

THE TENNESSEE EASTMAN HIKING & PADDLING NEWS

March 1999

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NEXT TWO MONTHS AT A GLANCE				
Mar 5	Maintenance Dinner	FUN	B. Stowell	423-239-7697
Mar 6	Family/Beginner Hike: Bays Mountain Park	E	B. Stowell	423-239-7697
Mar 7	Leader's Choice	IV-V	M. Morrow	423-245-1201
Mar 20	Winter Dinner Meeting	FUN	C. Fritz	423-477-4669
Mar 20	Southwest Virginia Creeks	II-III	B. Becker	423-288-5886
Mar 21	More Southwest Virginia Creeks	II-III	B. Becker	423-288-5886
Mar 27	Lower Nolichucky or Lower Watauga **CANCELLED**	II	T. Pridgen	423-245-5975
Apr 10	AT: Hughes Gap - Iron Mountain	M	J. Thompson	423-245-1455
Apr 17	Little Hump Mountain via Hampton Creek	D	D. Kreh	423-349-4637
Apr 24	AT: Indian Grave Gap - Nolichucky River	M	S. Banks	423-288-2646

TEHCC on the Web

Steve Banks reporting

On February 3, 1999, TEHCC's Internet web site shared an experience with the A.T. - it was relocated! Our web site moved to ServerHost in Johnson City, and we got our own Internet "domain name"!! Our URL (web site name) is now <http://www.tehcc.org>. We did this to get a permanent, easier-to-remember name, and to allow our web site to continue to grow in size and capabilities. And this new TEHCC-specific name conveys a better image among those who use the Internet. We were able to pay for the relocation of our web site with our recent increase in dues.

Some of the new capabilities that have already been implemented include:

- Generic e-mail addresses. For example, is mapped to Steve Perri's e-mail address. When Steve is no longer our A.T. Committee Chair, will be remapped to the new A.T. Committee Chair's e-mail address.
- A "search" capability. For example, if you are doing some research on wilderness, you can enter the word "wilderness" in our search form and find every occurrence of that word in our web site.

Some capabilities we could add in the future include:

- On-line registration for dinner meetings, hikes and paddling trips, and other events.
- On-line entry of the activity release form, planned hikes and paddling trips for the six-month schedule and newsletter. "For the Record" reports, and online sales of TEHCC merchandise are also possibilities.
- "Threaded" discussion groups, which promote e-mail discussion of a particular topic. Our first topic will probably be A.T. maintenance, to provide better communications with our maintainers who use the Internet.

Finally, the additional space we now have has permitted several recent additions to our web site:

- New pages describing our A.T. shelters, including a list of recent maintenance activity for each shelter, and numerous photos.
- More photos of paddling trips, with still more planned.

The page [What's New](#) shows the latest changes to our web site.

Winter Dinner Meeting

Jan Mayo reporting

Our annual winter dinner meeting will be held March 20 at Eastman Lodge. We look forward to an evening of fellowship beginning with a social hour at 5:00, dinner catered by Sharon's BBQ at 6:00, and a short business meeting that will include presentation of maintenance, hiker, and paddler awards. We all enjoyed the photographic/music presentation so much at our Fall meeting that we have planned another program like that one. Ed Schell of Johnson City will be presenting "The Highlands of Roan" which is a slide show set to music. Mahoney's will be on hand with a vendor display and door prizes. Please return your dinner reservation form by March 12, and indicate if you will bring a dessert. Those homemade desserts have really added something special to our meetings. Of course, if you prefer not to come to dinner, you are welcome to come around 6:45 for the awards presentation and entertainment.

Please fill out the form below and send a check made out to TEHCC to:

Mike Morrow, Building 469

Or

Mike Morrow

1028 Surmont Ct.

Kingsport, Tennessee 37660

Reservation Form

Name: _____

Number of Meals _____ X \$12.00 = _____

I plan to bring a dessert _____ YES _____ NO

Please note:

The check and reservation form must be received by Friday, March 12th

Hike Leaders Needed: Appalachian Trail Conference, Radford 1999

Richard Colberg Reporting

The Appalachian Trail Conference is holding their 1999 biennial meeting July 9-16 at Radford College in Virginia. TEHCC is co-hosting the meeting, and we still need some

volunteers to help lead a few hikes. In particular, Collins Chew needs help with the three hikes listed below. If you can spend a day away from work, what better way to contribute to TEHCC and the ATC than to lead a hike. (Besides, depending upon our participation, we get some financial support from ATC for co-hosting the meeting.) If you can help Collins out, please call him at (423) 239-6237.

