

# POWER **Connect!**

Muscle Shoals Chapter  
Spring 2021 Issue



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## Message from our President

It's summer! It looks as if we may be getting closer to normal.

But we are still dealing with some of the COVID-19 protocols. As you may be aware; we had to cancel our Muscle Shoals Chapter Health Fair and Picnic this year. I never thought we would have to cancel two years in a row. Also, TVA will not be having the annual retiree picnic again this year. I know a lot of us look forward to that event.

We have decided that our Chapter September meeting will take place as scheduled.

In the meantime; have a good summer and stay safe. I look forward to seeing all of you in the near future.

Tim Cornelius



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## Inside This Issue

- 1 Message from President
- 2 Upcoming Events/Advertisers
- 3 Board Members
- 3 Receive Your TVARA News by E-mail
- 4 Chapter Community Project
- 7 BEST Volunteers Needed
- 7 Endowment
- 8 Valley-Wide Meeting
- 9 The Shoals Connection
- 11 Where Have All The Eagles Gone?
- 10 "The Goat Man is Coming"
- 13 Help Needed/Suggestions

Due to cancellation of our Annual Picnic and Health Fair; advertisers have not renewed with us for this year. Therefore; no advertisements will appear in this issue of our newsletter. Advertisers will be given an opportunity to renew in the near future. In the meantime; please thank our advertisers for supporting our scholarships and patronize our local merchants.

Special Thanks to non-advertising Supporters

TVA Power Service Shops

## Upcoming Events

Tuesday, TBA, 9:30 a.m.  
Annual Picnic and Health Fair

**Cancelled**

Wednesday, September 8, 2021, 9:30 a.m.  
Program to be announced.

Free Lunch and Door Prizes  
Wilson Dam Road TVA Community Credit Union

Wednesday, December 8, 2021, 9:30 a.m.

Program to be announced.  
Free Lunch and Door Prizes  
Wilson Dam Road TVA Community Credit Union

Wednesday, March 9, 2022, 9:30 a.m.

Program to be announced.  
Free Lunch and Door Prizes  
Wilson Dam Road TVA Community Credit Union

## Our Advertisers

*Our advertisers are contributing to our Muscle Shoals Chapter TVARA Endowment by advertising in our newsletter and at the Annual Picnic. When considering any of the services offered, please think first of our advertisers!*

**TVA Community Credit Union: First Community Medicare Supplement**

**North Alabama Medical Center Helen Keller Hospital**

**Merrill Lynch Blue Cross Blue Shield TN**

**Edward Jones Viva**

**Blue Cross Blue Shield AL Delta Dental**

**Brentwood Retirement Comm. Cottage Senior Living**

**Home Instead Listerhill Credit Union**

**The Foot Bar Alabama Health Guidance**

**Big Brothers/Big Sisters Eldercare**

**CASA Civitan International**

**Tennessee Valley Arts Assoc. UNA Continuing Ed**

**United Cerebral Palsy**

## Meet your Muscle Shoals TVARA Board Members

President, Tim Cornelius

Vice President Vacant

Treasurer, Joan Marsh

Secretary, Carol Sherer

TVARA Picnic Manager, Henry Long

Hospitality, MJ Ligon

Scholarship Program, John Ingwersen

Newsletter: John Ingwersen, Janice Berry

Board Members: John Blackwell, Cameron Kay, Jim Green, Bill Baggett

Problems with benefits, pharmacy? Contact TVA Service Center 888-275-8094

Comments/Recommendations/Articles for Newsletter? Send to [jtingwersen@gmail.com](mailto:jtingwersen@gmail.com)

### **Receive Your TVARA Newsletter By Email By Richard Wilson, TVARA Membership Program Manager**

Did you know you can receive the quarterly TVARA Newsletter (TVARA News) by email instead of by mail? If you received the newsletter by email, it would save the TVARA printing and mailing costs. In addition, you would receive the newsletter up to 3 days earlier.

We currently have over 460 retirees who receive their newsletter by email. If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by email instead of mail; send me an email at [rtwilson@tva.gov](mailto:rtwilson@tva.gov) and let me know if you wish to receive the newsletter by email.

Thanks for your continued support of the TVARA.

