

# THE RECYCLER

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Newsletter of Recycle Rutherford, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Summer/Fall 2017

## What Happens When the Landfill Is Full?

### **New Meeting Place:**

**Heritage Center, 225 West College St.**

### **New Meeting Date:**

**Monday, October 30, 2017**

**7:00 p.m.**

Local expert Mac Nolen will share his views at **Recycle Rutherford's fall meeting on what our community will face when Middle Point Landfill reaches capacity.**

Nolen is Rutherford County Solid Waste and Landfill director, a post he has held since 2008. He has consistently pushed to increase recycling in the county—both quantity and quality. Measures he has implemented to bring about that change include increasing recycling containers at the convenience centers and starting a single-stream recycling program in city and county schools. He encourages citizens to be mindful about what they buy, knowing that today's purchases are likely to become tomorrow's trash.

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**Note new meeting location:  
Heritage Center  
225 West College Street  
Park across the street in  
Pinnacle National Bank  
Parking Lot**

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It is widely recognized that the growth in Rutherford County over the last decade has increased recycling and trash disposal needs. Nolen will explain **four options** that are possible solutions for the county when, in the not too distant future, the landfill has to close. They are **(1) do nothing; (2) expand the landfill; (3) build transfer stations and a recycling facility; and (4) implement a waste to energy process.**

This is an excellent opportunity for citizens to be more informed about this important quality-of-life and economic issue facing the county.

Nolen's experiences include teaching agriculture and horticulture at Smyrna High School for almost three years and serving as a truck driver and then facility manager for both

BFI and Waste Management hauling companies for some sixteen years.

He holds a B.S. degree from Middle Tennessee State University with a major in agribusiness and a minor in vocational education.

### **October Program Includes Recognition of Postcard Winners**

Winners of the third postcard competition sponsored by Recycle Rutherford will be announced and prizes awarded to those winners who are present. This year's theme is Reduce, Reuse, Recycle; the intent of the competition is to promote recycling and raise awareness among teachers, students, and their families.

Students were invited to design original postcards 5.5 by 8.5 inches promoting the theme. Teachers were asked to select a class winner and submit that entry.

There are three categories by grade:

- Middle—Grades 6-8
- Elementary—Grades 3-5
- Primary—Grades K-2

Cash prizes will be awarded in each category:

- winning classroom: \$100
- honorable mention classroom: \$75
- winning student: \$50
- honorable mention student: \$25

In addition, all teachers who submit a classroom entry but do not receive one of the awards listed above will be entered in a drawing for a teacher appreciation award—a \$50 class donation. Four participating classrooms will be awarded.

Recycle Rutherford hopes that the contest provides teachers convenient opportunities to incorporate recycling into their classes. The contest replaces the annual collection of telephone books.

The public is invited to this informative meeting. **The new 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.

## Exotic Plants Pose Real Threat to our Environment

Janie Becker, speaker at Recycle Rutherford's annual meeting in April, explained why invasive, non-native plants are wreaking havoc on our landscapes.

It begins innocently enough because such plants are readily available at nurseries, and they are easy to grow and make survive, meaning that they are useful for stabilizing tough, hard-to-deal-with spots. She further explained that many of the exotic outsiders are more showy than native plants and are easy to propagate. Many of us are ignorant and perhaps somewhat apathetic about the negative effects on the native environment.

Becker defined invasive exotic plants with four points:

1. Thrives in a variety of soil and/or light conditions
2. Aggressively propagates by seed and/or vegetatively
3. Crowds out native species and habitat in native environments
4. Not found in local plant communities

The number one—and most serious—ecological impact is the loss of diversity. Other impacts include the decline and/or loss of interdependent species, a change in animal-dispersed seeds of native plants, altered stream biodiversity (timing and composition of organic matter), increased susceptibility to fire and storm disturbances, altered distribution and connectivity of habitats, new nutrient cycling and soil chemistry behavior, and exclusion of native perennials and tree seedlings.

This very real threat has a detrimental economic impact because it is expensive to fight the problem. It is estimated that the United States spends more than \$25 billion annually with at least \$3 million in Tennessee. Not only are dollars spent, but thousands of acres of habitat are lost and thousands of pounds of herbicides that adversely affect the environment are used.

Becker listed the following places as examples of where problems with invasive plants are greatest:

1. In and around cities
2. Along streams, in lakes, and other moist environments
3. Along highways, railroads, powerlines, pipelines (all known as "right of ways")
4. Neglected public places
5. At forest edges and cleared forests
6. Yards and landscaped areas

Among the plants Becker called attention to as threats in middle Tennessee are some familiar

ones that we may not have realized are non-native:

1. Tree of heaven
2. Princess tree
3. Japanese Stiltgrass
4. Chinese Privet
5. Multiflora rose
6. Nandina
7. Oriental bittersweet
8. Autumn olive
9. Sericea lespedeza
10. Trifoliolate orange
11. Wintercreeper
12. English ivy
13. Paper mulberry
14. Mimosa
15. Kudzu
16. Air-potato
17. Beefstake plant
18. Japanese honeysuckle
19. Burning bush
20. Purple loosestrife
21. Bush honeysuckle
22. Japanese wisteria
23. Bradford pear
24. Vinca
25. Garlic Mustard

Her presentation, which includes pictures of many of these problem plants, can be seen at Recycle Rutherford's website at [www.recyclerutherford.org](http://www.recyclerutherford.org)

The speaker pointed out that just as all of us are part of the problem, we can all be part of the solution. She urges that we seek information through the UT/TSU Extension Service in the county as well as through the Tennessee Invasive Plant Council. The mission of the latter is to improve public awareness of the serious threats invasive pest plants pose to natural areas and provide solutions to manage those threats. TN-IPC is a chapter member of the Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council and the national organization, National Association of Exotic Pest Plant Councils.

