

**Sarah's
Appalachia:
Sevier County
Tennessee**



My Grandparent's Farm: 100 A

When first looking at this picture, you will notice cows. If you have any knowledge of agriculture, you might go as far as to say that the front herd is beef cattle (mostly Black Angus) and the sparse herd behind are Herford. But the history and real story behind the farm are much harder to notice. My grandparents bought this farm in the mid-1950s and have worked it their whole married lives. I want to live and work on this farm for the rest of my life, but the farm is threatened: if you looking more closely, you'll notice that beyond the cattle and the fields is a subdivision. That land used to be a small family farm until a developer bought it and subdivided the property, which is happening to many small farms in the area. There is also talk that the city is going to put in a shopping complex across the street from our farm. You can imagine how I feel because I have always wanted to buy the piece of land across the street that stretches all the way to the French Broad River to expand the farm. I am connected to this farm in a way that is complicated to explain but involves family problems and the fact that I'm the only one of my generation who wants to farm. But I was raised there for the first years of my life, grew up working on it, and am studying Agriculture at Berea. Farming is what I love.



Country Music

This photo is iconic of a wonderful memory I have shared with my mother. She is the luckiest person I know at winning prizes on the radio, and she won these front row tickets to one of the biggest concerts my senior year. There were three major country artists performing that night on Brad Paisley's Tour: Brad Paisley, Miranda Lambert, and Justin Moore. The concert was so large that it was held in the Thompson Bowling Area in Knoxville Tennessee, the very place where the University of Tennessee plays basketball. Country music is the main genre where I am from, and Brad Paisley sums it up himself: "It ain't hip to sing about tractors, trucks, little towns, and mama, yeah that might be true. But this is country music and we do" (from *This is Country Music*).



Eye Sores

At first glance this photo looks like just a bunch of traffic on a gloomy cloudy day. Actually this photo represents the energy of Pigeon Forge Tennessee, complete with evidence of consumerism and the mountain range in the background. This photo shows a typical Saturday evening of trying to travel down the Parkway towards Gatlinburg. On the far left peaks the Sky Wheel that stands directly in the city's newest capitalistic endeavor, Bell Island—full of shopping, restaurants, and “fun” for the family. In this photo is the Track, one of the most popular go cart track and arcades, various hotels, and other shopping establishments and restaurants. The greatest tragedy is that most of the business owners are not locals but outsiders who have moved in, opened some sort of money making scheme, and capitalized off of the promising economy.



