

Hiking Club News

March, 1992

Hiking

NOLICHUCKY OVERLOOK (Scheduled for Saturday, March 14, 1992)

Leader: Hugh Thompson (Phone: 615-928-0472)

Note change in date. Here is a trip most missed last year due to a late hiking club notice. This is an easy walk of about 1 and 1/2 hours below Indian Grave Gap. We hike in through open woods along and across a small stream (low water). Last year some did have to do a shallow wade. Views from the overlook are of the Nolichucky River (800 feet below) and the Clinchfield Railroad. Hopefully we will see a train. Meet at B-215 at 9 am for a 9:15 departure. Again those wishing to do so can meet us at Burger King in south Johnson City at 9:30 am. Bring a light lunch, a drink and dress for the weather. Call Hugh Thompson 928-0472 for additional information or to make reservations.

JAMES RIVER FACE BACKPACK TRIP (Scheduled date - April 4-5, 1992)

Leader: G. S. Luttrell (Phone: 615-239-9854)

This trip was originally scheduled for March 21-22 on the Six Month Schedule, but has been rescheduled for Sat-Sun, April 4-5, 1992.

AT - HOT SPRINGS TO DAVENPORT GAP (Scheduled for Sat-Sun, March 28-29, 1992)

Leader: Kevin Edgar (Phone: 615-239-5742)

Contact Kevin Edgar for hike details.

LECONTE CREEK TRIP (Scheduled for July 11-12, 1992) Rating: Very Difficult

Leader: Dewey Fuller (Phone: 615-764-7340)

The LeConte Creek Trip has been an Eastman Hiking Club tradition for more than 15 years. Started by the late Stan Murray, the trip has a reputation for being a different kind of hike. In fact, the word "hike" is not accurate in describing a creek trip. Some refer to it as a climb, which again is not exact because this word implies a technical climb while the creek trip is more of a "scramble" to use the jargon of rock climbers and mountaineers. Whatever you prefer to call them, and believe me, some have used very graphic terms in reference to the Creek Trip, they are always exciting and memorable. This year we will rock-hop up Porter's Creek, take a right turn onto Boulevard Creek and make out ascent via this stream. After reaching the top, the lodge is still several miles away. Even with an early start we will be lucky to get to the lodge by 8:00 pm. This trip involves a long steep climb with very little time for

resting. If this is your idea of a good time, send your confirmation check (\$60.48) to Dewey Fuller, 608 Vance Drive, Bristol, TN 37620. This covers lodging Saturday night plus dinner and breakfast. In the event that not enough creek climbers sign up to fill all our reservation slots, the trip will be open to those who prefer to make the ascent via one of LeConte's trails. Let me know (764-7340), no check necessary, if you would like to be placed on the standby list to go up a trail.

HIKE AND CANOE TRIP LEADERS NEEDED - It's time once again to prepare the TEHC schedule of hikes and canoe trips for the second half of 1992. To continue our long tradition of offering a wide variety of outings, we need volunteer leaders. Send your list of hikes to Steve Banks, B-284, and your list of canoe trips to Dewey Fuller, B-150B. Include the name of the trip, date, rating (easy, moderate, or difficult), and your name and phone number. It's not difficult to lead an outing - contact Steve or any member of the Steering Committee if you have any questions.

Canoeing

BIG LAUREL CREEK (Scheduled for March 7, 1992)

Leader: Ben Becker (Phone: 615-288-5886)

This is a nice little steep creek (Class III-IV) that runs into the French Broad River near Hot Springs, NC. The gradient is a little over 50 ft/mile with some difficult rapids. An old railroad grade parallels the stream, so scouting is fairly easy. The last three miles of the trip are on the French Broad which also has several interesting rapids including Frank Bell's Rapid. When there is adequate water in Big Laurel, there is plentiful water in the French Broad. Helmets and throw ropes in addition to standard safety equipment are needed for this trip. In case of low water, an alternate trip of similar difficulty will be run. Call Ben Becker at 288-5886 to preregister. Meeting time and place will depend upon river conditions.

CANOE TRIP - LEADER'S CHOICE (Scheduled for Saturday, March 14, 1992)

Leader: Dave Ingram (Phone: 615-282-5856)

Contact Dave Ingram for more information about this trip.

CANOE TRIP - TELlico RIVER (Scheduled for Sat-Sun, March 28-29, 1992)

Leader: Dewey Fuller (Phone: 615-764-7340)

Contact Dewey Fuller for more information about this trip.

BLUESTONE RIVER - CHANGE OF DATE NOTICE

This trip has been rescheduled for May 9-10, 1992.

Other Activities

ATC SOUTHERN REGIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (April 3-5, 1992)

- The 1992 meeting of ATC Southern Regional Management Committee will be held at the Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, NC from Friday, April 3 through Sunday, April 5. It is an opportunity for the managers of the Appalachian Trail in the Southern Region to share information, debate issues of regional importance, and plan for the future of the AT. Members of the SRMC include representatives from the federal and state agencies, maintaining clubs, ATC staff, and volunteers. The program calls for informal discussions on Friday and Saturday evenings. The SRMC meeting itself will be all day Saturday and on Sunday morning. The Konnarock Steering Committee will convene to review Konnarock Crew requests and award weeks as appropriate. Several packages are available ranging from \$8 for Saturday only with lunch and a snack to \$107.75 for Friday night through Sunday breakfast with room and all meals included. Reservations must be made by March 18. For additional information, contact Dan Sand at 615-753-2162.

