

THE RECYCLER

Newsletter of Recycle Rutherford, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Summer/Fall 2018

RE-learn About Recycling at October Meeting

Meeting Location:

**Heritage Center, 225 West College St.
Monday, October 22, 2018, 7:00 p.m.**

Are you confused about what can be recycled and how items should be prepared? Have you heard that collection sites are having loads rejected because of contamination? As the years have gone by, have we gotten careless about what we throw into the bins?

Recycle Rutherford's fall meeting will feature a program on "**Recycling: RE-learning to Do It Right.**" Joey Smith and Mac Nolen of Murfreesboro's and Rutherford County's Solid Waste Departments will speak and remind us of **what must be done to assure that the items dropped off can be recycled.** The meeting is at 7:00 p.m., Monday, October 22, 2018.

The speakers, directors of their departments and thus in the front lines of making the process work, will **cite common mistakes** people make and **explain the issues** that arise from improper practices. They will **answer questions** from the audience. Global changes in the recycling markets make correct preparation more important than ever.

The public is invited to this informative meeting. The location is easily accessible on the ground level of the Heritage Center, located less than a block off the Public Square, just down College St. behind Marina's restaurant. There is plenty of parking in the Pinnacle Bank lot just across College Street.

Board President Participates in Composting Facility Field Trip

Rachel Cornett, president of Recycle Rutherford's board, recently traveled with local leaders to visit a municipal composting facility in Sevierville, Tenn. County officials are in the process of discussing ideas for the future of trash removal in Rutherford County. This spring, the county commission voted 21-0 to prevent the current landfill owned by Republic Services from expanding. Since the amount of trash collected and composted in Sevierville is comparable to the waste stream our government is in control of locally, a similar facility to the one in East

Tennessee seems at least an option to consider for Rutherford County.

The composting process is very streamlined in Pigeon Forge, as they have been in operation since the early nineties. It was one of the first in the world to use rotating drums, or "digesters," to break down garbage. The entire process for a bag of trash to be turned into compost takes about a month. Ms. Cornett states that she was very surprised there was not much of an odor on the grounds of the operation itself. Visitors were shown an extensive odor filtration system that funnels odorous air through the ground to help prevent any smelly fumes from infiltrating the surrounding community, including Dollywood.

County can learn how to do things better by visiting others

Most exciting for a recycling enthusiast was seeing how the recyclables were processed. Sevierville has some of the latest technology for processing recyclable materials. They have the capacity to separate plastic garbage bags from the other materials which many recycling plants cannot do. Unfortunately, though, the trash bags are one of the few materials that do not break down in the composting process and are landfilled. One lesson our government could learn from this facility is that it would be much more advantageous to recycle the materials on the front end of the process. The materials would be cleaner for resell and it would cut down on how many digesters would be needed to handle the remaining waste during the composting process.

The general manager of the facility, Tom Leonard, talked excitedly about recent recycling technology advancements being used in California at a similar facility. The use of artificial intelligence is crucial in sorting out recyclables quicker, without injury, and can even inform the processing machines that they will need to handle more or less of certain materials per day. What does the future of recycling look like in Rutherford County? Only time will tell, but this trip highlighted that our government is investigating all its options thoroughly, and that is always good news for our residents.

Spirit of Recycling Award Launched

Recycle Rutherford recognized and honored three businesses in its inaugural Spirit of Recycling Award event on June 18. Receiving trophies made of green recycled glass were Rich Products, Cardinal Health, and MAHLE Filter Systems. The awards grew out of board members' desire to recognize achievement in recycling even though it may require extra effort and resources. Because of the large quantities involved, the impact of businesses' recycling is significant.

The Rutherford County Solid Waste Department joined Recycle Rutherford in sponsoring the dinner event held at Carriage Lane Inn. Planners of the event selected the date because it coincided National with Garbage Man Week. Mac Nolen, county solid waste director, told the gathering that when the recycling effort began, garbage collectors didn't want to recycle, but their customers demanded it.

Recycle Rutherford President Rachel Cornett presided over the program and welcomed others from the county including Mayor Ernest Burgess and Environmental Coordinator Mimi Keisling.

Board members presented each of the three winners. In her remarks describing **Rich Products**, Suma Clark said, "It is my privilege to recognize a business that produces a food product, which, by its very nature, generates considerable waste. Despite that, Rich manages to recycle 65 percent of their waste!



