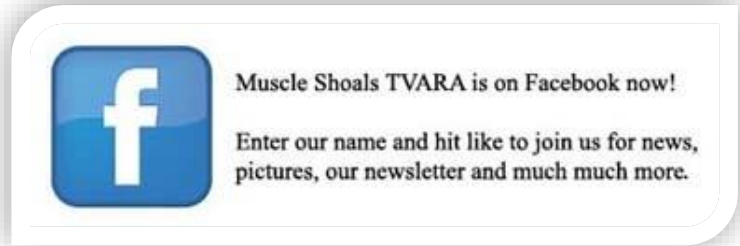


POWER **Connect!**

Muscle Shoals Chapter
Winter 2021 Issue



Message from our President

Hello, I hope all of you made it through the cold weather without frost bite.

Our Muscle Shoals Chapter will again support the Gerald Williams Garden Program. Last year, we changed things up on how we conduct the program. We issued vouchers to be used at local CO-OPs to purchase garden supplies. This was a success and we will continue doing this way.

Also, our chapter will make more donations to local food —banks with grants from Bicentennial Volunteers Inc. (BVI).

Due to current guidance to address large gatherings, the March Muscle Shoals Chapter Meeting has been cancelled. We hope to continue our meetings in the near future.

We will keep you informed of future plans for Muscle Shoals Chapter activities.

Everyone stay safe.

Tim Cornelius

NOW OPEN

TVA Community Credit Union

NOW OPEN

CLOVERDALE ROAD BRANCH
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(256) 792-3408

www.tvaccu.com
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M-F 8:30am-5:00pm

Branch Manager
Tammie Aday

Head Teller
Leah Newton

Tellers
Amberlee Carter
Brandt Holland

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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 for the rest of the year by the time of our next meeting. 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

Wednesday, March 10, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

Cancelled

Tuesday, TBA, 9:30 a.m.

Annual Picnic and Health Fair

Program: Health, Fitness, & More

Great Door Prizes (thousands of dollars)

Florence/Lauderdale Coliseum

Wednesday, September 9, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

Program to be announced.

Free Lunch and Door Prizes

Wilson Dam Road TVA Community Credit Union

Wednesday, December 8, 2021, 10:00 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

WOW! KUDOS TO OUR CHAPTER FOR BEING INVOLVED IN OUR COMMUNITY DURING 2020 AND TO-DATE 2021.

With the help of BVI, we were fortunate to donate to local agencies that provided food to those in need:

Ekklesia Missionary Baptist Church	\$2,000
Shoals Dream Center	\$2,000
Sidney's Safe Foundation	\$1,000
Killen United Methodist Church	\$2,000
Meal Barrel Project	\$1,000
Second Harvest of Middle Tennessee	\$5,000
The Chapel	\$1,250
Crossroads Community Outreach	\$1,250
Help Center	\$2,250
Meals on Wheels	\$1,000
Salvation Army	\$1,250
Total	\$20,000

Other giving and support:

Provided to Best Robotics--\$5,000

Helping with a Day of Caring for Cerebral Palsy--\$1,500

Donations from TVARA members for Power Service Shops Holiday Helping--\$11,125

Donation to UNA Endowed Scholarship--\$2,000

Winner of UNA Scholarship Essay--\$200

Providing sleeping bags to homeless--\$1,000

Community Action Center for Garden Seed Program--\$10,000

Additionally, \$1,000 was given by BVI to the Dream Center in honor of our chapter.

2020 Robotics a Success Despite Challenges

By Kim Sheppard

The game was adjusted this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We continued with a healthcare theme; but simplified our game fields so that we could follow CDC guidelines. Our hub extended its season to 8-weeks, and followed the template of a Classroom Outbreak Competition proposed by BEST Robotics. This allowed each school to compete in small groups at their own school or specified location. Each team was supplied materials for creating their game field, robot, digital camera, and other equipment to help facilitate the virtual environment necessary to compete. With this option, students used the engineering design process to create a product (robot) to isolate cells, vaccinate, and eliminate the spread of a virus. Some areas of the competition were done virtually using WebEx and Google Meet interfaces. Then, for the robot performance component, the hub supplied equipment and referees to their locations for game trials. This allowed the functionality of a "regular season" without a big gathering for competitions. Of course, we would have preferred to be have been together under different circumstances; yet, adjusting to the challenges motivated students to learn new skills and methods of promoting their products. Our hub felt that it was important for students to actually build a physical robot so that they could gain experience in engineering design.

