

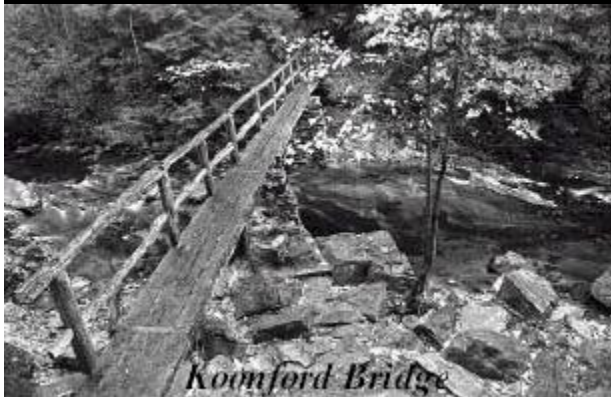
# THE TENNESSEE EASTMAN HIKING & PADDLING NEWS

February, 1998

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<u>NEXT TWO MONTHS</u>			
Feb. 7	Day Hike: Coon Den Falls	E-M	N. Dotson
<b>Feb. 12</b>	<b>TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, B-310, Rm 114</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>J. Mayo</b>
Feb. 14	Day Hike: Doe River Gorge	E-M	S. Perri
Feb. 15	Paddle Trip: Doe or Watauga Gorge	IV-V	M. Morrow
Feb. 28	A.T. Hike: Poor Valley (VA 625) - Burkes Garden	M	V. C. Chew
Mar. 7	A.T. Hike: Hurricane Campground - S. Fk. Holston (VA)	M	B. Stow ell
<b>Feb. 13</b>	<b>Maintainers Dinner Meeting</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>T. Malone</b>
<b>Feb. 21</b>	<b>Third Saturday Maintenance Trip</b>	<b>E-M</b>	<b>E. Oliver</b>
<b>Mar. 12</b>	<b>TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, B-310, Rm 114</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>J. Mayo</b>
Mar. 14	Paddle Trip: Whitetop Laurel	III+	D. Fuller
Mar. 14	S. Fk. Holston (VA) - Mt. Rogers HQ	M	B. Stow ell
<b>Mar. 21</b>	<b>Third Saturday Maintenance Trip</b>	<b>E-M</b>	<b>E. Oliver</b>
Mar. 22	Paddle Trip: Spring Creek	III-IV	M. Morrow
Mar. 28	Hike: South Beyond 6000	D	G. Luttrell
Mar. 28	Winter Dinner Meeting	F	Jan Mayo



## Flood Damage on the Appalachian Trail

*Joe DeLoach Reporting*

The extensive flooding in Carter County in early January took its toll on the Appalachian Trail. The worst damage was in Laurel Fork Gorge, where the two bridges below Laurel Falls were demolished. These were built with steel trusses on concrete supports! Also, the Koonford Bridge which won the Primitive Skills award lost its middle span, but has been repaired. Fortunately all of our other bridges, even those in the hardest-hit areas, made it through the flood unscathed.

We have a major repair job looming below Laurel Falls. A.T. through-hikers will begin showing up in our area around the end of February, peaking in early May. The two bridges were only about 1/4 mile apart. However, it does not look like there is a good route to relocate the Trail and eliminate the bridges. We are pursuing a short-term solution in time for the through-hikers to get through, and longer term rebuilding the bridges appears to be the best option. We are working with our agency partners, the Forest Service and ATC, to reach consensus as soon as possible on what to do. We are going to need lots of help!! Stay tuned for further notice.

## **Third Saturday Maintenance Project: Koonford Bridge Repair, Jan 17, 1998**

### *Ed Oliver Reporting*

Jim Mann, Neil Dotson, David and Dawn Allen, Gary Hale, Shelton Stubbs, Garry Luttrell, Nancy and Kent Wilson, Waylon Jenkins, Collins Chew, Doyle Johnson, Dexter Greer, and Emmett Dougherty, Bruce and Mary Cunningham, Bill and Derrick Stowell, Joe Deloach, John Kiefer, Frank Oglesby, Darrol Nickels, Frank Williams, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, and Bill Murdock worked to repair the center span of the Koonford Bridge. A record number of people (26) showed up to carry in materials and replace the bridge. It was great to have such a large turn-out. We had to carry 6 2X12's 24 feet long a distance of about 3/4 mile. Some people estimated that each 2X12 must have weighed upwards of 200 to 300 pounds. (THEY SURE SEEMED THIS HEAVY). Thanks to the large turn-out we were able to get everything carried in by about noon and were able to complete the project in time to get home just before dark. After the materials were all carried in for the bridge, some of the people drove to Bitter End and repaired the approaches to the bridge located about 0.7 miles trail south of Bitter End. We owe a special thanks to all the people who helped on this project. Without the excellent turn out we would not have been able to complete the work on Saturday.

