

TERC HIKING CLUB

JANUARY, 1985
NEWSLETTER



*****TRIP NOTICES*****

(M) HIKE NOTICE - Unthanks Cave Hike Leader: Greg Kramer
(Scheduled Sunday, January 13, 1985) Meet in the Bldg. 215 parking lot at 9:00 a.m.
All participants will need helmets and helmet mounted lights which the trip leader can provide if notified. Participants must bring lunch, spare light and water in a small pouch, plus a change of clothes. For helmets and lights or further information, call Greg Kramer, 239-7667.

*****SPECIAL NOTICE*****

Notice to Hiking Club members: In the November newsletter, Doug Lowman made a request for shift workers interested in a hiking schedule having events geared to their schedules to contact him. Only one member responded. Shift workers, if you are interested in Hiking Club activities being scheduled with your off-days in mind, send your name, address, phone number, and shift to Doug Lowman, B-150.

*****DINNER MEETING*****

The Hiking Club winter dinner meeting will be held on February 3, 1985. Mark your calendars and plan to come to hear about the club's 1984 Vermont hike and to meet your 1985 Steering Committee.

*****FUTURE ACTIVITIES*****

February 3 (Sunday) Winter Dinner Meeting (E) Leader: Paul Worsham
February 16 (Saturday) Blair Collins Cave Hike (M) Leader: Greg Kramer

*****FOR THE RECORD*****

AT - Carver's Gap to Highway 19E - October 6 and 7, 1984 Leader: John Thompson
Six hikers enjoyed this fine overnight backpack trip, highlighted by good views from Roan Mountain and a comfortable night in the U.S.F.S. - Still property barn loft. However, Sunday morning we struggled up Hump Mountain in thick fog and high winds. Those making the trip were Mary Ellen Ress, John Thompson, Shelton Thompson, Jack Young, Ginger Coley, and son Mike (Erwin guests of Shelton).

Roan Mtn. State Park Car Camp October 27 and 28, 1984 Reporting: Frank Williams
(with the Smoky Mtn. Hiking Club)
Five members of the TERC Hiking Club and about twenty from the Smoky Mtn. Club met at Roan Mtn. State Park for a week-end of hiking and companionship. Saturday was a beautiful day and a short hike around the gardens was enjoyed by all. Saturday night the Park Naturalist presented an interesting program about General Wilbur who built the Cloudland Hotel on Roan Mtn. Sunday was not a very nice day with wind and rain and fog, but all the hikers made it from Carver's Gap to 19E. Those attending from TERC Hiking Club were Herrick Brown, Linda Jewell, Stan Murray, Jack Young, and Frank Williams.

Unaka Mtn. to Iron Mountain Gap, November 1, 1984 Reporting: John Thompson
We planned to hike on the A. T. from the top of Unaka Mtn. down to Iron Mtn. Gap. but couldn't find the starting point due to the heavy fog and confusing roads. Consequently, we returned to Iron Mtn. Gap and walked south on the trail to near Cherry Gap Shelter, ate lunch, and returned. Hikers were: R. W. Miller, Tom and Betty Bammon, and John Thompson.

AT - Watauga Dam Rd. to US 321, November 8, 1984

Reporting: Dick Clark

This pleasant Thursday in November brought together five persons, 3 from Kingsport, and 1 each from Johnson City and Elizabethton, for a leisurely walk-thru of the 4 mile AT section, beginning at USFS Shook Branch Recreation Area on Watauga Lake and finishing at the high point of Watauga Dam Road. The short hike time was extended to a full day by considerable attention to trailside flora and to scenic views of Watauga Lake. We saw spring flowers blooming in November. Hikers were: Dick Clark, Nancy Clark, Carl Ray, and Ed Schell, and Jack Young.

Fall Dinner Meeting November 11, 1984

Reporting: Gordon Newland

Fifty-eight members and their guests gathered for this dinner meeting. Several enjoyed short hikes in the gathering darkness prior to the meeting. All enjoyed a fine dinner and an interesting slide program by Doug Lowman about the club's Montana Backpacking trio.

*****Trip Notices*****

TRIP NOTICE - Mount LeConte Creek Trip

(Scheduled July 13 & 14, 1985) We have reservations for 12 persons in the three-bedroom lodge for Saturday night, July 13, 1985. This is defined as a "creek trip"; so creekers will be given first choice on accommodations. The cost of accommodations at the lodge will be \$41. The first 12 reservations that are received with checks will be accepted. Make checks payable to Stan Murray and mail to Building 244. Please get your reservations to me by January 4, 1984. If you wish to be put on the lodge waiting list in case fewer than 12 persons sign up for the creek climb, call me, but do not send check until accepted. The trip is rated difficult, and those signing up should expect to spend an unusual amount of energy during the climb.