Hikes:

1. Tuesday, July 13. AT from I-77 to VA 611, 8.1 miles 600 to 800 ft. climb depending on direction, 38 miles from Radford.
 2. Wednesday, July 14. AT from Elk Garden to VA 601, White Top, 7.2 miles, 1000 or 2000 ft. climb depending on direction, 95 miles from Radford (and most convenient for someone coming from Kingsport for the hike but not going to Radford).
 3. Thursday, July 15. AT Dismal Creek to Wapati Shelter, 5 miles, 200 ft. climb, 35 miles from Radford. Collins needs an assistant or sweep for this loop hike.
- For other ways to assist with the conference, contact Bill Foot, .

Scheduled Activities and Trip Reports

Family/Beginner Hike, Bays Mountain Park, Mar. 6

Family/Beginner Hike, Bays Mountain Park, Mar. 6

Leader: Bill Stowell, 423-239-7697. Rating: Easy

We should meet at the parking lot at Bays Mtn. at 9:00AM. Bring a snack/lunch, water, and proper clothing for the weather. We will pick a hike suitable to those who show up to hike. Let me know if you are coming so I will be sure not to leave without you. Note the starting time is one hour later than normal.

AT Hike: Indian Grave Gap to Nolichucky River, Apr. 24

Leader: Steve Banks. Rating: Moderate

This hike starts at Indian Grave Gap, near Erwin. We will proceed south on the A.T. on a relatively level ridge, and then descend to the Nolichucky River. Bring appropriate clothing, lunch, and water. Meet in the parking lot between McDonalds and Burger King in Colonial Heights at 7:45 a.m. for an 8:00 a.m. departure.

Off Trail Hike, Mount LeConte Creek Trip, July 10-11

Leader: Dewey Fuller, 423-764-7340. Rating: Extremely Difficult

The LeConte Creek Trip is an off-trail ascent of Mount LeConte via one of the creeks that run off the mountain. This trip involves scrambling up and around very steep cascades as well as lots of bushwhacking through thick undergrowth, stinging nettles, and blowdowns. Typical trips take from 8 to 12 hours with very little time for resting. Once at the top, hopefully before dark, the group will be staying at LeConte Lodge, a rustic inn with cabins, real beds with clean sheets, and a dining room. For more trip details contact Dewey Fuller at 423-764-7340. The \$79.75 per person cost of lodging includes dinner Saturday evening and breakfast the next morning. Confirm your reservations for the trip by sending a check, payable to me, to Dewey Fuller 608 Vance Drive Bristol, Tennessee 37620. Often, those wishing to go up the creek do not take all of the reservations. If you would like to go on the waiting list to hike up the trail, let me know and I will contact you before June 10 if there is an opening.

Third Saturday Special Project Trip, March 20

Leader: Ed Oliver, 423-349-6668

We will install up to twenty bog bridges on the section of the Appalachian Trail located trail south of Tenn 91. We will have to carry the materials for the bridges about 1/4 mile. We need help in carrying in the materials and in putting the bridges in place. We will cut the materials and drill the holes in the wood ahead of time. This work will be done in Kingsport. If you can help with the work in Kingsport or with the work on the trail, please contact Ed Oliver at 423-349-6668 for additional information. On March 20, we will meet in the parking area between McDonalds and Burger King in Colonial Heights at 8 a.m. If you can't help all day but can help half a day; your help will still be very useful.

