

**1997 CELEBRATING TENNESSEE EASTMAN HIKING & CANOEING CLUB'S
50th ANNIVERSARY OF APPALACHIAN TRAIL MAINTENANCE
JANUARY, 1997
THE TENNESSEE EASTMAN**

HIKING & PADDLING NEWS

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<u>NEXT TWO MONTHS</u>			
<u>Jan 11</u>	Wilderness Wildlife Week (Pigeon Forge)	Fun	<u>G. Luttrell</u>
<u>Jan 18</u>	<u>Third Saturday Maintenance, Blow down Clearing</u>	Worthw hile	<u>E. Oliver</u>
<u>Jan 25</u>	Sand Cave Hike	Easy	<u>G. Luttrell</u>
<u>Feb 8</u>	A.T. Hike: Beyond 6000	Easy	<u>G. Luttrell</u>
<u>Feb 8</u>	A.T. Hike: South of Groseclose	Moderate	<u>C. Chew</u>
<u>Feb 15</u>	<u>Third Saturday Maintenance, Blow down Clearing</u>	Worthw hile	<u>E. Oliver</u>
<u>Feb 22</u>	<u>Maintainers Dinner Meeting</u>	Worthw hile	<u>T. Malone</u>
<u>Mar 1</u>	Laurel Falls Hike (Hampton, Tennessee)	Easy-Moderate	<u>E. Oliver</u>
<u>Mar 8</u>	<u>Winter Dinner Meeting</u>	Fun	<u>S. Wilson</u>
<u>Mar 8</u>	Smokies Hike: Beyond 6000	Difficult	<u>E. Dougherty</u>

REFLECTIONS ON 50 YEARS OF APPALACHIAN TRAIL MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

(Joe DeLoach reporting)

In 1996, we celebrated 50 years as a recreation club. 1997 brings another milestone- 50 years as one of the 32 Appalachian Trail maintaining clubs. This all started when Frank Oglesby agreed that we would take over what was then a 6.2 mile section from the Nolichucky River to Spivey Gap from the Carolina Mountain Club in 1947. From that point, we have grown to have responsibility for 125 miles of the Appalachian Trail, the longest section of any of the 13 Southern Trail clubs and the fourth longest along the entire A.T.. Through the years we have had many outstanding achievements, both by the Club and by

individual members. It is quite a responsibility, but one that we have been very successful in fulfilling.

Despite this record of success, there are some reasons to be concerned about our future in maintenance of the Appalachian Trail. In any volunteer organization, unfortunately much of the work is done by a few people. This is certainly the case with TEHCC, and there are indications that it is getting worse. Our number of hours spent on A.T. maintenance has slipped considerably, from 7400 hours in 1993 to 5500 hours in 1996. Of more concern is the number of participants. In 1995 we put in roughly the same number of hours on the A.T. as in 1996, but in 1995 181 people volunteered their time compared to only 118 in 1996. All of this comes about at a time when there are ever-increasing numbers of hikers on the A.T., as well as more complex management issues than we have faced before. And, our top maintainers aren't getting any younger. In 1995 eight people did 40% of all the Trail maintenance work; the average age of those eight people was 62! We have a relatively small group that works very hard, some people who make a couple of trips per year, but most of our 800+ members are not participating at all in Appalachian Trail maintenance. As we go into our fiftieth year of management of the Appalachian Trail, let's all renew our commitment as a Trail-maintaining club. If you haven't been participating in our maintenance activities, this will be a wonderful time to do so. You can do this by volunteering for our regular maintenance teams, special projects, or both. Our regular maintenance teams rotate among sections each year doing routine tasks like cutting blowdowns and weeds. Special projects include repairs to shelters, bridges, the treadway, and many other activities. These take place not only on weekends but also during the week when our retirees are very active, so those whose work schedules include time off during the week are particularly encouraged to sign up for the special project list. If you currently do some maintenance but would like to get more involved, then you're our kind of person; we'd like to hear from you as well.

Please fill out the form below and return it to Joe DeLoach, Building 150A; people off-site can return the form to 596 A A Deakins Road, Jonesborough, Tennessee 37659. Thanks, and hope to see you out on the Trail!!

I'm Interested in Appalachian Trail Maintenance!

