



Blount Partnership

Tourism Development

MEMORANDUM

To: Jared Anderson, Chair, Blount County Commission
Ed Mitchell, Mayor, Blount County

From: Bryan Daniels, President & CEO

Date: June 24, 2026

Re: Board Member Appointment for the
Smoky Mountain Tourism Development Authority

The Smoky Mountain Tourism Development Authority requests the reappointment of two candidates, along with alternate candidates, to fill two seats with expiring terms, each one is a six-year term on the Board of Directors. The candidates are ranked in order of preference:

Reappointment:

- Joy Carver, Owner, Dandy Lions Gifts
- Chad Rochelle, Owner, Dogwood Cabin

Alternate Candidates

- Cassie Halley, CEO, Company Distilling
- Carmen Simpher, CEO, Little Arrow Outdoor Resort

We ask that during the next meeting of the Blount County Commission, that you reappoint Joy Carver and Chad Rochelle or select which candidate/s that are approved for appointment to the Smoky Mountain Tourism Development Authority, for a term of six years.

We have also included biographical information on each candidate for your reference. Your consideration of this request at your next meeting is greatly appreciated.



Joy F. Carver

By day, I am the owner and principal buyer for Dandy Lions Gifts in the historic Downtown Maryville. By afternoon, I am a dance mom, baseball taxi and community volunteer.

Born and raised in Blount County, my first ever paycheck came from my summer job at Proffitt’s Department Store as a Trendsetter, representing Maryville High School. I loved it so much that I chose to work as many hours as I could that following summer and each holiday break during college.

Never dreaming I could actually work in the field of retail as a career, I took my deep desire to serve others and my need to be creative and decided I must be meant for the field of education. After an undergraduate degree from Baylor University and graduate work at The University of Tennessee in the College of Education, I honed my listening and creative problem-solving skills in the field of urban education through ProjectGRAD Knoxville.

Dandy Lions Gifts was born out of a dream to come back to my roots. Not only literally - with a move back to Blount County, but to the career field that stirred my soul. And there was nowhere else that fits my hometown heart better than the historic part of Downtown Maryville. With the creak of the original hardwood floors, the sun streaming through the large arched windows and the thick moldings - we could not be happier to call Maryville our home. Our shelves stay stocked with some of the latest trends in gifts plus baby items, jewelry, home accessories and handmade pottery. Many of the items within our walls are from some of the region’s finest artisans. We are thrilled to give them a place to grow their small business as well.

Almost twenty years, a full staff, and much growth later, each day is still as special as the first. We are grateful for our continued growth and proud to serve our community and the guests that travel through.

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Joy is a local small business owner passionate about her hometown and the smart growth of her county with a focus on the historic Downtown.

As the owner of Dandy Lions Gifts, she wears many hats. Joy is responsible for implementing marketing strategies that help grow the visibility of the storefront, local awareness, and community spirit. Buying and merchandising give her all the feels. But meeting the needs of her customers and wrapping gifts with pretty bows makes her day. She is also the principal window washer and shelf duster.

When she is not working, you will find Joy in her kids’ schools, on the tennis courts, wearing a little orange or dreaming of her next big family trip.



Chad R. Rochelle

- 25+ year resident of Townsend, TN
- Family - Wife: Amy, Children: Remy, Millie, Noah
- Members of St. Francis Catholic Church
- Graduate of McNeese State University, Lake Charles, LA B.S. Psychology
- Owner/Principal Broker of Dogwood Cabins - Manages daily operations of property management program, specializing in overnight vacation rental properties.
- Owner/Principal Broker of Parkside Realty Services - Manages operations and affiliate brokers of full-service real estate company, specializing in investment and residential properties in Blount County.
- Partner/General Manager of Laurel Valley Resort - Manages staff and coordinates marketing/lodging aspects of business for 18-Hole golf resort providing golf, F&B, and lodging services.

Cassie
Halley

573.270.9522

Knoxville, TN

clsimpher@gmail.com

MARKETING AND OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE

Strategic and growth-focused executive with 10+ years of experience leading marketing, retail, and operational performance in hospitality and consumer brands. Currently serving as CEO of Company Distilling, driving brand expansion, revenue growth, and organizational alignment across multiple business units. Known for building high-performing teams, executing large-scale launches, and translating vision into measurable business results.

