



## County Executive's Newsletter to the Commission



### A National Park in Roane County? – The Manhattan Project

Hopefully most of you read the recent column in *The Roane County News* regarding "The Manhattan Project" as a National Park. However in the event you may have missed the column, we thought it was important enough to take various excerpts of the article and reprint it here.

Continuing with the Five Point Star management approach, one of the current points/focuses is Industrial/Economic Development. There are many aspects of economic development, one of which is tourism and overall livability for the area.

This article focuses on making "The Manhattan Project" a National Park helping not only tourism for Roane County but also adding an important aspect of culture, history, art and livability.

Many individuals in and around Roane County are familiar with "The Manhattan Project" as an early 1940s U.S. Army Corp of Engineers/U.S. Atomic Energy Commission creation of facilities and processes to help build atomic bombs "The A-Bomb". The Manhattan Project was probably one of the biggest and greatest success stories in American history – a theory, an experiment, a development.

The "Manhattan Project National Park Act" is a draft bill to create a National Park which would include the three Atomic Sites of Oak Ridge, Tennessee; Hanford, Washington; and Los Alamo, New Mexico. Roane County government has been involved in supporting "The Manhattan National Park" establishment. We have attended a meeting in Oak Ridge with federal legislative representatives and officials and most recently with the sister cities of Los Alamo and Hanford that many state and federal officials also attended.

Roane County's involvement of not only supporting but helping direct "The Manhattan Project as a National Park" came through a relationship with the Energy Communities Alliance (ECA). Roane County joined with other Department of Energy (DOE) communities across the nation who deal with DOE issues ranging from prioritizing funding of environmental management budgets and clean-up initiatives to reindustrialization of DOE property and future advancements in research and development in science and technology. Oak Ridge Mayor Tom Beehan chairs the ECA board.

Roane County Commission has adopted a resolution stating their support of "The Manhattan Project" as a National Park and has sent support letters to our legislators.

Would it not be great to have the national park symbol of a brown arrowhead on Roane County signage signifying Roane County having a National Park? As one travels I-40 and on Gallaher Road there could be a sign that says, "Welcome to 'The Manhattan Project National Park' another Roane County Treasure". We are sure Anderson County and Oak Ridge would say the same.

There is a saying that people won't travel to see "stuff", but they will travel around the world to see places. Let's work for "The Manhattan Project National Park", a place in the heart of East Tennessee.

### A Collaborative Effort

Gail Okulczyk, a quality engineer for Isotek Systems subsidiary in TN and a 14-year member of Roane County's Environmental Review Board (ERB), coordinates with the Roane County Solid Waste Department to launch recycling programs at other schools, using Rockwood Middle School as a benchmark. As the first school in the county to implement a recycling program, Rockwood recycled 6.33 tons of materials in the first year. In 2011, 9 tons of mixed paper/cardboard were recycled (an average of \$125/ton return to the county). Isotek donated \$400 to the school's Science Club that led the effort. **"Congratulations" and "Thank You" to Gail, the RMS Science Club, and Isotek!**

### **Bob Peelle's SMR Resolution**

#### **"The Story of the SMR Resolution"**

Respect.....Roane County Commission was blessed with the presence of former Commissioner Bob Peelle and wife, Elizabeth, at the May Commission meeting. Peelle spoke on behalf of his support, with some stipulations, of the Small Modular Reactor. As things go in policy development, Executive Woody drafted a resolution supporting the project. Commissioner Steve Kelley proposed an amendment to keep Woody's caption and delete the balance of the resolution, substituting Peelle's amendment. Woody spoke on behalf of his resolution saying that he was glad to be able to assist by providing the caption, with great respect to a wonderful, energetic, forward-looking Commissioner, Bob Peelle.

A special thanks to Bob and Elizabeth for their insights. Moments like these are fond moments in county government.

### **Grants** by Joyce Nall

The county was fortunate enough to receive several new grants during this fiscal year.

VW construction was made more expedient through a grant we received of \$1.5 million for infrastructure installation. This grant was through the Department of Economic and Community Development. In addition, we received a grant for over \$900,000 from TDOT for road construction to improve Blackburn Lane.

In addition to our industrial grants, we also received funding for law enforcement, sewer line installation, litter prevention, energy saving construction, oil recycling, and emergency management.