NW Alabama BEST has experienced a wonderful "Outbreak" season! We offered training opportunities virtually throughout the year. Students could attend WebEx meetings or watch recorded sessions online. On September 26th, our hub distributed kits and supplies to teams, and revealed the rules of the game. We presented the game rules in the style of a drive-in theater. It was quite successful; and we plan to continue this method in years to come. Students could remain in their vehicles and view the game rules on a big screen. This helped us to encourage them and also have social distancing. Materials were distributed through a drive-in curbside pickup area. We had schools from all over our area join us. The number of schools did decrease this year due to many area schools' meeting virtually and their not being able to secure a robotics team. Brooks High School did not participate due to the pandemic this year.

Students had several trainings, virtual meetings, and judging throughout the season--culminating with game trials on November 20th. Due to Covid-19 outbreaks in Lauderdale County, AL, schools, three schools were not able to proceed with game trials. All schools built a functional robot. Most schools competed in a variety--of competitions, such as T-shirt design, Website design, CAD design, Mascot & Costume design; and Marketing Exhibits which were produced using Wordpress tools, Student Interviews, Critical Design Review, Engineering Design Challenge, Engineering Notebook, Safety Challenge, Innovative Design Challenge, and of course, robot performance game trials.

BEST AWARD Winners:

1st Place: **Athens Bible School**
2nd Place: **Wilson High School**
3rd Place **Covenant Christian School**

Robot Performance Winners:

1st Place: **Athens Bible School**
2nd Place: **Wilson High School**
3rd Place: **Russellville High School**

For a complete presentation of our 2020 Awards, go to www.nwalbest.com. Our hub is VERY PROUD of all of the teams!

Due to Lauderdale County Schools' closing the week of our competitions and their going "virtual", three schools were not able to finish all competitions. Due to Covid-19, Auburn University cancelled South's BEST. Thus, our teams did not get to advance to regionals this year. In order to celebrate the season; we hope to have a "BEST Bot Bash" this spring, if Covid-19 permits.

Our hub was not able to participate in the VexIQ Challenge this year due to Covid-19. We are preparing for things to get busier once the virus is under control better. We do plan to partner with S.C.O.R.E. at Auburn University, as soon as they resume face-to-face games. This fall, both hub directors received training on underwater robotics and in programming. Our hub directors hope to introduce training for MATE underwater robotics for area teachers this summer. We plan to begin a hub for M.A.T.E. in our area soon--provided we can find a venue.

This was a challenging year for us all. Managing BEST with virtual meetings and with live-streaming games was difficult. However; it was worth the effort--once we got to see how much the students have learned and grown from these STEAM experiences. None of this could take place without the volunteers and sponsorships of our local industries and organizations!

We now begin planning for the year 2021, and will continue with a healthcare theme of "Incision Decision" in BEST Robotics.

Muscle Shoals Chapter TVARA/UNA Endowed Scholarship Your Support Needed!

We have several businesses and charities who are supporting our endowed scholarship by providing financial support through the purchase of ads for our newsletter and booths at our Annual Health Fair/Picnic. We thank them for their generous support and hope that each of our members will look at their advertisements in this, and future newsletters, and will support these businesses and charities as they support us.

As of January 31 of this year, our scholarship endowment totaled \$76,101.71. In the three-month period from November 2020 through January 2021, we had contributions from Billy Baggett, Penny Walker, and our Muscle Shoals TVARA Chapter.

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

Muscle Shoals Chapter TVARA Supporting Community

By Heather L. Montgomery
Senior Consultant
Power Service Shops

Food Drive

Providing food to local families in need was the focus of the Safety Outreach Committee's annual charity drive. Through a strong partnership with employees, and the Shoals Area TVA Retirees Association, we delivered a total of \$5,000 and approximately 300 pounds of canned good to local food banks in Colbert and Lauderdale counties. The donations were split between the Colbert Caring Center and the Shoals Dream Center. These donations were used to supply more than 70 families with weekly groceries and hygiene products. Each of these charities worked with local schools to help identify children who rely on school meals as their main source of nutrition and are working to fill in the gaps.

Many of our committee members worked to collect donations outside of normal work hours; and they often had to meet at various locations to gather funds. The committee thanks these retirees for their generous donation of \$3,000. We were able to make a larger impact on our community because of them!