**TVARA Muscle Shoals Chapter**  
**Community Project: The Healing Place**  
**By John Blackwell**

The Muscle Shoals Chapter, working with BVI, has undertaken a number of projects to assist charitable agencies in the Shoals. The most recent has been The Healing Place in Muscle Shoals. The Healing Place has a mission to offer support to grieving children and families in an atmosphere of trust and acceptance in order to promote a sense of well-being and productivity in their participants. Their focus is children aged 3-19, and their families, who have experienced the death of a loved one—including a sibling, a parent, grandparent, friend, or other loved one who may need support or guidance in dealing with the grief associated with the loss.

John Blackwell worked with Candance Strait—Executive Director of The Healing Place, to determine their needs. Candance identified two projects: installing mulch around the playground and constructing a Healing Garden. After some discussion with Candance and folks in TVA, we determined that we could undertake the first task of installing mulch around the playground right away. The second task is going to take design work by a landscape architect. In addition, employees would be occupied with outages until July. Therefore; the Healing Garden project will most likely be scheduled for the fall.

John's work began by estimating the materials and costs. Once these were identified; he worked with Penny Walker to have the request submitted to BVI for funding. BVI has generously supported a number of projects throughout the years for the TVARA chapters. This project was no exception.

John worked with TVA, The Healing Place, and TVARA to schedule a work day. The work materials and tools were all available and ready to start the project.

On April 20, 2021, 2 TVA employees and 5 TVA retirees volunteered time to install a border and mulch around the playground. The weather was beautiful, with plenty of sunshine and blue sky. The advance party arrived about 8:30; and the main party arrived about 10:00. Penny Walker, TVARA Volunteer Coordinator, got us off to a good start with coffee and donuts. The work began by installing the border. Everything went well up to the point of when John realized that he has miscalculated the amount of border. Adjustments were made; and the task continued. Next, landscape fabric was installed—which required gluing the seams. Then, the border was spiked down. The very hard work began by filling in the playground with 225 bags of mulch. The mulch was spread so that 12” of mulch was provided in the playground. Two and a half hours later, the task was completed. Everyone was tired, but felt rewarded that the project was completed and that The Healing Place had a safe place for children to play. Tim Cornelius, President of the Muscle Shoals Chapter of the TVARA, thought the project went well and that everyone had worked hard to help a very worthwhile agency. Tim expressed his appreciation to all the volunteers. Candance Strait, Executive Director of The Healing Place, expressed appreciation for all the very hard work and the generosity of the TVARA.

The TVA employees who volunteered were Beth Purser and Shon Shaw. The TVA Retirees were Don Lokey, Tim Cornelius, Donnie Butler, David Purser, and John Blackwell.



The Healing Place playground before.



David Purser—with the playground border and landscape fabric.



Shon Shaw, TVA Employee and Don Lokey, TVA Retiree unloading mulch.



Don Lokey, TVA Retiree and Donnie Burns TVA Retiree spreading mulch.



Donnie Burns, TVA Retiree; Shon Shaw, TVA Employee; and Candance Strait, spreading Mulch; and the Executive Director of The Healing Place.



David Purser, TVA Retiree; Donnie Burns, TVA Retiree; and Don Lokey, TVA Retiree spreading mulch.



The completed project.



David Purser, TVA Retiree; Shon Shaw, TVA Retiree; Don Lokey, TVA Retiree; John Blackwell, TVA Retiree; Tim Cornelius, TVA Retiree; and Donnie Butler, TVA Retiree. Not pictured is Penny Walker, TVA Retiree; and Beth Purser, TVA Employee.

# **BEST Robotics Volunteers Needed!**

**By Kim Sheppard**

Hi everyone!

NW Alabama BEST Robotics is gearing up for 2021 Demo Daze! We are going to need your valuable help. We have several schools already registered to participate; so we are going to need Volunteers! We need help with everything from Judging, Referring, Tearing Down, Setting Up, Concessions, Pit Boss, etc.!

And, of course you are the BEST!

So, please Register to Volunteer at our hub on one or more of these dates:

Kick-Off Drive-In Theater: September 25, 2021.

Industry Night/Robot Practice: November 4, 2021.

Game Day (Week): November 20, 2021.

Register at <https://registry.bestrobotics.org>.



## **Your Support Needed!**

As of March 31 of this year; our scholarship endowment totaled \$79,254.59. In the three-month period from January 2021 through March 2021; we had one contribution from Joan Marsh.

