityalliance.org).

“About 120 interviews had been recorded, and recently the University of Cincinnati conducted another 20 with funding from the Ohio Environmental Education Fund,” said Sue Walpole, community relations manager for S.M. Stoller Corp., the Fernald site management contractor for long-term surveillance and maintenance. “We are now putting those interviews on DVD.

“The University of Cincinnati architectural school did the conceptual design for the visitor’s center, with a lot of input from the public,” she said. “Another group of students worked on the exhibit space design.”

Walpole said the Alliance is set up as a non-profit organization that received initial funding of \$19,000 from Fluor Corp., the contractor that cleaned up the Fernald site. Other funding will come from Alliance memberships, contributions, and fund raisers.

Completion of the center is scheduled for June 2008. Since DOE owns the building, it’s paying the cost to convert the warehouse to its new uses.

Annual Retreat Sets Tone for New Fiscal Year

The Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board held its annual planning retreat on Saturday, August 11, at Rothchild Catering in Knoxville.

Becky Brunton facilitated the meeting and began the day by focusing on board member responsibilities. She used the concept of obtaining the various levels of martial arts belts as an analogy for how one gains experience and takes on more responsibility within the board. New members are at a white belt level. As they gain experience and take on more responsibility they progress through yellow, green, brown, and black belts. She then asked retreat participants to work in groups to list the different board duties and assign a belt color to them. They included:

White

- Attend meetings
- Read emails related to board functions and activities
- Vote on issues
- Choose areas of interest, and join appropriate committees



During the retreat, each committee chair gave an assessment of their committee's accomplishments over the past year. Here Steve Dixon presents the Board Finance Committee's.

Yellow

- Read material before meetings
- Learn acronyms
- Interact with key players
- Encourage public outreach
- Ask questions
- Learn the scope of the Environmental Management Program

Green

- Become familiar with regulations
- Research issues
- Persevere
- Become a committee officer

Brown

- Participate in outreach presentations
- Train/mentor new members
- Serve as a board officer

Black

- Receive specific training
- Understand the workings of DOE
- Understand the issues

The remainder of the day was spent reviewing results of a board member survey Brunton conducted prior to the meeting, reviewing the results of the annual Stakeholder Survey (see story on page 4), and prioritizing and assigning work plan topics to the board's committees for the 2008 fiscal year. Those topics included over a dozen key items:

- Federal Facility Manager Program strategy
- FY 2010 Environmental Management program budget request
- Prioritizations agreed to by DOE and the regulators for FY 2010 and beyond
- East Tennessee Technology Park cleanup
- East Tennessee Technology Park ponds early action status
- Continued monitoring of K-25 building demolition
- Melton Valley Interim Record of Decision monitoring
- Enforceable institutional controls



Members listed board duties and assigned martial arts belt colors to them.

- Detection of radiological contamination in picket wells in Melton Valley
- Operation of the Transuranic Waste Processing Facility
- Accumulation of low-level waste on the Oak Ridge Reservation
- Review of the Bear Creek Burial Ground decision document
- Review of the 2007 Remediation Effectiveness Report

New Officers Elected



Lance Mezga



Steve Dixon



Ted Lundy

At the conclusion of the ORSSAB planning retreat, the board held its annual election of officers. These officers will serve during ORSSAB's 2008 fiscal year, which runs from September 1, 2007–August 31, 2008.

Reelected as chair is Lance Mezga, who joined the board in June 2005. Replacing Norman Mulvenon in the vice chair's office is Steve Dixon, who joined in November 2004. Replacing Ben Adams as secretary is Ted Lundy, who joined in December 2006.

Survey Results Reveal Cleanup Concerns

The Department of Energy is spending hundreds of millions of dollars in Oak Ridge each year cleaning up environmental contamination left from decades of nuclear enrichment and other activities.

So what concerns people most about that cleanup?