L to R, from Rich are Dee-Ann Courcy, Chris Ellison, Mike Tait, Cole Adcock, Chandler Gentry, and Ricky Martin

Clark explained that Rich excels in sustainably dealing with the dough they produce. "Instead of the waste dough going down the drain, it is captured and sent to a company in Albertsville, Alabama, where it becomes a high energy ingredient in a food for chickens and pigs." In 2017, Rich diverted 12,992,640 pounds in this way. Also, the Murfreesboro company, which employs 332, reworks dough at the beginning or end of a run as well as reclaiming dough if a line goes down, thus saving another 687,400 pounds of dough from becoming waste in 2017.

Rich recycles the containers and materials in which they receive needed products, resulting in 2017 in reclaiming more than 500 55-gallon metal drums; 120 55-gallon plastic drums; 765,941 pounds of cardboard; 2,295 pounds of paper; 5,504 pounds of plastic wrap, liners, and bags; and 14,652 wooden pallets. Their recycling efforts also include toner cartridges and

drums, scrap metal, plant waste sludge, used refrigerant oil, fluorescent bulbs, all types of batteries, and waste oil.

They complete the loop by purchasing corrugated cardboard that includes 17 percent recycled content for packaging their products.

Chandler Gentry accepted the award for Rich.

Bonnie Black presented **Cardinal Health**, a pharmaceutical distributor employing 450 and located in LaVergne. Cardinal has been listed on the Dow Jones Sustainability Index for the past 11 years and since 2014, they have been ranked on *Newsweek's* Green Rankings as a top green company in the country.



L to R, from Cardinal Health are Stuart Martin, Michael Large, Jason Cook, Sladana Hrvac, Madison Warmack, and Al Hollins.

One thing that stood out in Cardinal's efforts is their attempt to decrease waste from two sources used in the delivery of pharmaceuticals: Styrofoam coolers and ice packs. Black explained, "The Styrofoam coolers were initially intended for a one-time use. The problem was brought to the attention of the Recycling Committee, and a program was put in place allowing clients to return them for reuse. Damaged coolers are sent to be compacted for another use. The amount of Styrofoam being sent to the landfill was reduced by 75 percent." The company found another use for the ice packs through a food processor in West Tennessee.

The Recycling Committee mentioned above is composed of hourly, supervisory, and managerial employees. They meet regularly and monitor and manage recycling containers throughout the facility. Employees are encouraged to bring materials from home to recycle, and during their own version of Earth Day, they have a special collection of items such as paints and solvents, pesticides, electronic devices, and batteries. This year's Earth Day resulted in the collection of 4,100 pounds of such materials. Cardinal holds this event with the support of Dixicom Global, their recycling provider.

In accepting the award, Michael Large said, "Cardinal wishes to thank Recycle Rutherford for selecting Cardinal Health as one of the first recipients of the Spirit of Recycling Award. It is truly an honor for us to be recognized for doing what we believe is the right thing to do to protect our communities in which we operate." He said having dedicated employees is key.

(continued on next page)

Recycling Award Launched

(Continued from page 2)

Kimberly Broughton presented **MAHLE Filter Systems, North America Inc.**, who produce automotive engine components at their Murfreesboro facility where they employ 560. These parts are manufactured from nylon and polypropylene, a type of plastic. "It's clear that recycling and waste reduction are important at Mahle," observed Broughton. "The containers used to ship materials to Mahle are recycled offsite. Shipping containers used to send finished products all over the United States are returnable, and those that go overseas are recyclable."



L to R, from Mahle are Matt Eargle, Jim Murray, Barry Manus, and Darrell Bell.

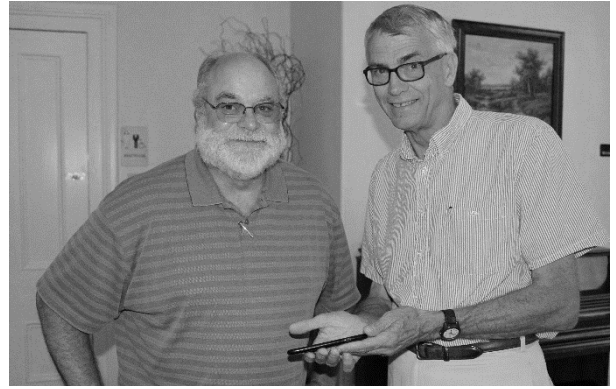
Engine components that don't quite live up to Mahle's standards are evaluated for any parts or materials that could be reused in production. What remains is then sent offsite for recycling. In 2017, Mahle was able to reuse over two million pounds of plastic components in house and send another 1.5 million pounds to be recycled.