Home

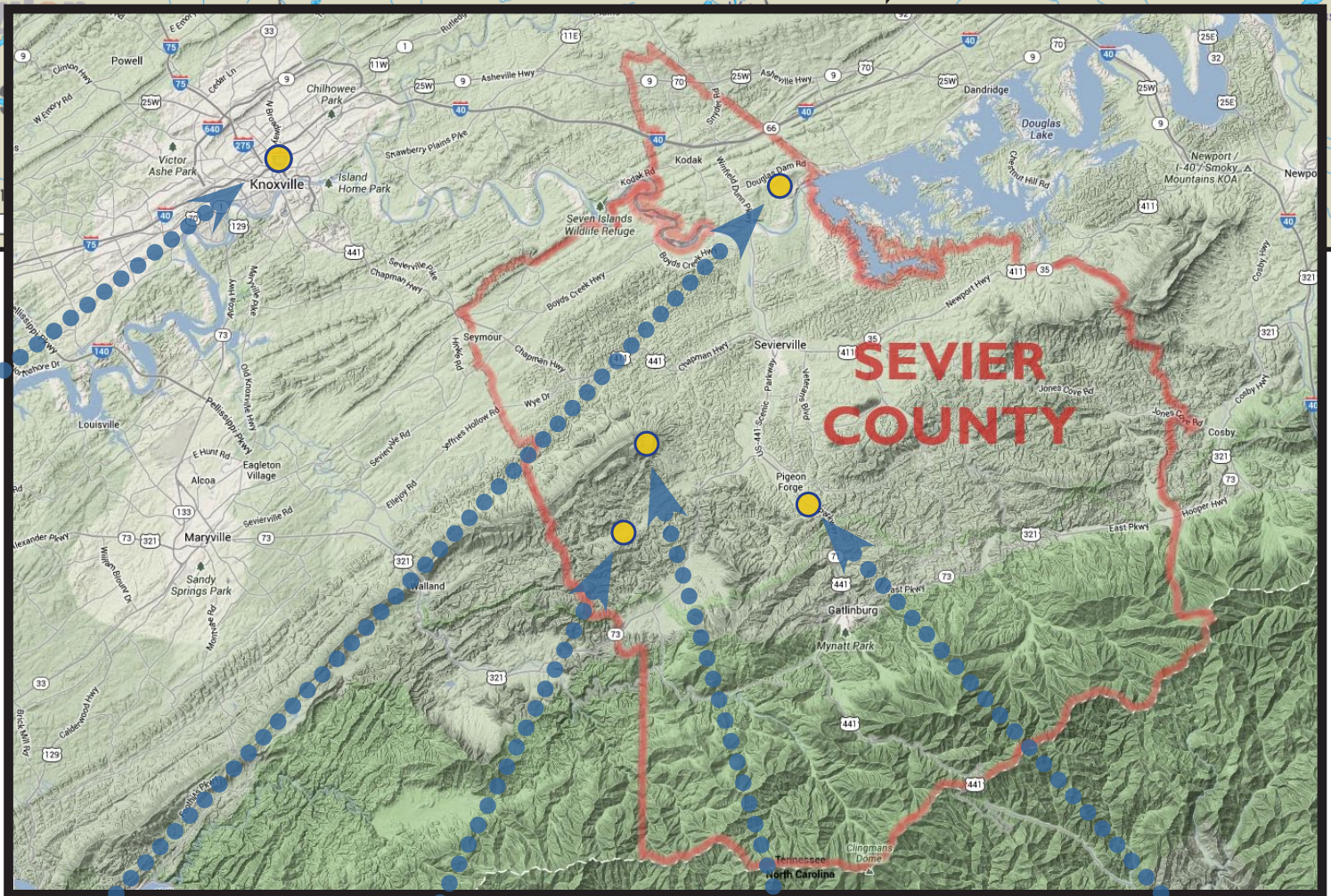
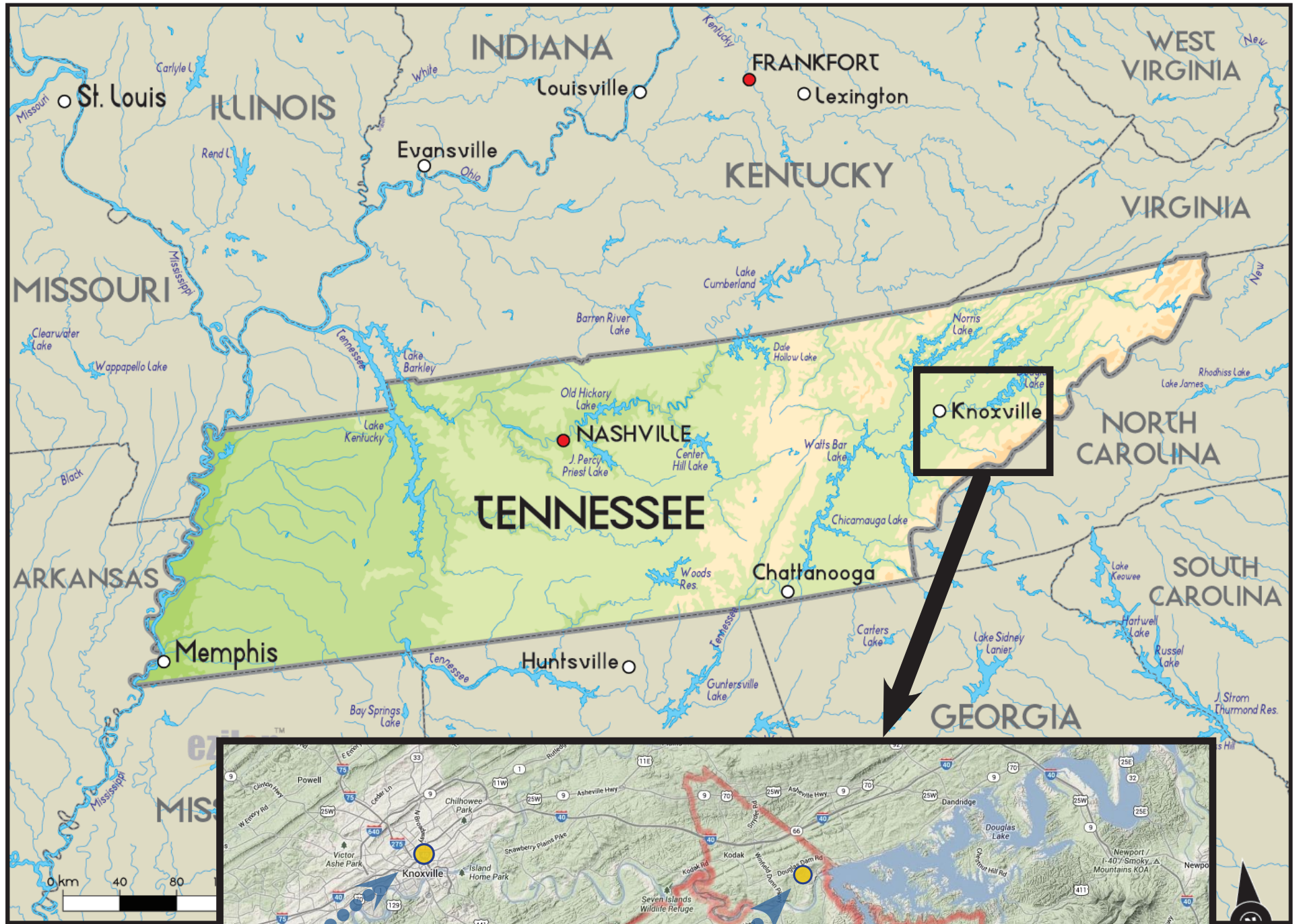
I call this God's Country because of the radiating beauty. This is a view off of the mountain that holds a small 87-acre farm that I live on and has been handed down for five generations. It is at the base of what's known as Bluff Mountain just outside of the Pigeon Forge and Sevierville city limits. Looking back away from the main strip in Pigeon Forge towards the Great Smokey Mountains National Park, the picture shows the serenity and beauty of those mountains through the silhouettes of some trees. If you look deeper into the picture, you'll see some man made developments on mountainsides that are not protected by the National Park. People are moving in and piling many rental cabins onto a mountain side as an attempt to make fast money. To me, people are just destroying natural beauty to capitalize off of the land. Plus, it is completely ugly.



The Stables

The Walden's Creek riding stables is my home away from home. It is a 500 acre horse ranch on which I am employed. The owners are more than just employers, they have become family and are a beautiful picture of a functional, loving, Appalachian family that I admire. I work as a wrangler and guide tourist on horseback trail rides through the mountains. It does not feel like work being there; it's more like hours of playtime. This photo was taken in July of 2013 as I was walking out to feed a horse in the back field. I felt so blessed when I looked up and saw the sun peaking through the trees shining on the barn that I was compelled to capture the moment. It is one of God's reminders of how precious is it to be alive.

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5) Country Music



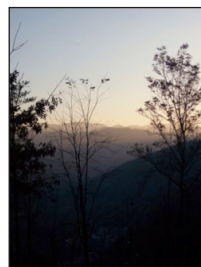
2) My Grandparents' Farm



3) The Stables



1) Home



4) Eyesores