Hike Report: Doe River Gorge, Jan. 23

Steve Perri reporting

The weather continues to be a determinant factor for participation on the hikes I lead□ the nasty storm that brought the hurricane to Arkansas plagued this casual beginner's trip. Steve Wilson, Ray and Sue Tarpley tentatively risked the trip to Hampton. It was lightly

raining upon our arrival so Ray, Steve, and I walked around the camp before venturing in the gorge. Ray indicated that his grandfather worked for the railroad years ago in its operation for transporting logs. At that time, the railroad had a connection with the Tweetsie railroad in Boone. We opted to go in just past the second tunnel, about 1/3 mile before Ray turned back and Steve and I continued, thinking we would go until the views weren't enticing or until it began to rain really hard. Steve Wilson was the most prepared donning an REI hat, Gore-Tex jacket and pants while I was wearing a slightly better poncho than a trash bag. Of course it didn't start raining really hard until we were about ¼ mile from the turn around point, so we decided to finish there instead of turning around where we were at the time. Needless to say we had a very soggy walk back! Steve Wilson said that the trip was worth it since "there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad preparation." So be forewarned if you hike with either one of us. Steve Wilson will always be prepared for all occasions of weather, whereas it always rains when I lead a hike (I'm about 5 for 7 with rain)! Those participating in this excursion were Steve Perri, Ray Tarpley, and Steve Wilson.

Hike Report: AT US 25/70 to Hot Springs, January 30

Neil Dotson reporting

On this particular Saturday, four hikers unflinchingly faced the pleasant 50-degree weather and dodged the odd sprinkle, bravely eschewing ponchos. Mill Ridge and the pond on the way to Pump Gap were easily reached, but the most time was spent in the Lovers' Leap area, the rewards for these fearless adventurers were fine views of the French Broad River Valley, Hot Springs, and the loftier mountains towards Max Patch, disappearing into the clouds. The greater share of this 5½-mile section of trail is galax-lined, with all shades from green to copper manifest - but we also saw pipsissewa, teaberry, partridge-berry, and a sole Rattlesnake Plantain. Living to tell the tale were Kent and Nancy Wilson, Patricia López and Neil Dotson.

Hike Report: Devil's Backbone Hike, Warriors Path State Park, Feb. 7

Nancy Wilson reporting

On Sunday afternoon, Feb. 7, two hikers braved the rain and wind to complete this 5-mile hike on the Devil's Backbone Trail and Fall Creek Loop Trail. The rain soon gave way to sunshine. Beautiful views of Patrick Henry Lake were enjoyed, as well as, the rushing waters of Fall Creek. Enjoying this close-to-home hike were Kent and Nancy Wilson.

Hike Report: AT Hike, Spivey Gap to Nolichucky River, Feb. 13

Phyllis Carnes reporting

"What do you think our chances are of getting to Spivey?" Hugh Thompson asked as I rolled down my window. "Oh, no problem" I quickly replied, as there was no sign of snow when we met him and his wife in Johnson City. After all, a record-breaking temperature of 74 had occurred just two days previous. However, a few miles south of Johnson City the snow was falling fast, and as we turned onto 19W and began gaining altitude the road surface became solid white and the hairpin curves a bit slippery. Slowly but surely our van of five hikers (Hugh and Marilyn Thompson, Mary Ellen Ress, Rolla Wade and myself) made it to Spivey Gap. We bundled up in mittens, hats, and parkas, and headed north on the AT to enjoy an 11-mile tramp through the snowy tapestry. Fat white flakes quietly accumulated to a 3-inch covering and created peaceful surroundings for an absolutely beautiful walk.

AT Section Maintenance and Special Projects

Maintenance Dinner Reminder This year's maintenance dinner will be held in the Eastman Employee Center on Friday, March 5. Cost will be \$2-\$3. Please notify Bill Stowell (423-239-7697) if you plan to attend.	Maintenance Inventory It is time for the yearly inventory of tools. Please let Bill Stowell (423-239-7697) know what tools you have at home so that we can decide what new tools we need for this year.
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TEHCC 1998 Maintenance Summary

Jeff Sirola reporting

AT Maintenance: 6880 hrs

243 events

920 people-events

211 individual participants

The above includes the following Adopt-A-Trail activities:

1841 hrs

87 events

247 people-events

By class and District:

