

# THE TENNESSEE EASTMAN HIKING & PADDLING NEWS

December, 1998

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NEXT TWO MONTHS				
Dec 19	Paddling Trip: Leader's Choice	IV-V	M. Morrow	423-245-1201
Dec 19	Third Saturday Maintenance Project	M	E. Oliver	423-349-6668
Jan 16	Third Saturday Maintenance Project	M	E. Oliver	423-349-6668
Jan 23	Day Hike: Doe River Gorge	E	S. Perri	423-349-5091



*Workers level rock steps near the railroad grade*

## Laurel Fork Gorge Trail Rehab Project

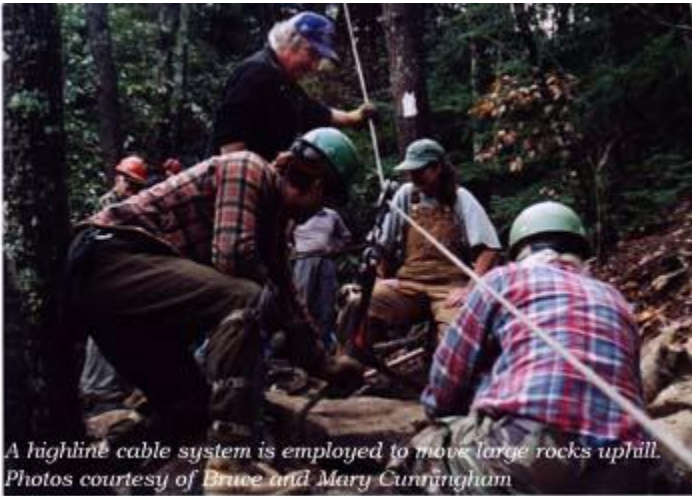
*(Joe DeLoach Reporting)*

Thanks to a generous contribution by TEHCC members Bruce and Mary Cunningham, we were able to have a crew work for a second straight year on improving the Appalachian Trail in Laurel Fork Gorge. This is a high use area with lots of loose rock, which makes building and maintaining a stable

treadway difficult.

The crew, led again this year by Fred Lashley, did a great job installing rock steps and cribbing on a section of Trail heading from the Koonford Bridge up to the old railroad grade. This section had become quite dangerous to descend and the repairs were badly needed. A total of 48 rock steps were built in the two weeks the crew worked. Fred is a practicing stone mason, and her talents and experience as a Trail crew leader were invaluable in the construction. We were able to provide good Club support as well; 13 Club members worked a total of 365 hours on the project. We also had twelve students from Appalachian State help for 96 more hours, giving a total of 461 hours on this project.

While working in the area, we were also able to build some log steps leading to the bridge on the other side; reinforce the bridge abutments which had been undercut during the infamous January floods; flag a relocation trail south of the bridge to eliminate another steep, eroding section; and start on some rock work to stabilize the Trail where it runs very close to the stream (another safety hazard).



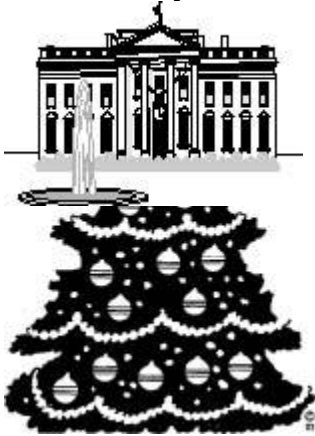
*A highline cable system is employed to move large rocks uphill.  
Photos courtesy of Bruce and Mary Cunningham*

Special thanks go to Bob and Pat Peoples, who housed the crew at their Kincora Hostel in Dennis Cove. Bob also worked every day with the crew accounting for 90 of our 365 hours!

Special thanks also to the Cunninghams, who donated not only their money, but their muscle as volunteers on this project. And, thanks to all the other volunteers: the Appalachian State students, Frank Williams, Hugh Thompson, Derrick and Bill Stowell, Mary Ellen Ress, Steve Perri, Ed Oliver, Bill and Adair Murdoch, and Joe DeLoach. Finally, thanks to Fred and her crew for all their hard and good work!



