

ORSSAB Experience Has Been Rewarding for Member David Martin

After a long career as an electrical engineer, board member David Martin could be described now as a 'retired gentleman farmer.' He and wife Nancy live in Harriman near their 160-acre farm, which has been in his family since the 1820s. "This is a legacy farm. It has been handed down through the generations since it was first acquired from the federal government in 1824," he says.

David inherited the farm from his mother. "Interestingly enough it's been kept in the family often through the daughters. The sons would move away and one of the daughters would, with her husband, stay and buy out the others. This is the way it was for four generations before me."

These days he operates it as a cattle farm with a mixed herd of 30-40 head, plus he sells a small amount of forest products. "This is grass country," he says. "The land does not row crop well because it is highly erodible. The old joke is if you want to dig a ditch just drag a

chain where you want it and you'll have your ditch in a few weeks. I'm working now to close out the last of the old eroded ditches on the place."

Originally from Rome, Ga., David studied electrical engineering at the University of Tennessee. That's where he met Nancy, who was studying education. They have two children, Nora and Andrew.

When they graduated in the early 1970s, they both found jobs in

Cartersville, Ga. David went to work for Georgia Power Co. and over the years held a number of positions in engineering, operations, and maintenance at the Bowen Generating Station. "In 1995 they offered me an opportunity to retire. I took it and went out on my own. I did contract engineering in the electric power industry in and outside the U.S. until 2010. Although I still keep a couple of clients I farm pretty much full time."

When the Martins returned to Tennessee in 2002 their first thought was to live on Watts Bar Lake, but

I saw an ad for board membership I decided to apply and I'm glad I did." He's been a board member since 2007.

"So many of my initial concerns have been addressed in a positive way, like White Oak Creek. It's well under control. I'm not overly concerned about the sediments in the Clinch River and Watts Bar Lake. At ORNL, though, we have some problems, particularly with the uranium-233 stored at Building 3019. It's holding that whole research facility hostage until we can get it taken care of. And because of the amount of money needed to dispose of that

material it could negatively affect the cleanup of other areas of the reservation."

Regarding his experience on the board David said it's been rewarding for him. "I'm glad we've increased our board membership limit to 22 because in the next eight to 10 years there will be so much going on and it's critical that we have enough people to cover it. I think board members should take every opportunity to get out on the

reservation. Every time we've been able to go out and see what's going on we've been able to come back and contribute in a positive way toward cleanup."

As a board member David currently serves as the vice chair of the EM Committee and he's on the Public Outreach Committee. He's also been vice chair of the Stewardship Committee and looks forward to serving on the Board Finance & Process Committee before leaving the board.



David Martin stands on a hill that overlooks a large part of his 160-acre farm in Roane County. The farm has been in his family since the 1820s.

a family friend from Oak Ridge questioned that plan because of contamination in White Oak Creek and the Lower Watts Bar Reservoir. "I'd never heard of that so I started reading about some of the problems on the Oak Ridge Reservation," said David. "I started reading Frank Munger's articles in the *News Sentinel* about the reclamation work on the reservation. Living so close felt I needed to know more about what was going on. When