In light of many financial cuts in the grant agencies, Roane County feels fortunate to have received this additional funding for important projects.

### **Move into the Old Jail Official** by Ron Woody

Many thanks to Roane County employees and the County Commission for making this a successful project. We are pleased to report that with the help of the Roane County Sheriff's Department, inmates, Marty Miles, and Keith Howell and Ken Clinton of maintenance, the project came in **much under budget**. The original engineering estimates were over \$700,000; the county budgeted \$250,000, and the project was completed for around \$150,000.

The Old Jail is a new home to Juvenile, Sheriff's Department Drug Unit and additional records storage for County Historian Robert Bailey, Records Department.

### **Celebration of Success Conference**

Based on Roane County's Industrial/Business Inventory Summit held on April 12<sup>th</sup>, County Executive Woody has been requested to present at the Cumberland County campus of Roane State Community College on June 22, 2012.

The **Celebration of Success Conference** is being directed by Robert Safdie, Director of the Cumberland Business Incubator at Roane State Community College. Woody will be speaking on Assessing Community Assets/Inventory.

### **Industrial Economic Development** by Ron Woody

As Roane County focuses on Industrial Economic Development, the following efforts in relationship building and economic study take place throughout the months and year:

1. Regularly attend the 7:30 a.m. Friday morning meetings of the East Tennessee Economic Council (ETEC) meeting in Oak Ridge.
2. Participate as a board member in the Association of Tennessee Valley Governments (ATVG) with quarterly education and board meetings and position statements related to TVA programs.
3. Participate as a member in the Energy Communities Alliance with quarterly meetings related to policies and activities of the Department of Energy.
4. Periodically meet with Community Reuse Organization of East Tennessee (CROET), Oak Ridge Industrial Development Board (ORIDB), and Department of Energy (DOE) re-industrialization teams regarding the re-industrialization work and plan of reuse at the old K-25 site and Oak Ridge National Lab.
5. Regularly attend the Roane County Industrial Development Board meetings.
6. Staff representative attends the CORE Team meetings.
7. Manager of the Industrial Economic Development County Budgets of the County General Fund.

We are pleased to say that Roane County is engaged and continues to work with our community and regional leaders and partners for economic diversity.

We see good things coming as we build relationships.

Roane “**Swap and Shop**” and “**Bark in the Park**” is **June 23rd**. Be sure to come out that night and root for your favorite team during the annual “**Law vs. Order**” softball game.

### **2013 Budget Update:**

The 2013 Budget work has been intense the last few weeks as the County General Fund had a full day review on May 17 and an evening review on May 29. Hopefully by this publication the budget process, excluding school budgets will be ready for recommendation to the Commission. The county financial plan and budget appears to be sound; however, employees’ raises and money allocated for various additional expenditures continue to demand our attention as additional revenues are needed to support these costs. The county employees have been three (3) years without raises and the county must take steps to address equity of general county and school employee pay issues. Further, from the recent submitted school budget, the school system has painted a dreaded picture of financial crisis to come either by cutting or property tax increases to support programs and raises.

The Budget Committee will begin review of the school budget in June. The FY 2013 Budget Committee minutes are posted on our website.

### **Did you know? ... The Beginnings of Oak Ridge** (by Robert Bailey, County Historian)

[This is the first of a series of articles about the history of Oak Ridge, the “Secret City.” Oak Ridge made a tremendous impact on our area in 1942 and the possibility of a National Park would again have a major impact in our County.]

There have been many important events that have occurred throughout the history of Roane County. The coming of industry to create Rockwood, the Temperance movement which brought about Harriman, the Tennessee Valley Authority which brought power to rural areas and many others made dramatic impacts in Roane County. However, the creation of “Oak Ridge” may have had the most impact.

The bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese brought the United States into World War II. Here in Oak Ridge and other plants in the United States, the atomic bomb was developed which were dropped on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The development of the atomic bomb had to be kept top secret. The first code name for the project was called the “Kingston Demolition Range” but was later renamed “Clinton Engineer Works” after the city of Clinton. One of the reasons this area was chosen was that the area was isolated. It also had power provided by T.V.A. and there were two railroads. Land acquisition began in the fall of 1942. Approximately 56,200 acres in Roane and Anderson Counties were acquired for the project. An important aspect of the land was the ridges which divided the valleys. A plant was located in each valley. At this time there were only about 1,000 families in the area. The average cost of an acre paid was \$45 per acre. However, many families received much less. Among the items located in the Roane County Archives are the maps of the Kingston Demolition Range showing all the owners of the different properties which were acquired by the Federal Government. Among the acquisitions was the Wheat High School, located near the K-25 plant, which was only one of three High Schools being run by Roane County. The other two were Roane County High and Rockwood High. The Harriman High School was run by the City of Harriman.

