

THE TENNESSEE EASTMAN HIKING & PADDLING NEWS

October 1999

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NEXT THREE MONTHS				
Oct 2	A.T.: Va. 16 (Dickey Gap) to Holston River	M	N. Dotson	423-245-61
Oct 2	Family/Beginner: Max Patch	E	E. Oliver	423-349-66
Oct 9	A.T.: Hump Mountain	D	J. Deloach	423-753-79
Oct 16	A.T.: Iron Mountain Gap to Indian Grave Gap	M-D	S. Banks	423-288-26
Oct 16	Third Saturday Maintenance		B. Stow ell	423-239-76
Oct 17	Nolichucky Gorge - Fall Colors	III-IV	G. Porter	423-288-65
Oct 23	Bays Mountain	M	C. Chew	423-239-62
Oct 30	A.T.: Holston River to Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area HQ	M	N. Dotson	423-245-61
Nov 6	Smokies Dayhike	M	K. Edgar	423-239-57
Nov 13	The Crevices on Brumley Mountain	E-M	C. Chew	423-239-62
Nov 13	South Beyond 6000 Hike	D	G. Luttrell	423-239-98
Nov 20	Third Saturday Maintenance		B. Stow ell	423-239-76
Nov 20	Fall Dinner Meeting	FUN	C. Fritz	423-477-46
Dec 4	A.T.: Hughes Gap to Iron Mountain Gap	M	B. Stow ell	423-239-76
Dec 18	Third Saturday Maintenance		B. Stow ell	423-239-76

TEHCC Newsletter Going Electronic

Carl Fritz reporting

As was mentioned in the July Newsletter, this newsletter will be primarily electronic by the beginning of next year. The change is driven by the increased costs with hard copy, the increased complexity with production of hard copy, and the difficulty in getting the news to you in a timely manner. There is an opportunity to go to electronic copy since most members and affiliates have email. Those of you who do not have email will continue to get hard copy. The electronic version may appear slightly different but content will be as good as ever.

The club should save between \$1500 and \$2000 annually with the electronic newsletter and you should receive it in two of it being assembled rather than two weeks later. With the reduced mailing costs, the retiree and affiliate dues will be reduced to \$5, the same as Eastman employee members.

The electronic newsletter will be an email notification that the TEHCC newsletter has been updated. A link will be provided to the electronic version.

that will automatically take you to the newsletter on our Web site.

For the last three months of this year, Eastman employee members will receive both the electronic and hard copy newsletter. Retirees and affiliates will need to provide us their email addresses, if they have one, when they submit their membership application for the next year. If you want to help us build the address list early, just email me from our Web site.

Fall Dinner Meeting

Carl Fritz reporting

Reserve Saturday evening, November 20, for our traditional meeting. UT does not play this weekend so come to Eastman Lodge to enjoy good company, good food and a good program. Details and a reservation form will be in the November newsletter.

New Survey, or Is It Soup Yet?

Steven Wilson reporting

One of my favorite children's stories is about "Stone Soup." As I recall, a stranger comes to a town and begs for food but is turned away. In response, he sets up a kettle of water and starts to boil some common stones. The activity is quite a bit of interest by the villagers and they come out to ask what he is doing. The stranger continues to cook the soup out of curiosity and talks up the stone soup to the point that the villagers all want to taste it. Then the crafty stranger says on one condition, they each must add something to the soup. So the first villager goes and gathers his excess vegetables and one brings some onions, and so forth. Before long the soup is remarkably full and tasty, becomes quite a meal. The moral of the story is that it is remarkable what one can create when we all add something.

The story reminds me of our club, because all of us have something to contribute. We have different talents and interests, like the villagers had different vegetables to add to the soup. We hike or paddle on different trails and make different choices of gear. These experiences and skills make us all unique and potential contributors to the club. The current Steering Committee will soon be sending out a club survey in an effort to learn how we might improve. Please take the few minutes to fill it out and return it by October 15. We are interested in your opinions and suggestions for the club. The club has a quite active core group, but roughly three quarters of our club members have rather limited participation. The key question is - how come? What could or should the club be doing better to fill the members needs? If your questions do not hit the subject you think important, please add comments. One final note, any idea is only as good as the resources available to implement it, that is, you can't have soup without some ingredients. So if you have an idea that we could change the club activities, then please be a volunteer.