EXPERIENCE

FEB 2025 - CURRENT

Company Distilling

MARYVILLE, TN

Chief Executive Officer (Nov 2025 - Present)

- Lead overall company strategy, operations, and growth initiatives across retail, marketing, and distribution
- Drive brand positioning and expansion, including new market entry and location development
- Oversee cross-functional leadership team to improve alignment, accountability, and execution
- Guide long-term planning including product innovation, partnerships, and revenue growth strategies

Director of Marketing & Retail Operations (Feb 2025 - Oct 2025)

- Opened Company Distilling's Lynchburg location, leading brand strategy, retail operations, and launch execution
- Developed and implemented processes across marketing, retail, and events to improve efficiency and team alignment
- Launched integrated marketing campaigns and strategic partnerships to increase brand awareness and engagement

MAR 2019 - FEB 2025

COO & CMO

Little Arrow Outdoor Resort

TOWNSEND, TN

- Led and managed a team of 16 across three departments, ensuring seamless collaboration and high performance
- Maintained exceptional levels of customer satisfaction through meticulous oversight of all resort operations, ensuring a functional and enjoyable guest experience
- Oversaw the resort's retail store, driving annual revenue of nearly \$400K
- Achieved gross annual profits of approximately \$4M by optimizing operational efficiency and strategic marketing initiatives

MAY 2017 - MAR 2019

Account Management Specialist

Epsilon (formerly Conversant LLC)

CHICAGO, IL

- Managed client relationships and executed media programs for top national accounts, including Cabela's and Carter's/OshKosh B'Gosh, among others
- Collaborated across internal cross-functional teams, consisting of client development, media, and web development, to ensure seamless execution of campaigns
- Developed promotional programs focused on ROI, contributing to market share growth
- Coordinated timelines and deliverables, maintaining high standards of client service and satisfaction

NOV 2015 - MAY 2017

Account Manager

OKRP (formerly Juice Interactive)

CHICAGO, IL

- Managed long-term client relationships for over 6 accounts including and 12 projects, acting as the primary point of contact and leading status calls with key stakeholders
- Spearheaded the development and implementation of a new project management system, resulting in a projected \$90K in cost savings and streamlined processes for a team of 12
- Juice Interactive specialized in delivering human-centric digital experiences for major brands such as Allstate, MillerCoors, Mead Johnson, and Behr

EXPERTISE

Digital Marketing

Mastery

Retail Management

Advanced

Team & Client Management

Advanced

Business Operations

Advanced

EDUCATION

University of Missouri, Columbia

Bachelor of Arts & Science

Interdisciplinary – Journalism,
Communication and Sociology

2010 - 2014

CERTIFICATIONS

Outdoor Hospitality
Management

REFERENCES

Available Upon Request

View my full resume here!





Carmen Simpher

Carmen Simpher is the CEO and cofounder of Little Arrow Outdoor Resort, a destination-driven hospitality property located in Townsend, Tennessee, at the gateway to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Since launching Little Arrow, Carmen has led the development and growth of the resort with a strong focus on guest experience, employee culture, and sustainable tourism practices that enhance the visitor experience while respecting the surrounding natural and cultural resources.

With more than 26 years in the medical field and experience owning and operating two businesses, Carmen brings a disciplined, operations-focused approach to leadership, along with a deep understanding of service excellence and stakeholder engagement. Her transition into hospitality reflects a commitment to creating experiences that contribute positively to the regional tourism economy and strengthen community identity.

Carmen has an extensive background in civic and nonprofit service supporting education, community development, and quality-of-life initiatives. She previously served on the Jackson City Park Board and the University of Missouri–Columbia Extension Council, where the council was responsible for advocating for educational access, advising on local programming, and securing funding for the Cape Girardeau County Extension Office.

After relocating to Townsend in 2018, Carmen became actively involved in local and regional organizations focused on tourism, conservation, and economic vitality. She has served on the boards of the Great Smoky Mountains Heritage Center, the Little River Watershed Association, the Blount County Chamber of Commerce, and the Townsend–Cades Cove Gateway Alliance. Through these roles, she has worked collaboratively with public, private, and nonprofit partners to support responsible tourism growth, protect natural resources, and enhance the visitor experience across the Smoky Mountains region.

Carmen is passionate about advancing tourism strategies that balance economic development with conservation and community values, making her well-suited to contribute to the mission and long-term vision of the Smoky Mountains Tourism Development Authority.