Other materials that Mahle recycles or diverts include 595,360 pounds of carbon; 382,639 pounds of cardboard; 201,600 pounds of wood pallets; 128,300 pounds of scrap metal; and more than 126,000 pounds of used absorbents and oil. Through these various methods, Mahle recycles an astonishing 88 percent of their waste, not counting the materials reused in

production. They estimate landfill costs for the materials they recycle would be \$20,000 monthly.

Jim Murray, who accepted the award for Mahle, acknowledged the difficulty of determining what to do with all the plastic waste generated.

Congratulations to each of the winners for **a job well done and for truly living up to the spirit of recycling.**



Mac Nolen, left, and Gib Backlund, past Recycle Rutherford board member, visit before dinner.



Recycle Rutherford Board members present are, from left, Rick Racker, treasurer; Bonnie Black, vice president; Rachel Cornett, president; Suma Clark, secretary; Kimberly Broughton, and Glenn Himebaugh, past president.

Photos courtesy of Pat Peay

Recycle Rutherford Membership Form

I enclose my annual dues to support Recycle Rutherford and receive the newsletter.

- \$25.00 supporter \$15.00 student \$100.00 patron
 I am contributing \$_____ in addition to dues. I prefer the newsletter to be emailed.

PLEASE PRINT:

name _____ amount enclosed _____

address _____

city, state, zip _____

telephone: day _____; evening _____

e-mail _____; volunteer interest _____

Please make check payable and mail to Recycle Rutherford, P.O. Box 1804, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-1804

4 The Recycler, Summer/Fall 2018

Tiny Houses Could Help Veterans

There was lively interest from the audience gathered in April to hear Rob Mitchell and Frank Caperton share their vision of building tiny houses for homeless vets, but financial issues thwarted what seemed to be a promising effort in Rutherford County.

Mitchell said that the movement developed out of necessity because there is such a shortage of affordable housing in middle Tennessee. They talked with veterans about their needs and consulted others for advice and ideas. The projects seemed to be one that could lead to solutions for other population groups, such as the elderly.

A trailer park that needed to be brought up to codes seemed to offer a viable opportunity. They reached out to the Nashville School of Art and Design, and students took it on as a class project and designed eight different models, each comprising 600 square feet. The small dwellings would be part of a cohesive neighborhood that would offer safe surroundings. They envisioned using the Habitat for Humanity model and partnering with churches and other groups.

However, as the project moved forward, the donor who was going to provide the land developed serious health issues, and the project floundered. "Everything stopped when it was time to pay for the sewer," said Mitchell. He and Caperton both said they haven't given up on the possibility and continue to hope that something will come along that will make the project possible. They welcome help and suggestions from anyone who would like to contact them.

Dates to Remember

Fall Meeting—Recycle Rutherford:

Monday, October 22, 2018, 7:00 p.m.
Heritage Center, 225 W. College
Program: RE-learn About Recycling

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Saturday, November 3, 2018, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Murfreesboro City Solid Waste Department
4765 Florence Road, Murfreesboro

2018-20 Officers and Board

Recycle Rutherford holds elections each April at the annual meeting; in general, officers and part of the board are elected in even years for two-year terms, and approximately half the board is elected in uneven years, providing for staggered terms.

The officers are listed below with the board members, who are elected each April and serve staggered terms. The date indicates when the term of each ends. The board meets monthly on first Mondays at 6:15 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 210 N. Spring Street.

Rachel Cornett, president
Bonnie Black, vice president
Suma Clark, secretary
Rick Racker, treasurer
Glenn Himebaugh, past president

Board Members:

Kimberley Broughton, 2020
Linda Hardyman, 2020

**Reminder: To renew your membership,
please see the form on page 3.
Dues are only \$25 per year.
We don't want to lose you!**

**For more information, go to
www.recyclerutherford.org**

Like us on Facebook!

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.



P.O. Box 1804
Murfreesboro, TN 37133-1804