Watauga Unaka Total

Regular Maintenance 640 1406 2046
Special Projects 2976 1858 4834
Total 3616 3264 6880

Jan. 30, Trail Maintenance

Bill Stowell reporting

Bruce Cunningham drove us to Walnut Mountain Road to begin our work. Ed Oliver, Joe Deloach, and Derrick Stowell hiked in towards Big Pine Mountain to continue flagging the relocation in the Elk Falls area. The rest, Bruce and Mary Cunningham, Frank Williams, and Bill Stowell started working towards Bitter End clipping back rhododendrons and cutting blowdowns. We completed clipping to just past a campsite where an old gravel road intersects the trail. There is a double blowdown just past the camping area overhead that was too large for the small chainsaw. Bruce and Mary provided soft drinks and snacks for everyone. Total: 70 person-hours

Feb. 6, Trail Maintenance

Bryan Fakes reporting

Joey Wilson and I went from Beauty Spot to the top of Unaka to clear several blowdowns, mainly the tops of trees, as if we'd had another ice storm that pulled the top branches off. There was one blowdown about 1/2 mile trail north of Deep Gap that was too big for us, with only a folding saw. I think a big bow saw would take care of it. Total: 6 person-hours.

Feb. 6, Trail Maintenance Double Header

Bill Stowell reporting

Trip 1: Derrick and I drove to meet Kevin O'Donnell in Johnson City and then to "Can Lot." We met up with Bill Berry (hours will be reported separately) to clear blow downs from No Business Knob south to the Forest Service road. We cut out 5 trees that had come down. I would like to welcome Kevin to the maintenance effort. This was his first maintenance outing. He is a professor in the English Dept. at ETSU. Total: 27 person-hours.

Trip 2: The other group went to Tenn. 91 and did some trail rehab and blowdown removal from Tenn 91 to U.S. 421. This section is currently clear of blowdowns. Along for this trip was Ed Oliver, Frank Williams, Bruce & Mary Cunningham, and Phyllis Cairnes. Total: 55 person-hours.

Feb. 7, Maintenance Hike

Steve Banks reporting

I picked up trash at McQueens Gap, and cut briars and small blowdowns for 1.1 miles between there and Abingdon Gap Shelter. A cold driving rain forced a return to Kingsport. Four blowdowns will require another trip with a chainsaw. Total: 6 person-hours.

Feb. 9, Flagging for Trail Relocation

Ed Oliver reporting

Bill Elderbrock, Frank Williams, and Ed Oliver continued working on the flag line for the relocation between Campbell Hollow Road and Walnut Mountain Road. We completed all the flagging except for a section about 1/4 miles long at the point where Jones Branch flows into the Elk River. We did find a route at Jones Branch and were able to flag part of it. Total: 30 person-hours.

Feb. 10, Blowdown Removal

Steve Banks reporting

Steve and Mary Banks, accompanied by our dog Princess, cut all blowdowns from McQueens Gap south approximately 1.4 miles to the "old rock wall with spring." There were eight blowdowns; two of them were fairly large and required a considerable amount of time to clear. We also cut briars, and picked up trash at the emergency shelter and at McQueens Gap. Another trip will be needed to clear blowdowns north of McQueens Gap. Total: 20 person-hours.

Feb. 16, Flagging for Trail Relocation

Ed Oliver reporting

Bruce Cunningham, Frank Williams, and Ed Oliver flagged relocations trail north of Walnut Mountain Road. In the first mile trail north of Walnut Mountain Road the trail crosses five small streams. The trail on each side of these streams is steep. We flagged four relocations and part of a fifth relocation. These relocations will put the trail on a 10% grade into and out of these drainages. It is possible to by-pass most of these drainages by putting the trail close to Walnut Mountain Road. However, we may or may not want to do this. We also cut out two blowdowns about a mile trail north of Walnut Mountain Road. The trail location shown on the topo maps of this area is not correct. The actual location of the trail is along a line running from the crossing of Walnut Mountain Road to the center of the narrow corridor of Forest Service land about 3/4 to a mile trail north of Walnut Mountain Road. Total: 30 person-hours.

To submit an article for the newsletter, contact:

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