Angel Tree

When the Shoals Area TVA Retirees Association heard our Angel Tree efforts were impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, the group was eager to lend a helping hand. The retirees obtained local grant funding and began a campaign to involve all local retirees.

These retirees' efforts renewed the spirits of employees. While retirees were building momentum; PSS employees reached out to local school guidance counselors and offered to help provide a better Christmas for those families in need. As employees adopted angels from the PSS tree and personally bought gifts, the retirees raised a PSS-record of more than \$10,000. Despite these uncertain and challenging

times, we were able to provide clothing, shoes, and toys for 49 children and teenagers in our surrounding counties. Thank you to each retiree for volunteering to improve the quality of life in the Tennessee Valley!



SOME OF MY FAVORITE QUOTES

Contributed by Joan Marsh

- ❖ People don't care how much you know. They just want to know that you care.
- ❖ We keep no secrets from God.
- ❖ Gross ignorance: 144 times greater than normal ignorance.
- ❖ There is a destiny that makes us brothers. None goes his way alone; for what we send into the lives of others will come back into our very own.
- ❖ There is no evidence that the tongue is connected to the brain.
- ❖ Love and a cough cannot be hidden.
- ❖ The trouble with learning from experience is that you never graduate.
- ❖ It is a statistical fact that the wicked work harder to reach hell than the righteous do to enter heaven. Josh Billings
- ❖ If you can't do great things, do small things in a great way. Helen Keller
- ❖ Only some of us learn from others' mistakes. The rest of us have to be the other people.
- ❖ Blessed are those who choose the good.
- ❖ Things that matter most must never be at the mercy of things that matter least. Goethe
- ❖ You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is like an ocean. If a few drips of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty. Gandhi
- ❖ Experience is the best teacher; but the tuition is very costly.
- ❖ Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do. John Wooden
- ❖ Do what you can with what you have where you are. Teddy Roosevelt
- ❖ God doesn't promise us tomorrow. He promises us eternity.
- ❖ A positive anything is better than a negative nothing.
- ❖ Sometimes the best response is no response.
- ❖ The mind forgets; but the heart always remembers.
- ❖ To make a difference in someone's life, you do not have to be brilliant, rich, beautiful, or perfect. You just have to care.

- ❖ Simplicity--live quietly, mind your own affairs, work with your hands, walk properly before outsiders, be dependent on no one.
- ❖ Say what you mean. Mean what you say, and honor your word.
- ❖ Forgiveness is not always easy, but is the right thing to do.
- ❖ Disappointments are inevitable; discouragement is a choice.
- ❖ Be careful how you use words and time. You can't get either of them back.
- ❖ It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself. Ralph Waldo Emerson
- ❖ Prefer to believe the best of everybody. It saves so much trouble. Rudyard Kipling
- ❖ For sin they do by 2, and 2 they must pay for 1 by 1. Rudyard Kipling
- ❖ Beautiful faces are they that wear the light of a pleasant spirit there; beautiful hands are they that do deeds that are noble, good, and true; beautiful feet are they that go swiftly to lighten another's woe. McGuffey's Second Reader
- ❖ It is not important to do something great. Do something small with great love.
- ❖ It's what you learn after you already know everything that counts. Pat Summitt
- ❖ To be happy, you must follow the facts. Forgive others. Accept your mistakes. Cry and move on. Thank God for everything. Smile Always.
- ❖ Three things you don't recover: said words, time gone, and opportunities.
- ❖ The new year lies before-- use like a spotless track of snow. Be careful how you tread it for every mark will show.
- ❖ The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or touched but are felt with the heart.

Worth Remembering - Five Years Ago, From Our Winter 2016 Newsletter:

Running on Empty

By

Jerry Condrey

As I write this article, I can report that I had no trouble finding gas earlier today; and I paid \$1.689 per gallon for it—not a bad inflation-adjusted price. But that has certainly not always been the case. I remember in the late 1970's when this presented challenges when your TVA employment required travel.