Trail Team Work Trips: The Essential Element

Bill Stowell reporting

Adapted from The Georgia Mountaineer

"Well, I've been so busy that I just haven't been able to get up to my section..." is an often-heard excuse from our members. Certainly, it's a true statement. We are all more than busy at work, and with the family running errands and other business. But think for a moment. When was the last time you made a work trip to your section? If you think your work trips are not important, consider this. If you don't make your work trips each year, who will?

Our special project team, for all it's hard work, cannot maintain the entire 127 miles of trail. Third Saturday maintenance cannot maintain the trail. The job is just too big. If you are not maintaining your section, it is not being maintained. You, however, the section teams and leaders, can maintain the trail, one section at a time, one work trip at a time, several times a year. That is how the TEHCC sections of the A.T. are maintained. It is the only way it can be maintained. Our special crews and 3rd Saturday trips can help. If you need help with a problem on your section, contact the section coordinator or the A.T. Committee Chair. They can provide assistance in the form of advice, expertise, tools, and additional manpower. Our efforts together can result in a trail of which we can all be proud. Never think that your individual team is not important. It is the cornerstone of our trail maintenance. And trail maintenance is one of the reasons TEHCC exists.

Those trail teams who fulfill their commitment by keeping their sections maintained can see how important what a difference they make. They can be justifiably proud of their sections. And their efforts are greatly appreciated by TEHCC and most importantly, by HIKERS. See you on the trail!

Scheduled Activities and Trip Reports

Family/Beginner Hike: Max Patch, October 2

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

This is an easy hike for beginners, families, or anyone enjoying a leisurely walk. We will hike a loop of about 3 miles across and in the vicinity of Max Patch Mountain. This mountain is open (no trees) and has excellent views of the Smokies and surrounding mountains. Meet in the parking area between McDonalds and Burger King in Colonial Heights at 8:00 a.m. Bring lunch and water. It will take us about two hours to drive to the trail head. We should be back in Colonial Heights by 10:00 a.m. so. If you have any questions, call Ed Oliver at 423-349-6668.

Hike: A.T. - Dickey Gap to the South Fork of the Holston (VIRGINIA 650 to VIRGINIA 670), October 2

423-245-6105, Rating: Medium

Come join us for an early fall hike northeast of Mt. Rogers! This 6.6-mile section of the A.T. is mostly downhill and finishing at 2450 feet), ending at the fine footbridge that crosses the South Fork of the Holston River. We will do some mileage (and climbing) by taking the side trail up to High Point (4040 feet), for some views of the Mountains to the south of us) and our destination: Rye Valley, through which the river (more a creek at this point) runs. But we will enjoy the weather and foliage, of course - and we hope the latter will already be showing colors. We'll meet between McDonalds in Colonial Heights) for an 8:00 a.m. departure.

A.T. Hike: Hump Mountain, October 9

Leader: Joe DeLoach, 423-753-7903, Rating: Difficult

Hump Mountain is one of the finest of the Southern Appalachian balds, with expansive grassy meadows and 360° views. It has one of the largest open areas of all the balds and the Forest Service is grazing cattle on it. Hump is one of the highlights not only of our Appalachian Trail section but also the entire A.T. This is now one of the nicest mountains but also one of our best Trail sections. The climb to the top from Highway 19E used to be very steep, but several Trail relocations in recent years have made the grade much more gradual although with a total gain of over 2600' the hike still merits a difficult rating. But, we'll take our time and enjoy autumn in the mountains. There should be some early fall colors out in the pretty woods the Trail goes through up to the last mile, which is indeed beautiful with great views from there and a couple of points below. We'll meet at the parking lot between Burger King and McDonalds in Colonial Heights at 8:00 AM on Saturday, October 9. We'll plan for lunch on top and pick out all the most beautiful views. The weather in October can be fickle, so dress in layers. After finishing the hike, we can drive just a mile or so to North Carolina and get some of the fresh fall apples. Please contact Joe for more information or to sign up.