The answers lie in an annual survey conducted by the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board called the Stakeholder Survey. The board has distributed the survey since 1998 in an effort to get input from the public on what cleanup issues are most important to them.

The survey is prepared each year by the board's Public Outreach Committee and mailed to about 600 people on the board's *Advocate* newsletter mailing list. Copies are distributed at the Secret City Festival, the Oak Ridge and Kingston public libraries, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and the Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce. Notices about the survey's availability on the ORSSAB web site are posted in *Anderson County Visions* magazine and other local

papers, and on the three main DOE contractor web sites.

The results this year (which were collected in July and August) showed great similarity to those from last year. Just getting the cleanup finished was the top issue both years, followed closely by long-term stewardship of contamination left in place on the Oak Ridge Reservation. The table below shows the top ten issues.

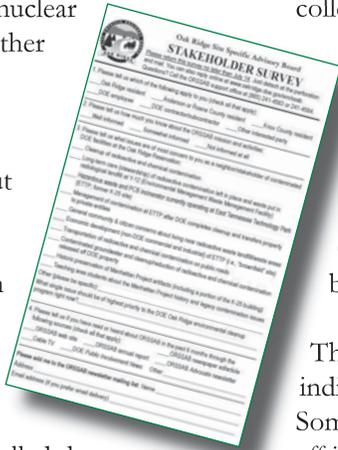
The survey also provides space for individuals to write in comments. Some are very specific in nature: *Past offsite exposures should be translated into an estimate of health risk with uncertainty and include the local and regional footprint of*

concomitant exposures to historic fallout from atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons.

Some comments are more general: *Radiation cleanup and management of legacy wastes and waste sites is critically important to the future of our community and our children. Government needs to fulfill its responsibility and fund these activities better in the future.*

And some are just nice to receive: *Would just like to say thank you to each board member for their service. It is good to know there is a group of people similar to me, who are looking out for my welfare.*

Comments on the DOE Oak Ridge Reservation cleanup can be made anytime on the ORSSAB web site at www.oakridge.doe.gov/em/ssab/comments.htm.



Issue	%
Cleanup of radioactive and chemical contamination	74
Long-term care (stewardship) of radioactive contamination left in place and waste put in radiological landfill at Y-12 (Environmental Management Waste Management Facility)	67
Contaminated groundwater and cleanup/reduction of radioactive and chemical contamination released off DOE property	58
Management of contamination at the East Tennessee Technology Park after DOE completes cleanup and transfers property to private entities	47
Economic development (non-DOE commercial and industrial) of the East Tennessee Technology Park (i.e., "brownsfield" site)	34
Hazardous waste and PCB incinerator currently operating at the East Tennessee Technology Park	29
Teaching area students about the Manhattan Project history and legacy contamination issues	28
Historic preservation of Manhattan Project artifacts (including a portion of the K-25 building)	26
Transportation of radioactive and chemical contamination on public roads	21
General community & citizen concerns about living near radioactive waste landfill/waste areas	18

Recent Recommendations & Comments

Complete recommendation text can be found on the ORSSAB web site at www.oakridge.doe.gov/em/ssab/recc.htm.

In September ORSSAB passed a recommendation regarding a public information sheet provided by DOE to explain the need for an explanation of significant differences (ESD) to a record of decision (ROD) to dispose of CERCLA waste in the Environ-

mental Management Waste Management Facility. The ROD addressed the management of leachate collected from the waste facility, but it did not address the regulatory status of the leachate. The ESD seeks to establish a method of evaluating and managing the leachate if a hazardous waste listed under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) is ever placed in the facility.

DOE is asking that if a RCRA-listed waste is placed in the cell that the regulatory status of the subsequent leachate be considered non-hazardous as long as sampling of the leachate continues to meet health-based limits.

The board concurred with DOE's position for asking for the ESD and supported the publication of the information sheet.

ORSSAB Welcomes Five New Members

Five new members have joined the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) recently. They are Bill Bass of Lenoir City, David Branch of Knoxville, John Coffman of Clinton, Charles Jensen of Knoxville, and David Martin of Harriman.