TERC HIKING CLUB**1985 Appalachian Trail Maintenance Trip Reports****Damascus to Abingdon Gap (Holston Mountain) - Doug Lowman reporting**

On Saturday June 1, 1985, Mary Fanslow, Richard Zimmerman, and Doug Lowman performed annual maintenance on Section 1 of the AT. We painted white blazes southbound, painted blue blazes to the spring, cleared numerous small blowdowns, and left about 25 large blowdowns. We met one through-hiker.

Abingdon Gap to US 421 (Low Gap) - Steve Banks reporting

In a series of five work trips, Steve, Steven, and Mary Banks and Darrol Nickels blazed, weeded, and removed blowdowns from Section 2 of the AT. Several additional blowdowns still remain. Parts of this section are prone to severe annual weed growth which require a second cutting later in the season.

US 421 (Low Gap) to TN 91 (Cross Mountain) - John Thompson reporting

On warm, sunny May 5th, six AT maintainers hiked the 6.9-mile section from US 421 to TN 91. We repainted white and blue blazes, cleared away limbs, nettles, and briars, picked up three bags of litter and four broken chairs at the shelter and checked the trail condition. During our walk south we met nine through-hikers who generally approved of our section's condition and the new relocation on Hump Mountain. The participants were Bruce and Mary Cunningham, Ben and Garnita Thompson, Bob Casper, and John Thompson.

TN 91 (Cross Mountain) to Turkey Pen Gap - Van Wilhelm reporting

This was the easiest maintenance trip ever. On June 10, Ed Oliver and Tommy Scalf blazed and weeded the section of trail from Turkey Pen Gap to the Grindstaff Monument. This left my group (Hugh Thompson, Terry Dougherty, Thresa Fee, Richard Jones, and Van Wilhelm) about a three-mile section from Grindstaff Monument to TN 91 to cover on June 15. The weather was ideal for maintenance and as we walked in from TN 91 to the Grindstaff Monument, Hugh Thompson provided a wealth of information on the flora, fauna, and history of the area. We arrived at the monument, ate lunch, then blazed and weeded our way out by 3:00. We then celebrated completing our arduous task by devouring ice-cold watermelon provided by Richard Jones. After spreading seeds liberally around the TN 91 inter-section, we decided to rename the area Watermelon Gap.

Watauga Dam Road to US 321 - Dick Clark reporting

Thirteen persons contributed to a successful work trip over this section on June 1, 1985. We did a specially thorough job of weeding, trimming, blazing, trash collecting, and blowdown removal. This was possible because of the large and good crew. Participants were Jim and Ruth Marie Rosser, Peret Morrison, Waylon Jenkins, Jerry Schlather, Doug Clark and daughters Libby and Milissa, and Dick and Margy Clark. Doug also had with him three scouts from BSA Troop 373: Adam Bolden, Kenny New, and Shannon Vaughn. The five young workers provided a lot of extra effort in trash pickup so that we left the section in unusually good condition.

US 321 to Laurel Fork (Pond Mountain) - Collins Chew reporting

The section was marked and cleared except for a few blowdowns in a very full day of work. One missing step was replaced, but many more are needed. Fine views of Roan, Unaka, and Iron Mountains, Laurel Fork Gorge, and particularly of Watauga Lake and Dam rewarded the group. Pink ladies slipper blooms adorned the trail from end to end. After several years searching in the 550 million years old quartzites of the Blue Ridge, I found abundant fossil worm burrows (tubes) in rock around the spring near the top of Pond Mountain. The blue access trail to Braemar was blazed. Supper at Wendy's delayed our return until dark. Workers included Ed Blakemore, Dave Green, Ben Pelot, and Collins Chew.

Laurel Fork Gorge to Dennis Cove - Bill Murdoch reporting

On May 11, Brad and Teresa Dayvolt and Bill Murdoch painted blazes, pruned limbs, and picked up two big bags of trash along this AT section. We also replaced a log and a few roof nails at the shelter. However, this roof will need permanent replacing soon. The new bridge built by the Forest Service is great!

Dennis Cove to Bitter End (Whiterocks Mtn) - Stan Murray reporting

On June 29, nine workers weeded, clipped removed blowdowns, painted, and picked up trash along this section. Vehicle access and use is evident at Moreland Gap Shelter and at Bitter End and some erosion near the two southernmost creek crossings will require approach improvement. Participating were Linda Jewell, Reuel Smith, Paul and David Arapakos, James Murray, Kathy Singleton, Bill Wortman, Dewey Fuller, and Stan Murray.