A.T. Hike: Indian Grave Gap to Iron Mtn Gap, Oct. 16

Leader: Steve Banks, 288-2646, Rating: Moderate

This hike starts at Indian Grave Gap, near Erwin. We will travel north on the A.T., crossing Beauty Spot (west of the surrounding area) and Unaka Mountain, the highest mountain in the vicinity, as well as several smaller peaks and arrive at Iron Mountain Gap. Bring appropriate clothing for the weather, lunch, and water. Meet in the parking area between McDonalds and Burger King in Colonial Heights at 7:45 a.m. for an 8:00 a.m. departure. Call Steve Banks at 288-2646 to sign up or for more information.

Hike: Bays Mountain Park, October 23

Leader: Collins Chew, 423-239-6237, Rating: Moderate

This will be a moderate 8 mile hike with some steep trails along the ridges and valleys at the Southwest Mountain State Park. We will follow Bays Ridge Trail to the end of the Park where we pick up the Pretty Ridge Trail to the

on to the fire tower and back to the Nature Center. All these trails were closed several years ago with blowdown from a hurricane. These were cleared and re-blazed by (mostly) TEHCC people this past winter and spring so they can be enjoyed. The leaves should be pretty then. We will meet at the Bays Mountain Nature Center Parking Area. Bring water, lunch, and appropriate clothing. There is a parking fee if you are not a member of the Park Association. For more information call Collins Chew at 423-239-6237.

A.T. Hike: South Fork of the Holston to Mt. Rogers Headquarters (Va. 670 to Va. 16), October 30

Leader: Neil Dotson, 423-245-6105, Rating: Medium

On this 8.0-mile section of the A.T. we will ascend Brushy Mountain from the South Fork of the Holston River. It's a climb of no more than 1000 feet, and once on the ridge there should be a few opportunities for views south and (weather permitting) points south. For those of you trying to find all this on the map, look south of Marlinton in the northern part of the Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area - about an hour and half driving time. We'll meet at the intersection (between Burger King and McDonalds in Colonial Heights) for an 8:00 a.m. departure.

Itinerary Change: Fire Tower Hike The Crevices on Brumley Mountain, November 13

Leader Collins Chew, 423-239-6237, Rating: Easy-Moderate

We will hike to the fire tower on Clinch Mountain at Hiltons, Va. rather than to The Crevices. Both are on the Clinch Mountain. We can get permission to hike at Hiltons. This hike provides views of Kingsport, Bays Mountain, Gate City, and a view of the long, long line of Clinch Mountain as the point is north of the main line of the mountain. Details in the next newsletter.

Hike Report: Annual Mt. LeConte Weekend, July 10-11

Jon Mather reporting

A brave group of nine hikers started out in the Roaring Fork Creek off of the Roaring Fork Motor Nature Loop on the Clinch Mountains. The weather forecast for this day was a strong chance of heavy rain most of the day, and unfortunately the prediction was correct. Early in the morning the creek was low and easy to get through. After lunch, passing through the Falls the creek got steeper and the flow of the water got higher and stronger from the hard rain. The water was so high it covered all the rocks and landmarks of where to put hands and feet, so we were forced out of the creek. After a moderate amount of bushwhacking we arrived soaked and dirty, but thrilled to see Trillium Gap Trail. We did a short hike to the Mount LeConte Lodge. We had a great group of hikers that toughed out a difficult hike under less than ideal conditions. The Creek Hikers were Lynn Byrd, Tim Dawsey, Chad Eads, Bill Hamilton, Jon Mather, Seth Osbourne, Matt Osbourne, David Scotty.

Another group of trail hikers started at Newfound Gap on the Boulevard Trail. The hard rain made this group's hike a creek hike also as their trail became a running creek. After a pleasant evening at the lodge, they returned down the mountain on the Alum Cave Trail, hiking in more rain. The trail hikers were Sador Black, Scott Eads, Alice Eads, Jo Beth Eads, Kristy Loflin, Rita Osbourne, Jennifer Scotty, Judy Slaughter, Sharon Sharp.

A.T. Section Maintenance and Special Projects

August 21 Install Water Bars: Cherry Gap to Low Gap

Bill Stowell reporting

August 3rd Saturday was a combined effort of TEHCC and the Johnson City Old Timers. We met to install water bars on the section the Old Timers maintain. We started at Low Gap and installed water bars going trail north toward the Johnson City Shelter. We installed about 40 water bars, and cut an additional 30 water bars. That leaves about 16 miles of trail to complete the work to the shelter.