The endowment for 2020-2021 is supporting two scholarships. These awards exceed \$1,100 each. When our 3-year average endowment value is \$75,000; we will be able to give three \$1,000 scholarships. Note that, with the current amount, we are very close to being able to do this! The scholarship award gives preference to relatives of active (paid) Muscle Shoals TVARA members. In addition, your TVARA Board has approved an award of \$200 for the winning essay.

Please make our endowed scholarship a priority for your charitable giving. **Due to Covid shutdowns, we will receive no funds from our normal advertising; so we need your support more than ever!** Donations are tax deductible. Make your check payable to Muscle Shoals Chapter TVARA/UNA Endowed Scholarship and mail it to:

UNA Foundation Office (Attn: Endowed Scholarships)  
Box 5113, Florence, AL 35632-0001

## Valley-Wide May 12 Quarterly Meeting Summary

The Valley-Wide meeting was held by internet/telephone and included Tim Cornelius, John Blackwell, and John Ingwersen from the Muscle Shoals Chapter TVARA. The following is a brief summary of interest to our membership:

**Washington and FERC Update by Justin Maierhofer, Vice President, External Affairs.** Mr. Maierhofer reported that “The Theater of Washington Continues”.

- Beth Geer
- Robert Klein
- Kimberly Lewis
- Michelle Moore

Geer served as chief of staff to former Vice-President, Al Gore, and serves as a member of Nashville Mayor, John Cooper’s Sustainability Advisory Committee. She has also served in senior roles in the Department of Labor and United States Senate.

Klein is a life-long resident of Chattanooga, and served in the Tennessee National Guard. He began his professional career at the Chattanooga Gas Company, before continuing at the Electric Power Board of Chattanooga (now EPB), where he worked in the Overhead Line Department.

In 2003, he was appointed as the Vice- President of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers 10th District, which consists of Tennessee, Arkansas, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

During his career, Klein has served on the executive committee and board of directors of the United Way of Chattanooga, and served as president of the Tennessee Valley Trades and Labor Council. He also sat on the TVA Labor-Management Committee, as well as on the board of directors for the Southeast Labor-Management Public Affairs Committee.

Lewis, of Huntsville, Alabama, is the CEO of Project XYZ, Inc., a business that provides services and products in the areas of engineering, logistics, technical services, manufacturing, and international foreign military sales. Lewis has a 25-year career spanning business operations and management, technology, and Federal Government contracting.

A life-long resident of Madison County, Alabama, Lewis would later become the first black female elected as Board Chair of the Huntsville/Madison Chamber of Commerce; and most recently, the first minority owner of North Alabama’s only locally-owned broadcast television station, WTZT-TV.

Moore serves as CEO of Groundswell, a non-profit that builds community power through community solar, clean energy, and resilience programs that share power, savings, and economic opportunity. Her accomplishments range from building the global green building movement as a Senior Executive with the U.S. Green Building Council to leading the sustainability and infrastructure delivery teams for the Obama Administration.

Mr. Maierhofer noted that there was no nominee from either Mississippi or Kentucky which could be a problem. However; regardless of the outcome, the TVA Board will still have a quorum through 2022.

He also gave a FERC update and Memphis evaluation status. Both are still in process.

**New Portal for TVA Employees and retirees by Rachel Welch, Sr. Program Manager, People First Solutions.** This program will replace PLUS in providing Customer service and key benefits information. It is scheduled to go live on August 2, 2021. There will be 24/7 service by computer and 7:00 a.m. to

7:00 p.m. (Eastern) access to TVA Specialists to respond to all questions/concerns of employees and retirees (except, TVARS issues, which will continue to be handled by that organization). Go to TVARS.com for information on “What is coming in 2021”. You will be asked to update your home address, phone number, and email address. You can expect a courtesy email on this new system on or about July 28.

**TVA Update by Susan Lauver, Director, TVA Media Relations and Marketing.** During 2020, TVA assisted in creating 45,000 jobs in the TVA region, and investment of four Billion Dollars. In just the past month, an additional 10,000 jobs have been added. TVA is expecting to reduce carbon emissions by 70% (currently 30%) by 2030. TVA will be looking at closure of additional coal fired plants.