For the Record

WHISTLING ROCK - January 18, 1992 (*Hugh Thompson reporting*) - It was a cold, clear, calm day as 7 true hikers made their way to Spivey Gap and then up the mountain to Whistling Rock. As we arrived, a trace of clouds moved in and by the time we had finished lunch, the bright sun was slowly emerging. There was a trace of snow at the top and on the dark side of the hills. On the trip to the starting point, one car load of us took a brief side trip to Spivey Cascade and Spivey Falls which were clothed in ice. These were both very pretty. Hikers were Emmett and Renee Dougherty, Frank Williams, Gary Lutz, Andrea Wynegar, and Hugh and Lynn Thompson.

KINGSPORT'S GREENBELT TRAIL - January 19, 1992

(*Collings Chew reporting*) - Fifteen people enjoyed the beautiful, clear, cold day as they strolled along the trail that the City of Kingsport is developing. All did the new section upstream from the Kingsport Mall along Reedy Creek. Progressively smaller groups also hiked the sections behind Holston Valley Hospital, around Cloud Park, and in Riverfront Park with a side trip to the Indian land on Long Island. This trip covered all of the trail currently open. Hikers included Collins Chew, Mary and Bruce Cunningham, Emmett Dougherty, George Ford, Aldine and Ralph Giles, Charlotte Floyd, Sam Lloyd, Sylvia and Gary Morin, Rhonda and Jeff Smith, Frank Williams, and Jack Young.

WATAUGA GORGE (NOLICHUCKY DEFAULT)

REPORT - January 25, 1992 (*Dewey Fuller reporting*) - Jim McDarnit was the only brave soul to call about Saturday's Watauga Gorge trip. When I talked with him Thursday night,

the Watauga had been running a strong 390? CFS that morning, it had rained a good part of the day, temperatures were close to 50, and everything looked right for the run. Well, this is January and I keep on relearning how fast it can get cold again. Strong winds on Friday cleared away the nice cloud cover which had given us the 50 degree temperatures and all the rain. The weather report called for a very cold night and an almost as cold following day. These predictions were confirmed by our cats who were lurking close to the front door waiting for a chance to dash inside and head for deep cover to keep from being put outside again. Early Saturday morning, I called the TVA information line, punched in the code for stream flows, and slid back under the covers to listen to the list of early morning flow reports. The Watauga reading was still 230 CFS, the same as the 7 am and 5 pm Friday readings. This meant the gage was frozen, not that the flow had stabilized at this level. The Watauga drains out of the highlands of NC which are generally much colder than the Tri-Cities and most of the moisture which should be flowing into the river was now frozen and going nowhere until warmer temps arrive - the Watauga would be too low to run. When I called Jim, I was confident he would not be too hot on getting out this frosty January morning given an acceptable excuse for staying in. My words of feigned disappointment about the Watauga being too low were carefully calculated to elicit from Jim like words of mild dismay along with a tactfully reluctant agreement that if the Watauga was too low then it was just not worth running a lesser stream. All fond hopes of staying in that warm bed were dashed when I immediately detected in Jim's voice the unmistakable ring of grim determination which characterizes an advanced case of Whitewater Withdrawal Syndrome (WWS). He had not paddled for a full five weeks and was bound and determined to paddle today regardless of the frigid weather. Having duly volunteered to lead a trip on this date I felt bound to follow through. I could see headlines in the newsletter if I didn't: "DEWEY FULLER WEENIES OUT ON JANUARY PADDLING TRIP." Couldn't let that happen! In just a few short hours A. T. was shuttling us over the mountain to make a Nolichucky run. Although the Watauga was too low, the Noli was running a healthy 1800 CFS - a great level. There were plenty of waves to surf and eddies to catch... or attempt to catch. The day was cold, but with the sun out and very little wind, it turned out to be another fine day on the river. We saw Burchel and Cindy Pierce taking advantage of the sunny, although cold, weather to hike the tracks and take pictures of the river and gorge. Judging from the number of boat rack equipped cars at the takeout, a surprising number of others had braved the cold to get out on the river. The moral of this story is: "Always resist that urge to weenie out on those days that seem too cold to paddle." Jim and I had a great run and were glad we made the effort to get out.

1992 BLOWDOWN HUNT - February 1, 1992 (*Ray Hunt reporting*) - On February 1, Dick Burow and Ray Hunt went on

To contribute an article or hike notice to the TEHC News, contact the editor, Eric Middlemas, B-231, TED, Home Phone - (703) 479-3287. All contributions should be received by the 12th of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter.

their annual search for the biggest blowdowns on the Appalachian Trail. As in past years, we used Jeff Siirola's AT project list, which directed us to the 4.5 miles on Iron Mountain just south of Highway 91. This section was recorded as having 10 blowdowns. We are sure that we got all 10, because we cut 26. Although some of them were large, none seriously obstructed the trail. In other words, the trail was easily passable before we got there, and with no obstructions at all when we left. At the rate that trees blow down, that perfect condition should last a week or two. And it wasn't all that hard to do, mostly because we have learned how to do it without getting the saw stuck in the logs.

On the trip, we had our first look at the Iron Mountain Shelter after its recent renovation by Darrol Nickels and crew. With new roof timbers, new roofing, and a complete paint job, it looks like a new shelter. Very nice!

BUFFALO MOUNTAIN - February 8, 1992 (*Hugh Thompson reporting*) - Frank Williams, Judy and Eric Middlemas, and yours truly braved a snow squall, partly cloudy skies, and slightly chilly weather to explore the trail system on Johnson City's Buffalo Mountain Park. This was a first for the first three hikers and they were in agreement that a good job had been done on the trails. If there is interest in a hike in the Spring (while the Lady Slippers are blooming), in the fall, or at any time, a trip can be arranged.

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