In addition, the Old Timers touched up blazes where needed and removed blazes which weren't needed. We plan to spend a Wednesday in September installing water bars which have already been cut. Hopefully the

3-4 ready with pegs, and cut pegs and complete some of the other 30 for which the logs have been cut. Those present were: Dick Lewis, Waymon Mumpower, Sandra Perry, Ed Schell, Bob Spencer, and C. B. Willis. They contributed a total of 42 hours. Members of TEHCC present were: Mike Floyd (first maintenance trip), Ed Oliver, Deloach, John Thompson, Steve Perri, Bill & Derrick Stowell. TEHCC members contributed a total of 64 hours.

August 22, Trail Maintenance: Doll Flats to Hump Mtn.

Ed Oliver reporting

I walked from US19E to just past the stile on the trail north side of Hump Mountain and cut weeds. I had heard that the weeds might be bad on the section of trail above Doll Flats. The weeds were not bad; however, there were a handful of places where they definitely needed to be cut. I cut weeds for the entire distance. The field at Doll Flats has been maintained by the Forest Service or a contractor and is in good shape. I painted a double blaze at the point where the trail enters Doll Flats. This is to prevent north bound hikers from missing the turns in the trail at Doll Flats. I met a southerner on US19E and walked with him to Doll Flats. He said that he had not had any serious problems on our section of trail from Damascus to US19E. He did say that a black bear showed up at Iron Mountain Shelter at about 5 p.m. and stayed there almost 11:00 p.m. the night that he stayed there. He said that the bear was young, probably a couple of years old, and definitely connected this shelter with food. The bear false charged several times. The hiker left a note in the log book that hikers know that they need to hang food from the trees and not from the nails in the shelter. He also commented that the weeds in the general area between the two shelters (Iron Mountain and Vandeventer) are high and that they need to be cut in many places. Total: 10 hours.

August 25, Fun/Maintenance Hike

C.B. Willis reporting

Fun hike for the Old Timer's Hiking Club from Dennis Cove north to shelter and down to Laurel Falls, then back to Dennis Cove. One member, Hueston Fortner, spent considerable time picking up litter at the shelter and particularly at tent areas. In one area he found several quilts, ground clothes and blankets which had been left on the bank. Some kid's mother is probably looking for these. Hueston Fortner should be given credit for three hours.

August 26, Trail Maintenance: Watauga Lake and Cross Mtn

Ed Oliver reporting

Darrol Nickels and Ed Oliver cut the weeds around Watauga Lake near Shook Branch Recreation Area and picked up litter. We then drove to Cross Mountain and installed the wire mesh on the two bog bridges that did not have them. Total: 16 hours.

August 28, Trail Maintenance on Iron Mountain

Steve Wilson reporting

Ed Oliver, Steve Perri, Bill Stowell, Jeff Sirola, and Steve Wilson cut weeds on 11 miles of the A.T. from Vandeventer to Highway 91. Most of the weeds were cut with scythes, but a weed eater was used in the open areas of the trail. We used loppers to cut back the rhododendron on some of the trail including the 2-mile section of wilderness near Turkey Pen Gap which is rather thick. While at the Vandeventer Shelter, we read the log book and noted that hikers had seen a rattlesnake on a blue-blaze trail leading down to the shelter's water supply. Vandeventer Shelter was in good shape, but the roof needs replacing in a few years. Ed Oliver hiked from Turkey Pen Gap to Highway 91 cutting weeds, but did not see the young bear reported earlier near Iron Mountain Shelter. These sections are in good shape now. Total: 10 hours.

(Webmaster's note: access to the A.T. at Turkey Pen Gap has been CLOSED)

August 29, Trail Maintenance

Bill Stowell reporting

Ed Oliver and Bill Stowell went to Watauga Dam Road to meet Jim Harrison from Emory & Henry University who was adopting a section of trail. Jim went to the wrong place and we didn't meet. We decided to check out the work done last fall between Watauga Dam and the shelter. We walked to the Watauga Lake Shelter. Along the way we cut the growth, cut back some trees and carried out a bag of trash from the shelter. Total: 10 hours.

August 31, Trail Maintenance

Ed Oliver reporting

Frank Williams and Ed Oliver cut weeds and clipped back the growth on the Appalachian Trail between W and the Watauga Lake Shelter. This section of trail is in good shape other than needing a few water bars