*Fred Lashley's Trail Crew and TEHCC Volunteers.*



## **North Carolina Provides Capitol Holiday Tree**

*(Courtesy of Paul Bradley, Appalachian Ranger District)*

For nearly 30 years, one of the nation's 155 national forests has provided a giant holiday tree for the west lawn of the U.S. Capitol. For the first time in 25 years, this year the National Forests of North Carolina were privileged to send a tree to the nation's capitol. After considering four different trees, a 27-year-old, 2,400-pound, 50-foot Fraser fir from Pisgah National Forest in Mitchell County was chosen by the U.S. Capitol's Landscape Architect to be THE Capitol Holiday Tree.

On November 15th, the tree was carefully cut, wrapped, and transported by helicopter onto a Mack truck. A ceremonial send-off was followed by a two-week journey to Washington, D.C., which included numerous stops, parades and public ceremonies.

Since no federal funds could be spent for this project, a steering committee was established to gain the necessary resources. The partners working together are the National Forests of North Carolina, the Cradle of Forestry in America Interpretive Association, the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the North Carolina Forestry Association, and the Governor's Office. North Carolina's first lady, Carolyn Hunt, is spearheading an effort to collect the 4,000 ornaments needed to decorate the tree. The handmade ornaments will come from people of all ages from across the state and will showcase the State's valuable and diverse natural resources.

To involve children in the Holiday Tree Project, an essay contest is planned. Three winners

representing the coast, the piedmont, and the mountains will be selected to attend the holiday tree lighting ceremony in Washington, D.C. on December 8, 1998. At the lighting ceremony, the tree will be lit by the Speaker of the House.

Several sponsors are assisting in this effort. Mack Trucks, Inc. transported the Capitol Holiday Tree and a second truck, provided by D. M. Bowman Trucking Company, carried 50 smaller holiday trees and the 4,000 ornaments. A.T.&T. is giving cash support and AAA Carolinas is helping with travel. Artist Teresa Pennington created a colored pencil drawing of the tree and has donated the reproduction rights to assist in fund-raising to cover the cost of cutting and shipping of the tree. Prints, called "*Carolina's Gift to the Nation*," are available through the Pennington Gallery at 15 N. Main Street in Waynesville, NC (828-452-9284).

## SCHEDULED HIKES / ACTIVITIES

### Call for 1999 Trip Leaders

*Richard Colberg Reporting*

It's that time again. It's time to gather the club's hiking plans for the first half of 1999. Please think about some of your favorite hikes and/or some easy family/beginner hikes, look at a calendar, choose a weekend, and volunteer to lead a hike. Some suggestions include:

- family/beginner hikes (Greenbelt, Warriors Path, Bays Mtn, Buffalo Mtn, Creeper Trail, Grassy Ridge, Grandfather Mtn, etc.)
- wildflower hikes
- favorite creekside or waterfall hikes
- Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area
- Cumberland Gap National Park
- Great Smoky Mountains National Park
- Linville Gorge
- A.T. hikes in or near our section

Just call Richard Colberg at 288-8333 and tell him what hike you'd like to lead, what day you'd like to lead it, the difficulty rating (Richard can help you decide this) and your home phone number. Please call Richard by December 6th so we can submit the calendar to the printers.

### Padding Trip: Leader's Choice, Dec. 19

*Leader: Mike Morrow, 423-245-1201, Rating: IV-V*

Contact Trip Leader for details and meeting location.

### Third Saturday Maintenance Trip, Dec. 19

*Leader: Ed Oliver, 423-349-6668, Rating: Easy-Moderate*

We have several options available, depending on the weather. First priority will be to continue water bar installation toward Hughes Gap. We plan to meet in the Burger King parking lot in Colonial Heights at 8:00 a.m. Please contact Ed Oliver at 423-349-6668 for more details.