As individuals, one of the most important actions we can take is to choose natives for all our landscaping. Many nurseries and landscapers will help with this. Information sources include

- Tennessee Invasive Plant Council at [www.tnipc.org/](http://www.tnipc.org/)
- Tennessee Native Plant Society at <https://www.tnps.org/>
- University of Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Program at <https://extension.tennessee.edu/mastergardener>
- USDA Plants Database at <http://plants.usda.gov/>

## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

If you know someone who needs a reminder about the importance of the three Rs—reduce, reuse, recycle—the chart below should help. It tells **how long it takes ordinary items to decompose** if just tossed them out, whether it be to a landfill or an ocean or lake or a garbage heap. We could bury ourselves in discarded stuff while using up the resources of the earth. Do the times below surprise you?

Paper towels	2-4 weeks
Banana peels	3-4 weeks
Paper bags	1 month
Newspaper	1.5 months
Apple cores	2 months
Cardboard	2 months
Cotton gloves	3 months
Orange peels	6 months
Plywood	1-3 years
Wool socks	1-5 years
Milk cartons	5 years
Cigarette butts	10-12 years
Leather shoes	25-40 years
Tin cans	50 years
Foam plastic cups	50 years
Rubber boot soles	50-80 years
Plastic containers	50-80 years
Aluminum cans	200-500 years
Plastic bottles	450 years
Disposable diapers	550 years
Monofilament fishing Line	600 years
Plastic bags	200-1,000 years

**Source:** *MaryJanes Farm*, August/September 2017

## Fighting for Bees on Capitol Hill

Friends of the Earth continued their Bee Action campaign in Washington this June, organizing a congressional briefing and “fly-in” to raise awareness about the \$66 billion merger of Bayer and Monsanto and the dangerous grip these companies have over our food and agriculture systems. The top six agricultural and seed companies are negotiating mergers which could result in just three powerful multinational corporations controlling this market. If approved, the toxic Bayer+Monsanto mega-merger will devastate American consumers, farmers, workers, and our environment.

Teaming up with farming, food, beekeeping, environmental, and consumer groups, Friends of the Earth helped mobilize over 15 farmers and beekeepers from ten states to lobby Congress and the U.S. Department of Justice, the agency responsible for approving the merger. These individuals shared their concerns about the mega-merger in over 40 meetings with senators, representatives, and Department of Justice officials, including five in-person conversations with members of Congress.

These grassroots efforts persuaded several House and Senate offices to ask their state attorney generals to join the Department of Justice’s investigation of the Bayer+Monsanto merger. Success came on both sides of the aisle with three Republican offices pursuing a hearing on the merger and 19 Democratic senators signing a letter to the Department of Justice expressing concern over the merger. Also, the issue was highlighted as an area of concern as part of the Democrats’ new policy agenda, which calls for a crackdown on corporate monopolies and adoption of new standards for merger reviews.

One of the most significant achievements was securing the commitment of two House offices to work with Friends of the Earth to craft federal legislation protecting farmers and the American public from agribusiness consolidation and concentration.

**Source:** *Friends of the Earth News Magazine*, Sum ‘17

## 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 my dues.

**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**

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### Dates to Remember

#### Fall Meeting—Recycle Rutherford:

Monday, October 30, 2017, 7:00 p.m.  
Heritage Center, 225 West College St.

#### PLEASE NOTE LOCATION CHANGE

**Speaker: Mac Nolen, Solid Waste and Landfill Director, Rutherford County**

**Topic: "What Happens When the Landfill Is Full?"**

#### Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Saturday, Nov. 4, 2017, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Murfreesboro City Solid Waste Department  
4765 Florence Road, Murfreesboro

Dispose of oil and fuel additives, grease and rust solvents, naval jelly, carburetor fuel injector cleaners, starter fluids, body putty, antifreeze, coolant, gasoline, used strippers and thinners, adhesives, driveway sealant, roofing tar, wallpaper remover, pesticides, fertilizers, wood preservatives, pool chemicals, photo processing chemicals, medicines, drugs, aerosols, mercury thermostats and thermometers, fluorescent tubes, needles and sharps (in a puncture-proof container)

**UNACCEPTABLE** items include paint, radium paint, infectious wastes, medical wastes, dead animals, smoke detectors, fireworks, ammunition, gun powder. This is for households only—NO businesses, schools, hospitals, or contractors

*This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.*



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

### 2016-18 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:

Gib Backlund, 2018  
Linda Hardyman, 2018

**Reminder: To renew your membership, please go online to the address below or complete and mail 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](http://www.recyclerutherford.org)**

**Like us on Facebook!**