<b>TEHCC List of Officers and Contacts</b>	
<b>1998 Steering Committee</b>	
Chair	Jan Mayo
Past-Chair	Steve Wilson
<b>1997-1998 Members</b>	
	Steve Banks
	Kevin Edgar
<b>1998-1999 Members</b>	
	Mary Fanslow

	Carl Fritz
	Frank Williams
<b>Appointed Officers</b>	
Historian	Frank Williams
Librarian	Steve Wilson
New sletter Editor	Steve Perri
Publicity Chair	Rick Lott
Paddling Coord.	Mary Mathis
Paddling Sched.	Dew ey Fuller
Records	Jeff Sirola
Rental Equipment	Garry Luttrell
South Beyond 6K	Garry Luttrell
Treasurer	Steve Falling
Web Page Ed.	Steve Banks
<b>A.T. Committee Officers</b>	
A.T. Comm. Chair	Joe Deloach
A.T. Maintenance	Ted Malone
A.T. Shelter Coord.	Darrol Nickels
A.T. Signs	Steve Perri
A.T. Guide Bk Ed.	Kevin Edgar
Land Aq. Man.	Ray Hunt
Konnarock Liason	Joe Deloach
Spec. Proj/Relos	Ed Oliver
TEHCC Guide Bk	Steve Banks
Radford 99 Chair	Collins Chew

<b>ATC Field Representatives</b>	
Tennessee-North Carolina	Morgan Sommerville
VA	Mike Dawson
<b>USFS Contacts</b>	
Appalachian Dist.	Paul Bradley
Unaka Dist.	Vern Maddux
Watauga Dist.	Pete Irvine
<b>SCHEDULED HIKES / ACTIVITIES</b>	

### **Hiking Club Rental Equipment Work Session, Feb. 5**

*Leader: G.S. Luttrell, Rating: Easy*

We'll have the equipment in the lobby or one of the unused meeting rooms in B-310, and will be inspecting and making some limited repairs on damaged items. We'll start at 5:30 pm, but come anytime between then and closing.

### **Hike: Coon Den Falls, Feb. 7**

*Leader: Neil Dotson, Rating: Moderate*

Given the severity of the stream crossings up to Rock Creek Falls (the previous venue for this hike), let's try a hike to Coon Den Falls instead. This hike is out of Dennis Cove and will be in the 5- to 6-mile range: a partial loop on the A.T., new and old. For some midwinter vistas, we may hike past the trail junction south on the A.T., but no further than the fire tower site. Be warmly dressed and bring food and water. Current plans are to meet in Colonial Heights between Burger King and McDonalds at 8:00 am, the standard departure time and place. Keep an eye on the weather; inclement weather or hazardous roads may be cause for postponement or cancellation. For more information, call your cheerful hike leader.

### **Hike: Doe River Gorge, Feb. 14**

*Leader: Steve Perri, Rating: Easy*

This is a relatively easy hike since it fairly flat. Total distance is about 5.5 miles round trip. The gorge is usually lined with icicles dangling along the rock walls for some beautiful scenery. There are two railroad tunnels we pass through and several overlooks with views of the river. Dress appropriately and bring food and water. Current plans are to meet in Colonial Heights between Burger King and McDonalds at 8:00 am, the standard departure time and place. Keep an eye on the weather; inclement weather or hazardous roads may be cause for postponement or cancellation. We'll most likely be back early in the afternoon. Call for more information.

### **Third Saturday Maintenance**

**(Scheduled for February 21, 1998)**

*Leader: Ed Oliver*

We will continue our Third Saturday Appalachian Trail maintenance trips in 1998. We get together at 8:00 am in the parking lot between Burger King and McDonald's in Colonial Heights. Contact Ed as the time draws near for details on the project. In February we will target blowdown removal, probably on our lower elevation sections.