Sign Me Up for:

Regular Maintenance Team _____

Special Projects List _____

Available Weekdays _____

Name _____

Telephone _____

PAST CHAIR REFLECTIONS:

G. S. Luttrell reporting

I hope you had as much fun as I had in 1996, the 50th Anniversary of TEHCC: Winter Dinner meeting with the theme "50 Years of Hiking, Stories, Experiences, A.T. Stewardship", the Anniversary Hikes, Special Events, Fall Dinner Meeting, and the great spirit of Volunteerism. I thoroughly enjoyed being the Chair last year, and thanks to all of you who helped me have such a good time!

CONGRATULATIONS:

THE FOLLOWING HIKERS HAVE COMPLETED THE 1996 ANNIVERSARY HIKES: Bob Miller, Emmett Dougherty, Garry Luttrell, Theona Moorehouse, Cris Moorehouse, Nancy Wilson, Kent Wilson, Bill and Derrick Stowell, Jill and Steve Wilson, Phyllis Cairnes, Mary Ellen Ress, Richard Colberg, Steve Perri.

1996 ANNIVERSARY HIKE REPORTS

A.T. HIKE #5: WATAUGA DAM ROAD TO US 321

: Nov. 16, 1996: Phyllis Cairnes reporting. Since this was a very short section, we decided to double the distance by making it an "out and back." The moderate mileage and forecast for a beautiful day led us to invite a group of friends. Joining Mary Ellen, Rolla, Phyllis, and Biscuit were Jim Miller, Earl Farrar, John & Maria Evans, Bill and Carol Griffin, and Rick and Doreen Heppert. Along the trail, we met six bearded thru-hikers who began last June, headed north to south. They said they knew of 20 or so other thru-hikers currently headed to Springer Mountain. Our group had a delightful hike, stopping for lunch on the way back at Watauga Lake Shelter. (After the hike, it took several of us to gingerly remove about a hundred cockleburs from Biscuit's fur.)

A.T. HIKE #13: WATAUGA IRON MT. GAP TO INDIAN GRAVE GAP: Nov. 18, 1996: Phyllis Cairnes reporting. Mary Ellen had taken another Monday off, so we weren't going to let a little rain deter us. The car shuttle was a long one, but we got an early start and were on the trail by 9AM. For several miles there was just mist and light drizzle. We were fine as long as we kept moving. The ascent to the summit of Unaka Mt. was particularly memorable, with large rocks placed strategically in the streambed surrounded by rhododendrons. Before we reached Beauty Spot, the rain was pelting down and we were thoroughly soaked. We laughed about how we will fondly remember this very wet walk as the culmination of our anniversary hikes. Mission accomplished for Mary Ellen Ress, Phyllis Cairnes, and Biscuit, the hiking Sheltie!

A.T. HIKE #5: WATAUGA DAM ROAD TO US 321: Nov. 24, 1996, Steve Perri reporting. Tish and I hiked from Watauga Dam Road to Watauga Dam to complete this section of the Anniversary Hikes for me. We had completed from US 321 to Watauga Dam on Sep. 2, but decided to hike back out and complete this section later. The relocations on this section have really improved the steep parts of this trail and make this a lot safer. The weather was beautiful Saturday with temperatures in the low 50's. This last section completes the Anniversary Hikes for Steve. Those present for this hike were Steve and Tisha Perri.

WORKING ON THE A.T., MAINTENANCE UPDATE:

A.T. MAINTENANCE: BLOWDOWN REMOVAL BETWEEN LITTLE BALD AND CHERRY GAP: Wednesday, Oct

30, 1996, C.B. Willis reporting. Participants were: Tom Buckner, Charlie Hendrix, Nancy Kinkead, Sam Lloyd, Wayman Mumpower, Neil Ottenfeld, Sandra Perry, Ed Schell, Bob Spencer, Clyde Taylor, Malcolm Wolf, C.B. Willis (all Trail Adopters). Total people hours: $12 \times 8 = 96$. Cleared the blowdown on Little Bald. There are two more according to the TEHC notice. These we will clear ASAP. The Cherry Gap Privy is history. Siding is stored behind the shelter, framing is sawed into firewood & metal, etc. is buried. I just hope we covered the old pit with enough dirt.