Bitter End to US 19E - Lester Church reporting

The maintaining group we participate in is fondly called the "A" Team, and as should be the case we try to make it as enjoyable as possible and still get the job done. A laid back easy scouting and painting excursion was held on April 14. From this trip we learned 9.3 miles would be hard to clear in one day even though we knew what tools were needed. Within the group are several capable leaders and the suggestion by them was why not split the clearing up into three teams of three miles apiece. It worked

and on the second work trip, after a hearty breakfast at Bob's Dairyland in Roan Mountain, we spent about three hours apiece on the trail and shortly after noon were on our way back to Kingsport. Participating in these trips were Randy Churchwell, Tom Flora, Garland Ruth, Thomas Smidman, Dan Sand, Candace Betson, Boyce Cross, and Lester Church.

US 19E to Bradley Gap (Hump Mountain) - Frank Williams reporting

Three workers, Ken Hyche, Jack Young, and Frank Williams gathered on May 18 for this maintenance trip between US 19E and Bradley Gap. Blazes were renewed, blowdowns removed, and weeds clipped. The relocation between Doll Flats and Hump Mountain was in very good condition and appears to have been well received by hikers. There was evidence of recent vehicular traffic on the Hump and a few bullet holes in the trail markers recently erected there.

Bradley Gap to Carvers Gap - Jeff Siirola reporting

On May 18, five workers weeded, clipped, blazed, removed blowdowns, and picked up trash from the mostly open areas over Round and Jane Balds, Grassy Ridge, and Yellow and Little Hump Mountains. The morning at Carvers Gap was typically windy, foggy, and cold but the weather improved throughout the day so that at least some views from these magnificent highlands were obtained. Participating on this trip were Lewis and Doris Carsom, Ted Germroth, Judy Kiefer, and Jeff Siirola.

Carvers Gap to Hughes Gap (Roan Mountain) - Kevin Edgar reporting

Typically our maintenance trip on May 11 to Roan Mountain began in bright sunshine in the lowlands, but by the time we reached Carvers Gap the weather was cool, cloudy, and foggy. It was actually pleasant hiking weather and we all enjoyed our work on this short section of trail. The condition of the trail was generally good, with the exception of many areas of heavy blackberry growth where the death of balsam firs and spruce trees has opened up the canopy. The trail on the south slope of Roan was almost surrounded by lush fine grass and a variety of wildflowers (including dozens of varieties of "little white stuff"). Sharing in a profitable and enjoyable trip were Darrell Wilder, Kathy McDavid, Russ Brogden, Judy McClanahan, and Kevin Edgar.

Hughes Gap to Iron Mountain Gap - Tom Pridgen reporting

Six hearty workers braved a hot humid Saturday on July 13 to maintain this section. The crew leader advertized the section as "relatively flat" but the crew demanded to know relative to what? Blazes were painted, a few blowdowns cleared, and some extensive weeding in spots was performed. A cloudburst caught us about a

mile south of Clyde Smith Shelter. About one-half mile north of the shelter we were able to clear a very fresh blowdown: lightning from the cloudburst had struck a tree (1.5 feet in diameter) and split it all the way to the ground. Fortunately, only part of the tree was on the trail. Also, fortunately it had struck the tree and not us. The skies were relatively clear as we climbed Little Rock Knob for some good views of Ripshin Ridge. We approached Hughes Gap to the sound of gunfire and encountered a mountain character "shooting buckeyes out of a tree" and drinking blue ribbon beer. He was, fortunately, quite friendly. Shortly after we arrived, the game warden drove up and the gun and beer disappeared as if by magic. Workers on this trip were Kay Newell, Allan and Tim Newland, John and Cathie Faust, and Tom Pridgen.

USFS 230 to Indian Grave Gap - Richard Hanks reporting

On November 9, Richard Jones and Richard Hanks enjoyed a beautiful work day blazing, clipping, and clearing blowdowns. The views from Beauty Spot were crystal clear, enhanced by snow on Beauty Spot and various other peaks.

Indian Grave Gap to Nolichucky River - Gordon Newland reporting

On May 11, Herrick and Jean Brown, Barbara Kiser, Olin Babb, Allen Lester, Bill and Whit Boy, and Gordon Newland maintained this section of the trail. In addition to the usual jobs, the roof of Curley Maple Gap Shelter was repaired. A 300-yard trail section along Jones Branch has washed out and needs to be repaired as a special project.

Nolichucky River to US 19W (Spivey Gap) - Steve Falling reporting

Our group of four tackled the Hiking Club's southernmost section on June 8. The 10.2 miles were in generally good condition except for numerous blowdowns which were later cleared in a series of three special project work trips. Workers on the regular maintenance trip were Bill, Cindy, and Debbie Tindall and Steve Falling. Helping out of the special clearing trips were Doug Lowman, Gordon Newland, Darrol Nickels, Ed Oliver, and Jeff Sirola.