### **Paddle Trip, Doe or Watauga Gorge, Feb. 15**

*Leader: Mike Morrow, Rating: IV-V*

Contact trip leader for details and meeting time.

### **TEHCC Steering Committee Meetings Open to All Club Members, Second Thursday of Each Month**

#### *Jan Mayo Reporting*

The Steering Committee meetings of TEHCC are open to all Club members to attend. Meetings are held once a month to plan and discuss numerous club activities including annual dinners, meetings, and other activities. We open the floor for informal discussions and welcome anyone who would like to bring issues or ideas before the committee. The meetings are held the second Thursday of each month and are located in the Eastman Employee Center, Room 114. Meetings begin at 5:00 pm and usually run about 1 h. For more information contact me or any of the Steering Committee members if you have a topic of interest you would like to discuss.

### **Winter Dinner Meeting, Saturday, March 28**

#### *Jan Mayo Reporting*

The Winter Dinner meeting will be held March 28 at the Eastman Lodge. The meal will be catered by Wright's Cafeteria and the local outfitter will be Rocky Top Trail Shop. More details regarding the dinner, program, meeting time, and reservations will be included in the March issue of the newsletter. So mark your calendars!

### **Maintainers Dinner Meeting, Friday, Feb. 13**

#### *Leader: Ted Malone*

The Maintainers Dinner Meeting will be held Friday Feb. 13 at B-310 (Employee Center) in Room 219. The dinner will be soup and sandwiches provided by our favorite cook Ed Oliver, at a discount price. Dinner will begin at 5:30 pm and the meeting will begin at 6:30 pm. The meeting should last about 2 hours. The meeting is open to anyone interested in learning about maintenance and will specifically cover techniques, safety, and annual club goals and priorities. Contact Ted if you plan to attend so we can provide an estimate of the amount of food to prepare or if you would like more information.

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*Photo courtesy of Steve Perri*

## **Third Saturday Special Project Trip: Bridge Installation at Watauga Lake, Dec. 20, 1997**

*Ed Oliver Reporting*

Bruce & Mary Cunningham, Carl Fritz, John Kiefer, Darrol Nickels, Ed Oliver, Steve Perri, Bill & Derrick Stowell, and Frank Williams participated in the December 3rd Saturday Maintenance outing to install this footbridge at the west end of Watauga Lake. We installed the 28 foot bridge trail north of the old Butler Road which is now occupied by a portion of Watauga Lake. The bridge was originally assembled off-site at Darrol Nickels' house to fit all the pieces and drill and bolt together the bridge with all the hardware in place. The crew dismantled the old bridge, carried in the new bridge in pieces, and then put the new bridge back together at the site. This is the fourth bridge installed during 1997 and will allow hikers to cross this section when the lake is full. This bridge eliminates the need of a high

water route at this location now, so we removed the high water signs. We also rehabed the trail between the old Butler Road and Shook Branch and removed about seven bags of garbage plus some tires. We also cut two blowdowns between the blue blaze trail from Hampton and Laurel Falls. A couple of trees including one of the blowdowns had been cut down by beaver. Thanks to all the people who completed these projects so rapidly. We were finished shortly after lunch. The bridge is still in place even after the January flood that occurred throughout Carter County.

### **A.T. Section Maintenance and Special Projects**

- **Dec. 21: A.T. Maintenance (Garry Luttrell Reporting)**  
I hiked from HW 421 to Double Springs Shelter and back. No blowdowns and the trail is in good shape, except within a 1/4 mi. of the shelter the trail needs some sidehill work for maybe 40 yds. or so. I blocked a 10 yd. "slid down" section by dragging some blowdown and directing traffic to the original upper trail. There's lots of trash at the shelter & at the campsites along the trail. I toted some out, but several garbage bags could be filled. No log in the shelter.
- **Dec. 23: A.T. Maintenance (Bill Stowell Reporting)**  
Ed Oliver, Bruce Cunningham, Frank Williams, and John Kiefer worked on Sect 20 (Spivey Gap to No Business Shelter area). Ed installed an A.T./Appalachian Trail sign, that he had made, at Spivey Gap near the rock steps. Our mileage sign is in the woods and not visible from the road. Ed said coming off the CMC section, heading north, it was difficult to see where the Trail continued without a sign. Speculation was that the hwy mowers had chopped up the old sign. Ed and Frank then went to Oglesby Branch and rehabed 200 feet of trail in that area. That project is 80% finished after this trip. Bruce and John went to Temple Hill Gap, walked toward the shelter and finished clipping the last half mile of rhodo to the shelter clipping the last half mile of rhodo to the shelter.
- **Jan. 2: A.T. Maintenance (Bill Stowell Reporting)**  
Ed Oliver, Bruce Cunningham, Frank Williams, Derrick Stowell, and Bill Stowell began trail

