

Beaver Creek watershed gets 3,000 trees

Halls High School, the Beaver Creek Task Force, CAC Americorps' Water Quality Team and TVA teamed up to bundle and distribute 3,000 trees throughout the Beaver Creek Watershed Saturday.

Students in Mike Blankenship's third-period forestry class produced a brochure detailing the seven different tree species found in each 30-seedling bundle distributed from the Halls Library.

Blankenship said that the students learned much about riparian zones, a term used in ecology to denote wooded areas where land and water merge together.

"This area right here," he said, pointing to Beaver Creek near the library, "is a textbook riparian zone."

Blankenship added that students in Kerrie Coley's ecology class were also involved in the program.

Members from the Water Quality Team were on hand to answer questions about the native seedlings and give planting tips and instructions.

The seedling project is part of a learning program in Knox County, coordinated by Ruth Anne Hanahan of the Tennessee Water Resources Center,



Representatives from Americorps, TVA, Halls High School and the Tennessee Water Resources Center distributed seedlings of various native trees Saturday at the Halls Library. Pictured are: (front) Renee Bliss, Melinda Andrews, Ruth Anne Hanahan, Nancy Arazan, Angela Danovi; (back) Jesse Yonkovich and Mike Blankenship. About 3,000 trees were distributed to residents that live along Beaver Creek.

that educates middle and high school students about their surrounding environment.

"It's a hands-on program where students can study the physical, biological and chemical aspects of their community," Hanahan said. "The students then identify ways that they can be involved in helping their community."

Halls Middle School students are also active in the program and will have a planting day on Saturday, March 6, at Halls Community Park.

The planting day is the cul-

mination of an eight-week learning program for about 160 students at the school.

Members of the Americorps Water Quality Team assist the teachers with the program.

Roy Arthur, Knox County watershed coordinator, said that the Beaver Creek Watershed is the largest in Knox County, covering 86 square miles. It begins in Gibbs and winds through Halls, Powell and Karns before ending at the Clinch River.

"These seedlings help stabilize the stream bed, filter pollu-

tion and eventually provide shade that will help aquatic life stay cool," Arthur said.

Each seedling bundle contained seven false indigo bushes, seven elderberry shrubs, five silky dogwood trees, five red bud trees, three red maple trees and three tulip poplar trees.

These species were chosen because they are both native to the area and grow best in damp places with occasional flooding, according to Arthur.

— Nick Frantz



With officers from the Sheriff's bomb squad yelling, "Back, back!" Mike Blankenship snapped this picture Saturday at the corner of Emory Road and Hwy. 33 in Halls. Someone had reported a suspicious package. The bomb squad responded. As officers blocked traffic on both ends of Emory, volunteers distributing seedlings were disbursed. The gizmo in the center of the picture, nicknamed Bubba, ripped apart the package. Then the officers gave an all clear signal and life as we know it resumed.