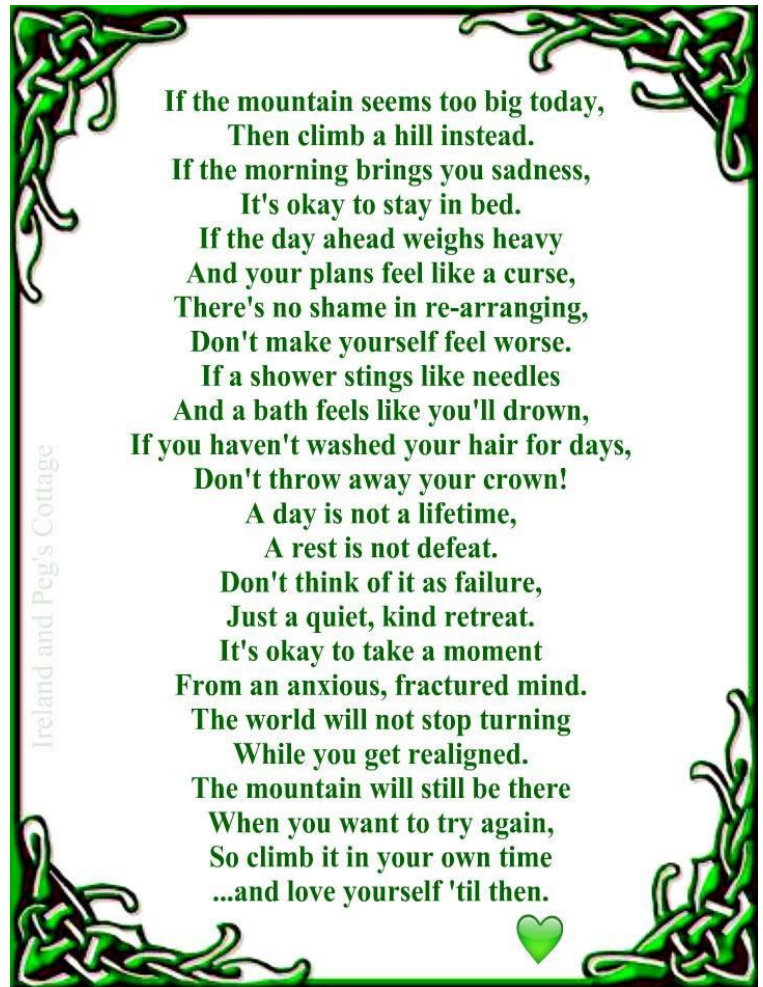
During that time there was a move to small cars; and, of course, TVA got in on the act. Unfortunately, at that time, small cars did not always get good gas mileage. Generally, those with manual transmissions did; but, company cars were not usually of this type. So when TVA bought a lot of Chevrolet Chevettes; many of them with automatic transmissions, the results were not as good as hoped for. TVA was desperately seeking good mileage. I even heard that, while the Chevettes purchased for use in Muscle Shoals had air conditioning, those purchased for use in Chattanooga and Knoxville, with their slightly cooler climates, did not.

Gas prices in the late 1970's were less than they are today (but not when adjusted for inflation); and they had risen considerably from ten years earlier. But supply was an even greater concern. We remember the gas lines. There was also talk of rationing or of being able to buy gas only on certain days,

depending on your tag number, whether it was even or odd, I think. One day, one of the employees in the River Oaks Building, where I worked, actually went out to the parking lot and looked at tag numbers and came back into the building telling us who would be able to buy gas on what day. Nobody really wanted to hear that. I never heard of those steps actually being taken; but what did happen was that gas stations were asked to close on Sundays.

This is where it got interesting. Another employee in our building and I were to travel to Chattanooga for a training class that started on a Monday. On Friday we picked up a brand-new Chevrolet Chevette—one of the ones with an automatic transmission, and with a full tank of gas from the TVA garage (and no, we did not burn any of the gas joy-riding before the trip). We would be travelling to Chattanooga on Sunday to be there for the class that started on Monday. Remember, no gas stations were open on Sunday. It is not that far from Muscle Shoals to Chattanooga, but it was almost farther than the Chevette could travel on a full tank of gas. When we reached I-24 at South Pittsburg, the hand on the gas gauge dipped below empty as the gas sloshed in the tank as we rounded the curves of the on-ramp. Once on I-24, the gas gauge hand rose above empty; but not by much, and we were not that close to our destination yet.

We held our collective breaths and managed to reach the hotel without walking. The next morning, I held my breath as I drove the few blocks down to the TVA garage in Chattanooga to fill up as a first priority. I later learned that another class participant from Muscle Shoals arrived in Chattanooga that Sunday night in a new Chevette with the fuel gauge on empty. We drove back on a weekday, but were careful to leave Chattanooga with a full tank of gas; and while there was not much left in the tank when we got back, we were able to make it without going into panic mode. It was a stressful trip, but it could have been worse. What if the class had been in Knoxville?



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.



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.