A.T. MAINTENANCE: BLOWDOWN REMOVAL TRAIL NORTH OF McQUEEN'S GAP: November. 6, 1996, Ray Hunt reporting. Participants: Ray Hunt and Dick Burow. Total people hours: $2 \times 6 = 12$. Ray and Dick removed three large blowdowns trail north of McQueen's Gap, along with about eight smaller obstructions. We used a GPS to denote the locations of the three large blowdowns, the positions are of no value now that the trees are gone! The GPS could be used to locate blowdowns in the future so that the people cutting them out could easily locate them. We saw about 10 overnight hikers, most of them thru hikers heading South. All expressed appreciation for our efforts and not one complained about the use of chain saws.

APPALACHIAN TRAIL WORK TRIP: INSPECT BRIDGE ACROSS LAUREL CREEK NEAR BITTER END AND CUT BLOWDOWNS: Tuesday, December 3, 1996, Darrol Nickels reporting. Participants: Frank Williams and Darrol Nickels. Total people hours: $2 \times 8 = 16$. Darrol Nickels and Frank Williams walked to the bridge across Laurel Creek in the Bitter End section of the trail. It had been reported that this bridge might need some repair work. Darrol and Frank determined that the stringers for the bridge have begun to weaken and that the bridge needs to be replaced. We measured the bridge and determined what needs to be done to replace it. The need for the replacement of the bridge is not such that it needs to be done right away but should be done during the first half of 1997. The best way to replace the bridge is probably to use salt treated pine material. Darrol will prepare a list of materials and get estimates of the cost of the materials. The bridge is within a half mile or so of a road access point. After inspecting the bridge, they walked trail north from Bitter End. They removed two blowdowns. One large oak tree was within 15 minutes of Bitter End. The other blowdown (a tangle of several trees) was within an hour's walk of Bitter End.

A.T. MAINTENANCE: CUT BLOWDOWNS BETWEEN DOLL FLATS AND 19E: December, 7, 1996, Bill Stowell reporting. Participants: Derrick and Bill Stowell. People hours: $2 \times 7 = 14$. Derrick and I hiked from 19E to Doll Flats and back. We left Kinsport at 9:00AM and returned back at 4:00PM. There were a fair amount of blow downs starting just south of the shelter. We cut out 5 that were blocking the trail. The rest of the blow downs are not severe but some will need a chain saw to cut. Total distance hiked: 6 miles.

A.T. MAINTENANCE: CUT BLOWDOWNS BETWEEN SHOOK BRANCH AND WATAUGA DAM ROAD: Saturday, December 14, 1996. Ed Oliver reporting. Participants were: Mary and Bruce Cunningham, Frank Williams, and Darrol Nickels. Total people hours: $4 \times 9 = 36$. Bruce let Mary, Frank, and Darrol out at Watauga Dam Road. They walked to Shook Branch and cut all blowdowns. There were no serious blowdowns on this section of trail. They cut back the rhododendrons on the relocations trail south of Watauga Dam Road. They also inspected the roof of the Watauga Lake Shelter to see if it needed repair. Darrol reported that the roof needs replacement in 1997. He measured the size of the roof so that he will know how much roofing to purchase. Bruce drove to the Yellow Mountain Barn to see if the road was clear and if the barn roof was free of snow and ice. He found the road and roof clear. He

met up with the other three at the culvert where the December third Saturday work trip is scheduled to occur. They cleared the brush from the culvert. Bruce reported that the work site is now ready for the rock movers. They also inspected the bridges near the old Butler Road and near Shook Branch to see if there is a way to raise them so that they will not be under water when the lake is full in the spring. They have some recommendations. They also determined that we need to work on a wet spot trail south of the old Butler Road.

A.T. MAINTENANCE: REPAIR ROOF ON YELLOW MOUNTAIN BARN: Sunday, December 15, 1996. Ed Oliver reporting. Participants were: Bruce Cunningham and Nickels from TEHCC and Fred Lashley. People hours: $2 \times 9 = 18$. Bruce had arranged with Fred Lashley to replace the two torn sections of metal roofing on the Yellow Mountain Barn on Sunday if the roof was clear of snow and ice. On Saturday, Bruce determined that the roof was clear. Fred removed the two damaged sections of roofing and replaced them with new sections of roofing. She also added additional nails and screws to insure that the wind does not damage these new sections. The roof on this shelter should be in good condition now and with any luck should remain in good condition for years to come.