“The new members we welcome to the board truly represent the talent of this board, which is vital to our success,” said Steve McCracken, DOE-Oak Ridge Assistant Manager for Environmental Management, at the July ORSSAB meeting. “They are joining a great group. The service the board provides to DOE is hugely important.”



Bill Bass is retired from Sears Holdings Corporation after 39 years of employment. He held various retail management positions in stores and in regional and home offices. When he retired he was the general manager of a 23-store district covering five states.

Bill also volunteers with the Service Corp of Retired Executives (SCORE)

as a counselor and with the American Red Cross, where he serves as a liaison for governmental agencies.



John Coffman is the president of DeNuke Services in Oak Ridge, which provides technical support services to contractors and sub-contractors on DOE sites. He is a certified health physicist and has worked in radioactive waste management and remediation activities for over 25 years. He is a member of the Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce and the Health Physics Society.



Chuck Jensen is the owner and manager of Diversified Technologies in Knoxville, which manufactures, designs, and services wastewater treatment systems for nuclear power plants. He has founded three technology companies, one of which is listed on the NASDAQ, and is currently operating the third. He has developed two

patents and has two more pending, and he has authored and presented several technical papers regarding waste processing in the commercial nuclear industry.



David Martin is a self-employed engineer who has worked on a wide range of power engineering assignments worldwide. His areas of expertise include

project management, power station startup oversight, electrical equipment testing and design review, and substation construction and maintenance. He is a member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, the Roane County Forestry Association, and Friends of the Kingston Library.

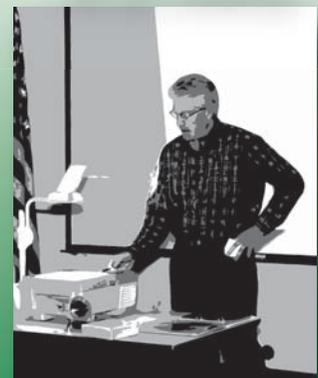


David Branch is employed by the U.S. Postal Service in Knoxville, where he has worked for the past 11 years. David was previously employed in the health care field.



The ORSSAB booth at the Secret City Festival brought together board members Sondra Sarten and Darryl Bonner (center) and former members Heather Cotbron (left) and Donna Campbell (right).

Need a speaker for your group's meeting?



Call the ORSSAB offices at 241-4583 to have a member of our Public Outreach Committee speak to your group about environmental cleanup issues at DOE's Oak Ridge Reservation.

Reservation Update

Mission Needs Statement Approved for IFDP

After many months of planning and promoting at some of the highest levels at DOE Headquarters, the Integrated Facilities Disposition Project (IFDP) has gotten some legs to stand on.

IFDP is a proposed cleanup program, in addition to what's planned or already underway as part of the Accelerated Closure Plan, that would take down over 200 unusable or surplus buildings at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) and Y-12 National Security Complex.

In July, Deputy Secretary of Energy Clay Sell approved the IFDP mission needs statement, also known as Critical Decision 0. The next step will be developing and getting Critical Decision 1 (CD-1) approved, which is a more detailed plan of scope, schedule, and costs. The CD-1 is required to obtain approval and funding by Congress.

ORSSAB first heard about IFDP when Steve McCracken, DOE-Oak Ridge assistant manager for Environmental Management, unveiled the plan at the June 2005 board meeting. He said that a great deal of cleanup work has been done or is underway, but there remains almost as much to do to completely remediate the Oak Ridge Reservation.

That additional work would amount to over 200 buildings at ORNL and Y-12 that need to be demolished. Some of them need to come down so the soil beneath them can be remediated.

"It just makes sense to do the work now," said McCracken. "We're trained for it, and we already have the workforce in place."