Most of the homes, barns and other out buildings were destroyed to discourage people and others from moving into them. Those buildings not torn down were used for storage. Two churches, the George Jones Baptist church near the K-25 plant and the New Bethel Baptist Church near the ORNL (X-10), which was used for storage, were not torn down and are all that remain in the Oak Ridge part of Roane County before the building of the city.

[The next article will discuss the building of the plants.]

**Commission Action May 14, 2012**

- Various resolutions authorizing the County Attorney to file lawsuits for overgrown vegetation/accumulation of debris on various properties, and for violation of the zoning regulations, were adopted.
- Adopted resolutions honoring Wilma Walker, Bill Alexander, Charles Cunningham and Charles Fitch for their service on the Roane County of Equalization.
- Authorized the County Executive to apply for a Litter and Trash Collecting Grant for FY 2013.
- Adopted Resolution #05-12-23 supporting US Congressional legislation creating the Manhattan Project as a United States National Park.
- Adopted Substitute Resolution #05-12-24 supporting the TVA in its Small Modular Reactor (SMR) application to the US Department of Energy.

**June Meetings and Events:**

Check the website [www.roanegov.org](http://www.roanegov.org) or more information on Committee meetings.

- June 4 – Sheriff’s Liaison Committee – 6:00 pm (CH)
- June 6 – Public Records Committee – 4:30 pm (CH)
- June 7 – Environmental Review Board – 6:00 pm
- June 11 – County Commission – 7:00 pm (CH)
- June 12 – Beer Board (if needed) – 5:30 pm (CH)
- June 12 – Fire Board – 6:00 pm (CH)
- June 20 – Board of Zoning Appeals – 6:00 pm (CH)
- June 20 – Planning Commission – 7:00 pm (CH)
- June 21 – County Board of Public Utilities – 5:00 pm (CH)

**2013 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes:**

As the Budget Committee meets and recommends the 2013 Budget, the related minutes are available on the county website, [www.roanegov.org](http://www.roanegov.org).

**Recreation Around Roane** by Joyce Nall

Family activities can be found in your backyard. The summer promises lots of activity in our park system.

Park Director Tony Brown reports that campers keep “pouring in” to Riley Creek Campground. The past month was near capacity camping, so if you want a good site for a night or the summer, contact Tony @ 865/466-0294.

The Roane County Park will be hosting several events during this month.

June 16<sup>th</sup> will be the Farm Fair hosted by the Roane Agricultural Extension Office. Come out and see the livestock that many of the youth in Roane County have raised and made their own. Questions about activities: call 865/376-5588.

On June 23<sup>rd</sup> come to the largest garage sale around. Roane’s Shop and Swap will offer “treasures” from all across the county. If you aren’t into shopping, stop by and bring your “best friend” for the Roane Animal Shelter’s Bark in the Park. Don’t forget to come out that night for the annual “Law VS Order” softball game.

Any day, tennis, splash pad, disk golf, camping, picnicking, swimming, and hiking can all be enjoyed without leaving your own community.

**Riley Creek Campground**

**The Riley Creek Campground is open for business. Waterfront, Interior, Handicap, and Seasonal sites are available. Our Parks and Recreation Department has been working hard to make the campground an inviting place to visit. For more information call Tony Brown at (865) 466-0294.**

**COCTP Training Program:**

Several officials/employees have passed the COCTP and attended Capstone in May: **Kaley Walker**, Director of Accounts and Budget; **Melanie Townsend**, **Marti Higgins** and **Jennifer Evans**, Accounting Personnel; and **Ron Woody**, County Executive. Congratulations to these Certified Public Administrators for their achievement.

**If you have an item of interest related to our county, please submit to Sheila or me. Deadline for submission is the last Friday of the month.**

**Ron Woody**