relocation on Killer Hill trail south of Watauga Dam Road. We had to walk in as the gate was closed due to snow. We completed 208.5 feet of trail.

- **Jan. 3: A.T. Maintenance (Bill Stowell Reporting)**  
Ed Oliver, Bruce Cunningham, Mary Cunningham, Derrick Stowell, and Bill Stowell continued work on Killer Hill. We completed an additional 280 feet of trail.
- **Jan. 9: A.T. Maintenance (Bill Stowell Reporting)**  
Derrick Stowell, Bruce Cunningham, John Keifer, Ed Oliver, and Frank Williams worked on the trail relo at Killer Hill. An additional 175 feet of trail was completed. Also 10 steps were installed near the dam road. The bridge at Wataga lake was inspected (it's OK).
- **Jan. 10: A.T. Maintenance (Bill Stowell Reporting)**  
Bill Stowell, Derrick Stowell, Ed Oliver, Frank Williams, Mary Cunningham, and Bruce Cunningham worked on the trail relo at Killer Hill. We completed the relocation at Killer Hill and added some additional steps. The section was opened for use. We then inspected bridges. We drove to Dennis Cove and hiked to the Koonford Bridge. The 20 ft center section was gone but the support piers and two ends were still there. We then drove up Dennis Cove road and over Walnut Mt. Road to inspect the bridges at Bear Branch and 19E. Those were OK. We split up at this point. Bruce, Mary, and Frank went to Bitter End to Check that bridge. It was OK water had been up to the bridge but it held up. Some foundation work needs to be done to shore up the bridge. Bill, Derrick, and Ed drove back across Walnut Mt. to 321 and hiked up the blue blaze from Hampton. We could only go to the first bridge location. We found pieces of the bridge everywhere. We found a dead deer that got caught in the flood. There was a rail from the Koonford bridge found below the first bridge coming in from Hampton. The destruction of the bridge here was complete. We found nothing but snapped 4x4's 2x6's and mangled steel. There are several places in the trail where holes will need to be filled in. We even found someones fire wood from Dennis Cove that had washed down to below the first bridge.
- **Jan. 13: A.T. Maintenance (Bill Stowell Reporting)**  
Ed Oliver, Derrick Stowell, Bruce Cunningham, John Keifer, and Jamey Donaldson worked to locate a route for a relo below Laurel Falls. A route was flagged, but here are no good routes without crossing the stream as in the past. Also the falls-side of the Koonford Bridge support was checked and is OK. The proposed relo looks like it would be much more work than rebuilding the two bridges. Work is under way to locate bridge designs that we could use to span 40 feet.

## Trip Reports

### **Backpack Trip, Thomas Knob Shelter, Mt. Rogers, Jan. 10-11**

#### *Garry Luttrell Reporting*

We spotted a car at Elk Garden then drove to Massie Gap, in Grayson Highlands State Park to begin. We hiked on the A.T. and Horse Trails to Thomas Knob Shelter on a beautiful day that allowed clear views of distant mountains such as the Black Mountains from Wilburn Ridge. During lunch we talked with some hunters whose dogs chased a Bobcat, but this time the Bobcat won the chase, losing the dogs and hunters on Pine Mtn. We shared the shelter with four young Canadians, and survived the mid-twenties and wind during the night. We had a gorgeous sunset

and sunrise, but the wind continued and we had some snow flurries on the Virginia Highlands Trail back to Elk Garden. Owen Holbrook and Garry Luttrell enjoyed stretching their legs and burning off some winter fat.

**To Submit an article for  
the newsletter, contact:**

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