## Announcements



## New Newsletter Editor

Beginning in January 1999, Shannon Stanforth will be responsible for the Newsletter editorship. Shannon works in B-280 and will be eagerly working to compile the newsletter. So for future articles, submissions may be made to Shannon Stanforth, 1122 Catawba Street, Kingsport, Tennessee 37660 (423-246-5414).



## Website Update: A New Address . . . Again

As of November 9, the TEHCC Internet web site consists of 108 pages, including 46 newsletters. In addition, there are 323 other files of various types; mostly artwork from the newsletters, and photos of our section of the A.T. We are getting about 800 visitors per month. We continue to get quite a bit of email on a variety of subjects, and also a few entries in our web site's guestbook.

Another change in our address has recently occurred. Our new address is <http://www.tehcc.org>. This change is currently in effect and the previous address will be phased out.

If you have any photos that you'd like to have posted, or if you have any other comments, please contact Steve Banks. I'd like to get at least one photo of each shelter on our section of the A.T., as well as more paddling photos.

## Mailing List Renewal Forms

Just a reminder that renewal of the TEHCC Newsletter subscriptions for recipients off site of the Eastman Chemical Company facility need to be turned in to Recreation by February of 1999. Renewal of your subscription by that date will assure no interruption in delivery. If you need a renewal form, it can be downloaded from our website or obtained by contacting our Recreation representative: Becky Bellamy, Eastman Recreation, B-310, 400 South Wilcox Drive, Kingsport, Tennessee 37662 (423-229-5147).

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## **USFS Conducts Rehab on Roan High Knob**

*Joe DeLoach Reporting*

The most publicized damage to the Appalachian Trail from the January floods was the bridges washing out in Laurel Fork Gorge, but there was also significant erosion of the Trail in the Roan Mountain area. Specifically, the Trail between Carvers Gap and Roan High Knob, which follows the route of the original road up the mountain (the Hack Line Road), washed out badly. Due to the extent of the erosion, the width of the Trail, and the rocky surface it would have been virtually impossible to correct all this damage by hand. But, the Forest Service was able in late October to use small equipment to fill in the ruts and construct numerous waterbars to hopefully prevent this from happening again. This work was done by the Nolichucky/Unaka Ranger District of the Cherokee National Forest.

***We greatly appreciate the work the USFS did in repairing this section of the Appalachian Trail!***

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



Derrick Stowell hauls rocks and sand for fill.

· **Oct. 17: 3rd Saturday Special Maintenance Trip**

*(Bill Stowell Reporting)*

The effort for 3rd Saturday was to rehabilitate the trail going from Laurel Fork Gorge towards Pond Flats. Much of the needed work was completed. One more trip should finish the job. We plan to go back on 3rd Saturday in November to finish this work. There was a good turnout including Ryan Horne (ETSU), Brian and Kathy Stubblefield (Sierra Club) Arthur Smith (Sierra Club), Bob Peoples (Kincora Hostel), Brian Fakes, Steve Perri, Ed Oliver, Frank Williams, Bill and Derrick Stowell. (See photo at left).

· **Oct. 31: Hughes Gap Water Bar Installation**

*(Bill Stowell Reporting)*

We began installing water bars from Hughes Gap going towards Ash Gap. We installed 50 water bars, alternating between the log variety and an earthen type being used in the Smokies. We also maintained a view. Additional trips are planned to complete this effort to the top of Roan. Those participating in this trip include: Bill and Derrick Stowell, Ed Oliver, Frank Williams, and John Thompson.

· **Nov. 3: Tuesday Special Work Trip**

*(Ed Oliver Reporting)*

We hiked in from Dennis Cove to repair the walkway below the falls. The January flood had damaged a section around a rock face. A bag of cement was carried in but was not enough to fix all that



needed to be fixed. Also some sledge hammer work was done further down where the trail crosses two rock outcrops. Both of these areas will need some further work. Participants for this trip include: Derrick Stowell, Ed Oliver, Frank Williams, John Kiefer.