**TVARS Update by Mark Meigs, Executive Secretary, TVA Retirement System.** Assets are holding steady at about 8.7 Billion Dollars; which represents 87% of full funding. Any questions should be addressed to [www.tvvars.com](http://www.tvvars.com). At the present time, fastest contact can be made by email.

### **Other Items Discussed.**

No TVARA Valley-Wide picnic will be held this year. Once again, TVA will provide each Chapter with \$2,000 for the charity of their choice.

All members can now receive their TVARA newsletter by email – see article following.

## **The Shoals Connection** **Provided by Joan Marsh**

The following article about one of our potential new TVA Board members appeared in the July 7, 2020, issue of the Times-Daily.

MUSCLE SHOALS

# Project XYZ saves plant, 137 workers

By Bernie Delinski  
Staff Writer

MUSCLE SHOALS – When CBC INGS America officials told the Shoals Economic Development Authority the company was existing its United States businesses, the agency immediately looked everywhere for someone to come in and take over the Shoals Industrial Airpark facility.

“Our staff cast a wide net and tested the waters nationwide,” SEDA President Kevin Jackson said.

At the same time, however, they thought locally – specifically of Huntsville businessman and Tuscumbia native Larry Lewis and his wife, Kim.

The Lewises have been involved in local ventures including the Superhero Chefs restaurant in Tuscumbia, as well as the purchase of other downtown Tuscumbia properties including a former theater they are considering renovating.

It also happens that they had been interested in getting into manufacturing, and they were inspired by the idea of helping preserve the 137 jobs at CBC.

On Monday, the Lewises, surrounded by employees and local leaders, officially



Larry and Kim Lewis listen to speakers during Monday's announcement that they have purchased the former CBC INGS America plant in Muscle Shoals. [PHOTOS BY BERNIE DELINSKI/TIMESDAILY]

announced they have purchased the plant, which now is named Project XYZ.

“I really want to thank the Lewis family for believing in the Shoals and what we can do here,” Jackson said.

The injection molding plant supplies North American



The former CBC INGS America plant in Muscle Shoals now is operating as Project XYZ.

SEE SHOALS, A3

## SHOALS

From Page A1

Lighting plants, including the one next door in Shoals Research Airpark, as well as SL-America, which also supplies automotive lighting and parts.

However, Larry Lewis said they have visions of expanding into some defense systems projects and possible aviation. There is room for expansion behind the existing facility it that occurs.

For now, the Lewises are just happy to be able to save

the plant and its employees.

“This place is home to us,” Larry Lewis said. “The employees are part of the XYZ family. We hope to keep this project running for the next 30 years at least.”

He said he was impressed during his initial tour of the facility and by the leadership of General Manager Mike Pillen.

“We’ve toured a lot of manufacturing facilities and this was the nicest, cleanest facility I’ve ever seen,” Larry Lewis said. “Mike did a great job of keeping the facility going.

He and the whole team here did. We’re looking forward to them being part of the XYZ family.”

He also was impressed by SEDA’s work and the compassion shown by CBC and Yasuyuki Nakamura, INGS managing executive officer, who worked together throughout the transition among the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We were supposed to have this wrapped up in March but when COVID hit, they were willing to keep this open until completion,” Larry Lewis said. “And we are very

appreciative of all SEDA did to make this happen.”

He said Project XYZ was the name of a different project he was involved with, but the company in that project decided to go in another direction. When SEDA approached him about this project he moved the name to this one. Plus, he said, it fits the company’s goal.

“We do everything from A-Z,” Larry Lewis said.

bernie.delinski@timesdaily.com or 256-740-5739. Twitter @TD\_BDelinski

# WHERE HAVE ALL THE EAGLES GONE?

By John Blackwell

We have not seen the eagles as often around the lake house this spring as in past years. Normally, the eagles are busy rebuilding and repairing the nest in November and December; lay eggs in February, and hatching in March. Everything seemed to be going well until March and April. The eagle experts think what happened was the eggs were laid; but something happened after they were laid. Photographers tell me they saw three eagles in the nest. In other words, an intruder was in the nest. The eagles usually fight off all intruders. In most cases, the intruder is usually an eaglet from the previous year that wants to return home. The parents do not want them around; and will fight them off. This year there could have been a fight; and the eggs were broken.