A.T. MAINTENANCE: REPAIR HOLE IN FLOOR OF ROAN HIGH KNOB SHELTER: Monday, December 16, 1996. Ed Oliver reporting. Participants were: Ed Oliver and Frank Williams. People hours: $2 \times 9 = 18$. Frank and I drove to within about 1/3 mile of the Roan High Knob Shelter, carried in the materials (5 2x4's, a sheet of plywood, two shutters, and numerous tools), and repaired the holes in the floor of the Roan High Knob Shelter. We also installed "shutters" or windows on the two outside openings at each end of the sleeping loft. Someone had built a fire on the rocks that had been put in the holes to keep anyone from falling into them. We were fortunate in that they had built only a small fire and no damage was done to the shelter. We removed the remains of the camp fire and the rocks, sawed and chiseled out the old plywood, installed 2X4's on 16 inch centers between the 2X6 floor joists, and nailed new plywood on top of this structure. We left Kingsport at 11:00 a.m. We were still working on this project when it started getting dark. We were happy when two hikers with flashlights arrived at the shelter a little after 5 p.m. With their help and the light from their flashlights, we were able to complete the project by a little after 6 p.m. That left us a 1/3 mile walk on a trail covered with numerous ice patches. Frank's small flashlight was about to run out of power but lasted long enough for us to find the car.

TEHCC NOW SUBSCRIBES TO AWA

The TEHCC Steering Committee recently approved a subscription to the American Whitewater Association (AWA) and has discontinued our membership in ACA. There are numerous benefits available now as an organizational subscriber to AWA, which include the following: subscription to AMERICAN WHITEWATER, 5 decals, 5 safety codes, inclusion in AWA Affiliate Club List published in the magazine several times per year (putting people in our area in touch with us), free club home page connected to their Website, and discounts on purchases of safety codes. TEHCC will establish a circulation list for interested members who would like to receive a copy as part of a distribution list. To have your name included on the new distribution list for circulation at Eastman, contact Mary Mathis, B-231.

FOR THE RECORD

A.T. SOUTH BEYOND 6000 HIKE: Tricorner Knob Shelter, G. S. Luttrell reporting. It was raining when we left Kingsport at 6 am, and it was raining when we finished breakfast at Cracker

Barrel in Newport where we called the Park Service to ask about conditions in the Smokies. Although the weather was suppose to change for the better, but still cold and windy, by noon Sat., the ranger advised staying in the warmth and comfort of Cracker Barrel since they had 3 - 4 in. of snow above 4000 ft. and HW 441 was closed. But, we rationalized proceeding with the permit, hiking up Maddron Bald Trail; and if conditions continued to be very bad, we could make a dayhike out of it, by looping back down the Snake Den Trail to the Bronco we spotted in Cosby. It was still raining when we put on our Gortex rainwear at Maddron Bald trail, and as we were making final adjustments to our gear, a ranger drove up to greet us, and we asked him what his thoughts on the weather situation were. He said his experience is that rain such as what we were in normally hangs around in the mountains much longer than forecasted. At one point when we stopped to catch our breath, I commented that the ranger we talked with at the bottom was quite young to have developed the kind of mountain wisdom he relayed on to us. I had remembered what my 5th grade teacher, Mrs. Barber, once said, "if it rains before seven, it will quit before eleven." Although each swollen stream crossing was a challenge, when we got onto the bald, as if by magic, the clouds blew away, the sun popped out, and there was no question about continuing on to Tricorner Knob Shelter. Sure enough, there was snow above 5000 ft. elevation, and the temperature began to fall. The rain and stream crossings slowed us down, and we arrived after dark, exhausted, at the shelter after 12 miles and 4500 ft. of climbing. Two thru-hikers, who said they started from Maine in May, shared the shelter with us. Emmett brought along a small TV, and we were able to keep up with the SEC championship game. We gave the two thru hikers all the extra food we had (they needed it), then we walked South on the A.T. to bag Mt. Chapman, as one of the South Beyond 6000 peaks. By the time we got back to the shelter, we had to move out in order to return by nightfall. The temperature was bitter cold, the wind was ferocious, but the ice, snow, and blue sky provided some absolutely gorgeous views. I took two rolls of pictures, but had to keep the camera warm, under my jacket, to keep the mirror from freezing up. Emmett Dougherty, Dr. Arvell Luttrell, and Garry Luttrell, suffered much, but all agreed the trip was worth the effort, and one that we will never forget.