· **Nov. 2-3: Special Maintenance Project--Sections 13 and 14, Highway 19E to Carvers Gap**  
(*Bryan Fakes Reporting*)

We clipped, removed some small blowdowns with saws, or drug them off the trail. There are two locations that we could not clear; one blowdown 0.4 miles south of 19E, not far past the Apple House Shelter (hikers have made a relo around it), and another blowdown we left about 1 mile north of Doll Flats near the cliffs. Two 33-gal lawn trash bags are full at the barn. They were too heavy for us to carry out with full packs. The trail bed is in awful condition south of Stan Murray Shelter. Runoff has cut deeply into the trail and hikers have formed new trails on either side of the original (like the back side of Round Bald prior to the relo). This is a tough and beautiful section of the trail. My hat's off to the people who maintain this section. Those participating in this work trip include: Bryan Fakes, Cliff Brooks, Kenny Laughters & Joey Wilson.

## **Hike Trip Reports**

### **Hike/Camping Report: Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, October 17-18**

*J.H.S. Jensen and Chris Niederer Reporting*

Three Eastman Employees known as "The Raven" (Steve Humphrey), "Stickman" (Julian Jensen) and "The Tortoise" (Chris Niederer), and an honored guest simply known for this writeup as "The Ox"



enjoyed a delightful overnight hiking trip in the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area.

At a time when the colors were rather bla-se in Kingsport, it was great to get to some higher elevations where the fall colors were in full blazes of oranges, reds and yellows. After about an 80 minute drive, we began our hike where the A.T. crosses Virginia state highway 603. Initially, we had planned to scale the A.T. from the road to its summit, 2,000 feet above us, and then follow the trail through Grayson Highlands and the beautiful bald areas across the many peaks of Wilburn Ridge, until arriving at our Saturday destination of Thomas Knob shelter. However, we quickly discovered that this stretch was about 13-14 miles, which none of us wished to dayhike with 40 pound packs!! So, we took one of Mount Roger's convenient side trails at the summit, the Pine Mountain trail, for 2 miles to Rhododendron Gap. Then, it was but a short 1/2 mile pack-off excursion to Wilburn Ridge. Throughout the day, we ran into numerous hikers and scout troops enjoying this perfect weekend. The views from Rhododendron Gap and Wilburn Ridge were absolutely spectacular!! The crowded Thomas Knob shelter forced us to pitch our tents nearby.

Our fearsome foursome enjoyed delicacies from tender sirloin to stirfry to noodles with chicken and shrimp under a starlit night and we entertained ourselves with cigar and brandy, a game of Spades and "The Raven's" traditional reading of Poe's, THE RAVEN. On Sunday, after beginning with a hearty breakfast of oatmeal, grits and granola, we began our 9 mile hike out--mostly downhill along horse trails and rarely hiked backtrails--to our car at the 603 intersection. We finished about 2:30 and enjoyed a pleasant ride back to Kingsport. The Mount Rogers area is a definite overnight camping experience for any avid outdoorsman.

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## **Grayson Highlands - Massie Gap / Scales Loop, Oct. 31-Nov. 1**

*Garry S. Luttrell Reporting*

We found out from the Park Ranger, as we paid our fees, that sources of water were scarce in the Mt. Rogers area, so we loaded extra water in our packs as we left the Massie Gap parking area. Three of us set up camp just outside the Park boundary at the base of Wilburn Ridge, then joined the four day hikers for lunch on the peak of Wilburn Ridge. After lunch all of us hiked along Pine Mountain to Scales, then followed the A.T. back to Massie Gap to complete the 10 mi. loop. The Mountain Ash berries were beautiful, especially along Pine Mtn., which was a sea of red. That night at 4 a.m., after the moon disappeared, the clear sky was a star gazer's delight including a show of shooting stars. During the night, one of the curious ponies stuck his nose in my open tent and tried to join me. The day hikers included Hugh and Marilyn Thompson, Debi Berry, and Susan Greenwood; the campers were Steve Woody, Arvell Luttrell, and Garry Luttrell.

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

Steve Perri  
180 Peppertree Drive  
Kingsport, Tennessee 37664  
Ph. 423-349-5091