At ORNL the removal of excess facilities eliminates contamination from the central campus and provides additional land for new science missions. At Y-12

IFDP would eliminate 2.2 million square feet of legacy buildings, while enhancing the plant's operational efficiency and security buffer area.

While figures have not been projected for what IFDP will cost, it will no doubt be an expensive proposition. But if the project is approved, the plan is for it to complete cleanup of the Oak Ridge Reservation by 2018.

DOE Forms Restart Team for MSRE Cleanup

Work at the Molten Salt Reactor Experiment (MSRE) is underway again, with a concerted effort to successfully complete the job that's been a thorn in the side of DOE and Bechtel Jacobs Company for months.

It's a difficult job under ideal conditions, but there have been a number of setbacks, including stopped-up drain lines and improper behavior by former workers.

The task is to extract uranium-233 from the salt mixture that fueled the old reactor, as well as drain flush salts from two storage tanks. Work was stopped more than a year ago when a fluorine leak was detected.

Recent readiness reviews indicated that all was not in order to resume work.

To kick start the stalled project, DOE-Oak Ridge Manager Gerald Boyd temporarily assigned Steve McCracken, assistant manager for Environmental Management, to head an MSRE restart team on a full-time basis. Gary Riner is assisting McCracken as Project Director, and Jay Mullis is the Senior Technical and Resource Adviser.

MSRE was to have been defueled by September 30, 2007, but that deadline will be missed. It's not clear if DOE will incur any penalties by the state for missing the deadline.

The reactor was built 40 years ago to test the use of lithium and beryllium salts to cool the U-233 reactor fuel.

DOE Looking at Disposal Sites for Greater-Than-Class C Radioactive Wastes

DOE has issued a notice of intent to issue an environmental impact statement for disposal of greater-than-Class C (GTCC) low-level radioactive waste (LLW) at several locations around the country. One of the sites to be evaluated is the Oak Ridge Reservation.

GTCC is defined by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission as low-level radioactive waste that exceeds the concentration limits of radionuclides established for Class C waste. GTCC low-level is generated by Nuclear Regulatory Commission-licensed or state-licensed facilities.

In addition, DOE proposes to include in the environmental impact statement scope DOE LLW and transuranic waste having characteristics similar to GTCC LLW, but which may not have an identified path to disposal.

DOE proposes to evaluate alternatives for GTCC LLW disposal in geologic repositories, intermediate-depth boreholes, and in near-surface facilities. Oak Ridge is to be evaluated as a site for intermediate-depth boreholes and near-surface facilities.

In the notice of intent, DOE said the September 11, 2001, attacks on the U.S. and subsequent threats have heightened concerns that terrorists could gain possession of GTCC LLW and use it for malevolent purposes.

DOE held a number of public meetings on the proposed environmental impact statement around the country, including one held August 22 here at the DOE Information Center.

Commitment to Nature and the Environment Led Rhonda Bogard to ORSSAB

Her love of nature and passion to protect the environment were the primary reasons Rhonda Bogard was attracted to the ORSSAB.

A lifelong resident of Oak Ridge, Rhonda was greatly influenced by her parents and a valued mentor who instilled in her the desire for learning and the importance of giving back to the community.



ORSSAB member Rhonda Bogard.

“My dad, Ted Shapiro, came here as part of the Manhattan Project, and my mother, Selma, was the director of the Oak Ridge Children’s Museum for 30 years,” she said. “It was a unique experience growing up in Oak Ridge. While what took place here wasn’t talked about very much, you still understood that you were part of a special community.

“Much of my identity as part of the Jewish community was shaped by Mira Kimmelman, a Holocaust survivor, who taught me and others the value of understanding your history, where you came from, and how that makes you who you are.

“And that’s part of what brought me to ORSSAB – caring about the history of Oak Ridge and the environmental impact it had on the area.”

Growing up in Oak Ridge and taking advantage of all that was available for youngsters also fueled Rhonda’s love of nature and the environment.