The bad news is that there was no hatching this year. The good news is that we have seen the parents almost daily; and hope they will return in the fall to rebuild the nest.

## “THE GOAT MAN IS COMING!”

Provided By Joan Marsh

When this was announced in our area in East Tennessee; my Dad would load our family in the car and head to where he was, usually the fairground. This was great entertainment for the town we lived in.

Chess McCartney was probably the best-known itinerant since Johnny Appleseed. He spent some thirty-eight years from 1930 to 1968 walking the roads of America, accompanied by his team of 12-20 goats harnessed to one or two box-shaped wagons. He started out from Iowa in the ‘30’s, when his rich farm became a victim of the Great Depression.

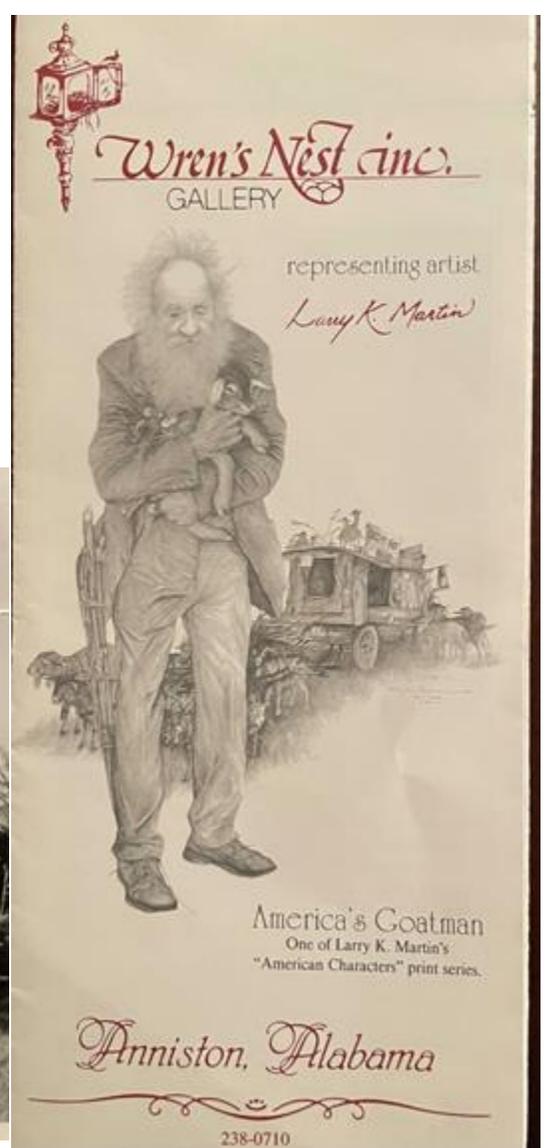


He milked his goats, drank their milk directly from a jar; and gave the remainder to his sickly kid goats; and sold goat milk and post cards. He slept outdoors alongside his goats.

When he became older and could no longer travel; he settled in Jeffersonville, Georgia, living in an old school bus with his son. People in cars would pass his place and honk their horns. He was recognized as the “Goat Man”, and portrayed a glaring discrepancy between fame and fortune.

When my Dad passed away; I found the postcards shown below that he had purchased from him. Years later, I was on a trip to Atlanta, Georgia, and stopped at a visitor center near Anniston, Alabama. In the lobby was a portrait of the goat man, with the title underneath "America's Goatman." Artist Larry K. Martin had sketched detailed pencil drawings of American Characters and Eccentrics, whose lives were remarkable and whose faces revealed strong individual characters.

When I saw this, it brought back memories of the times we had seen him when he passed through Morristown.



## **Help! We Need Your Help!**

Do you enjoy writing or photography? We're working to make this newsletter the best; and your talents are needed. If you would like to occasionally write an article on your experiences, or on a TVA person who deserves recognition, please let me know, and I will schedule your article for a future newsletter. Do you enjoy photography? We could use a designated photographer to get pictures at our various events. We have been somewhat haphazard at this, and would like to get better. Call John Ingwersen at 256-757-5325 or email him at [jlingwersen@gmail.com](mailto:jlingwersen@gmail.com).



## **Suggestions?**

We want your feedback, comments, and suggestions. Let us know what you would like for TVARA programs, for our newsletter, and/or ways we can improve, in any way, our service to you.