NEW A.T. FINISHERS PRESENTED WITH TEHCC PLAQUES:

Garry Luttrell presented Dixie and Fred Hoilman the TEHCC club plaques for finishing the A.T. on August 30, 1995. The plaques were presented in Mahoney's Store, Peerless Shopping Center, in Johnson City. Dixie and Fred do an excellent job as Trail Adopters on our section of the A.T. and have now wrapped up hiking the entire A.T.. Congratulations!

A.T. COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT:

Appalachian Trail Management Activity: A.T. Committee Meeting, November 26, 1996. Participants were: Collins Chew, Joe DeLoach, Ray Hunt, Garry Luttrell, Ted Malone, Cris Moorehouse, Frank Oglesby, Bill Stowell, Derrick Stowell, John Thompson, Frank Williams, and Steve Wilson. Total people hours: 12 x 3 = 36. A draft letter expressing the Club's comments on the Cherokee Forest Plan Revision was reviewed. Key points were questions about ecosystem management as opposed to a special classification for the A.T. as currently exists, concerns about increased interpretation along the A.T. corridor as a desired future condition, and the fate of roadless areas. On the latter subject, the A.T. Committee reiterated its opposition to designating new Wilderness areas along our stretch of the A.T.. This view was expressed in the letter, as were some proposals to redraw the roadless area boundaries to exclude the A.T.. This was particularly pointed out for the Big

Laurel Branch Extension and Flint Mill Gap roadless areas, where an area could be excluded without too much reduction in the size of the roadless area. Minor modifications to the draft were made and the letter was mailed on November 27. It will be circulated to members of the A.T. Committee.

The other major issue was power tools. Ted Malone will maintain a list of where the tools are stored. Ted and Frank Williams will keep the chainsaws, and Joe will ask Bruce Cunningham if he will keep one as well. The need for people using the saws on maintenance trips to take better care of them was discussed and will be emphasized at the Maintenance Dinner.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WILDERNESS WILDLIFE WEEK: JANUARY 11-19, 1997:

Leader: G. S. Luttrell

Wilderness Wildlife Week will be headquartered at the Heartlander in Pigeon Forge from 1/11/97 to 1/19/97. In the brochure it is described as "over 88 nationally recognized experts from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Tennessee State Parks, and Great Smoky Mountains National Park will lead you through the Wilderness Wildlife Week series of hikes, field trips, lectures, and photography workshops. Learn about nature and come to understand the fragile environment that makes up the nation's most visited national park." I attended many of the sessions last year and found them to be excellent. If you need further information, list of sessions, etc. contact me.

JANUARY 3RD SATURDAY MAINTENANCE:

Leader: Ed Oliver

Scheduled: Saturday, January 18, 1997. The third Saturday Special Project Maintenance Project for January will be blowdown removal on the Appalachian Trail. We will divide into groups of two to three people and cover as many sections of the trail in our area as possible. You don't have to use chain saws to help with this work. People are needed to cut the blowdowns using chain saws and/or bow saws. People are also needed to pull or roll the cut pieces off the trail. This trip is very dependent on weather conditions. Please contact Ed Oliver if you plan to help. Meet at the parking area between McDonalds and Burger King in Colonial Heights at 8:00 a.m. If the number of blowdowns on a section is small, the trip will turn out to be a winter hike.

SAND CAVE HIKE NOTICE: JANUARY 25, 1997

Leader: G. S. Luttrell, Easy.

Let's hope for clear, cold weather so we can check out some nice ice formations at Sand Cave; but, no ice and snow on U.S. 58 to Ewing, Virginia. This will be a casual hike, with a target departure at 9 am from Kingsport. You will need to bring lunch, water, warm clothes, raingear (depending on forecast), and don't forget your camera. Since weather could cause a quick change of plans in January, contact me for details. If you get my recorder, leave your name, phone number, number of people in your party, and whether or not you could drive, if needed, for carpooling.

TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE FOR PUBLICATION IN THE NEWSLETTER:

Contact:

Steve Perri

	TERC HIKING AND CANOEING CLUB EASTMAN ROAD B-89 KINGSPORT, TENNESSEE 37662	
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