

## THE BOOMER GENERATION

# Earth efforts

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Boomers have gotten the lion's share of credit for the modern environmental movement; they did, after all, give the world Earth Day. The Environmental Protection Agency is a product of their watch.

But local boomers who are involved in

the environmental movement say they merely carried on a long tradition.

"My interest in the environment started with my dad, who had me out hiking and camping and canoeing at an early age," said Brad Wyche, director of Upstate Forever.

Wyche's dad, Tommy, is the driving force behind preservation efforts that have culminated in a nearly unbroken "Blue Wall" of wilderness along the escarpment connecting

Caesars Head and the Chattooga River.

Wyche the elder started his preservation push after seeing the end result of development run amok in California's coastal mountains.

The younger Wyche "remembers that first Earth Day like it was yesterday. I was a student at Princeton and the spirit of the movement caught my heart."

That was April 22, 1970, the same year fuel rods in a reactor at the Savannah River plant near Aiken melted down.

The incident at the Savannah River plant remained a secret for 18 years.

Dianne Anastos is a boomer environmentalist of that stripe.

She came into the movement late in life,

barely remembering the first Earth Day during her college years.

Anastos is the director of Save Our Saluda, a river conservation group dedicated to the preservation of the Saluda River basin in Northern Greenville County.

Her little group of boomers and their kids (with some help from Upstate Forever) have taken on some of the richest and most powerful people in and out of state government over development plans for the area.

They've raised awareness of environmental issues in what has been called one of the last great bastions of laissez faire development in this part of the world.

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