“It was a great place to grow up,” she said. “We had wonderful neighborhoods with a lot of kids my age. The schools had great summer programs and ball fields and playgrounds, so it was very neighborhood oriented.

“And I spent a lot of time in the woods camping with the Girl Scouts, and that reinforced my interest and passion about nature and the environment.”

After raising her family, Rhonda then had more time to devote to hiking and doing volunteer work in the community. When the opportunity arose in July 2003 to become part of ORSSAB she thought it would be a good way to learn more about the environment in her own hometown. “Being on the board has met my need to be educated about environmental regulations and waste management practices. And it’s been fun, too.

“I’ve gotten what I wanted by serving on the board, and you do that by jumping in and getting involved. That’s how you learn. You don’t learn by watching. So I encourage newer members to get involved, even if they think they don’t have the background or knowledge to be able to contribute.”

Rhonda is involved in other activities, including being a charter member of the Oak Ridge Library’s book club. She has also held several leadership positions in the local and regional

chapters of Hadassah, the Jewish women’s service organization that addresses education and health issues and supports hospitals in Israel.

Rhonda earned a bachelor of science degree in plant and soil sciences and a master’s degree in public health from the University of Tennessee. She went to work at K-25 in 1980 in the radiation protection program. She then moved to Y-12 and has been there ever since. She is currently the manager for dosimetry and records at Y-12.

Rhonda and husband Jim have three sons and one grandson.

Snapshots in Oak Ridge Cleanup History

10 years ago...

ORSSAB, then known as the Oak Ridge Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board, sent a recommendation to the Department of Energy-Oak Ridge regarding waste streams management of the Toxic Substances Control Act Incinerator, including a ‘mis-shipment’ of incinerator ash to the Y-12 landfill.

5 years ago...

ORSSAB was concerned about a possible reorganization of the management structure of DOE-Oak Ridge that would eliminate the site manager’s office. The board felt losing the office would adversely affect the Environmental Management Program.

Schedule Slips on K-25 Building Demolition

Constructing the enormous K-25 building at East Tennessee Technology Park was one of the most incredible accomplishments ever. It was the largest building under one roof at the time it was built in the mid-1940s, covering 44 acres of land, encompassing 1.64 million square feet, and running a mile from one end to the other. It housed never-before-seen technology.

It was built in about two and half years. Tearing it down is proving to be almost as difficult as it was to build and is also taking much longer.

Demolition on K-25 began in 2002 and was scheduled for completion by the end of September 2008. Now because

of schedule delays and insufficient funding, the end date has been pushed to September 2010.

Some of the delay was the result of an accident that injured a worker early in 2006. Most of the work was



stopped while a new plan was developed to improve the safety of workers. Ironically, some construction has to be done to shore up parts of the old building to make it safer for demolition.

The building can't be knocked down like any other structure because it contains contaminated equipment, some of it hiding deposits of fissile uranium that has to be carefully removed. The

contaminated equipment and piping then must be foamed to fix remaining contamination in place.

In addition to schedule problems, costs have also increased. The original price tag to decontaminate and demolish K-25 and the nearby K-27 was \$300 million. The last estimate provided the ORSSAB Environmental Management Committee was \$704.2 million.

Actual take-down of the K-25 building is scheduled to begin October 2008 on the west wing. The east side work will begin May 2009. The current plan is to demolish the two wings and leave the north tower for historical purposes. That may change because of the poor condition of the north building.

Work to demolish K-27 is scheduled for May 2011 with completion forecast for February 2012.

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JOIN US FOR OUR PUBLIC MEETINGS

Board Meetings

- Oct. 10, 6:00 pm – Presentation: Environmental Management Program update
- Nov. 14, 6:00 pm – Presentation to be determined

Committee Meetings

- Oct. 16, 5:30 pm – Joint Stewardship/ Environmental Mgmnt.
- Nov. 20, 5:30 pm – Stewardship
- Nov. 21, 5:30 pm – Environmental Mgmnt.