

THE TENNESSEE EASTMAN HIKING & PADDLING NEWS

December 1999

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ACTIVITIES				
Dec 4	A.T.: Hughes Gap to Iron Mountain Gap	M	B. Stowell	423-239-7697
Dec 18	Third Saturday Maintenance		B. Stowell	423-239-7697
Jan 1	A.T.: Mt. Rogers Headquarters (Va. 16) to I-81	M	N. Dotson	245-6105

Call for Hikes

Richard Colberg reporting

It's time to develop the club's hiking calendar for January-June 2000. Please think about your favorite and/or easy family/beginner hikes, look at a calendar, choose a weekend, and volunteer to lead a hike. Just send me an e-mail note or give me a call (423-288-8333) telling me: (1) what hike you'd like to lead, (2) what day you'd like to lead it, (3) the difficulty rating (I can help you determine this), and (4) your home phone number.

I'd like your responses by **Monday, December 6**, so we can prepare the calendar in time for January. If you're concerned about the recent layoff announcement, please realize we'll understand if you have to back out of any hike leader commitments due to a change in job or location. We'd like to assemble the calendar according to our usual schedule and adjust later, if necessary.

Some suggestions for hikes include:

- Appalachian Trail
- Family/beginner hikes (Greenbelt, Warriors Path, Bays Mountain, Buffalo Mountain, Creeper Trail, Grassy Ridge, Grandfather Mtn, etc.)
- Favorite creekside or waterfall hikes
- Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area (SW Virginia)
- Cumberland Gap National Park (SW Virginia)
- Great Smoky Mountains National Park
- Linville Gorge (North Carolina)

Survey for the Millennium

Carl Fritz reporting

Thank you for taking time to fill out our TEHCC survey in October. We have received about 175. The Steering Committee is assembling the results. Unfortunately, we had a snafu and have to tabulate them manually.

So believe me when I say we are working on them! You did give us great input and we will be

sharing the results in future newsletters. Your input will also give us guidance as our club begins both a new century and a new millennium.

Friday Hikes - Interest Request

Collins Chew reporting

Several retirees have been hiking on most Fridays for the last several years. The hikes have included A.T. hikes between Hot Springs, N.C. and I-77 in Virginia, the Cumberland Gap area, Virginia Creeper Trail, Grandfather Mountain, Bays Mountain, and the Guest River Trail, with distances between 5 and 14 miles. Occasional additional activities include Trail maintenance and blueberry picking. We have planned the trips and starting times on a weekly basis. We would be glad to have more people join us now or next year. If there is much interest, we might organize the schedule more formally. (We don't want to take away from the regular Tuesday Maintenance group.) To show interest, contact Collins Chew at 423-239-6237.

Scheduled Activities and Trip Reports

Hike: A.T., Mt. Rogers Headquarters (Va. 16) to I-81, January 1

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

On this 11.5-mile section of the A.T. in SW Virginia, we will climb over Brushy, Locust and Glade Mountains (all a little under 4000 feet) - not too bad given that we'll start at 3220 feet at the Headquarters. After that first 6 miles, we will drop down to walk through open meadows for the last nearly 3 miles of the trail and cross the Middle Fork of the Holston. Given the length of trail and the short daylight hours, we'll meet at the usual spot (between Burger King and McDonalds in Colonial Heights) for a 7:30 a.m. departure. This trail is Y2K compliant; please ensure that you are seasonally compliant by dressing appropriately (with plenty of layers), having good waterproof footwear, and bringing a nice big lunch to keep you warm.

Backpack Trip Report: Naked Ground, October 23-24

G. S. Luttrell reporting

Three of us, Emmett Dougherty, Arvell Luttrell, and Garry Luttrell, drove to Beech Gap, at the N.C. / Tenn. stateline, on the Cherohala Parkway between Tellico Plains, Tenn. and Robbinsville, N.C. to begin our overnight backpack trip, hiking on the Stratton Bald Trail to the campsite at Naked Ground. When we stopped for lunch at Stratton Bald, some other hikers told us of Boy Scouts camped at our destination. Sure enough, when we arrived we found that there were three troops there, so we picked out a campsite almost out of hearing distance. We listened to the Tenn. / Ala. football game while trying to stay warm around the campfire. During the night our water bottles froze; and, when we awoke, there was evidence of snow flurries on our tents. Then, when we got to the car, one of the larger Boy Scout troops was boarding their bus for a return trip to Birmingham, Alabama. Round trip hiking distance was 9 miles, with very little change in elevation.

Hike Report: A.T., So. Fork Holston (Va. 670) to Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area Headquarters (Va. 16), October 30

Neil Dotson Reporting

This hike along Brushy Mountain - yes, *the* Brushy Mountain, not any of those pale imitations found elsewhere - was taken by Neil Dotson, Freda Kuo, Bill Stowell and Ed Oliver. It was a pleasant fall day, a little past the peak in colors - with walking in cool hollows early in the hike and the long stretch of ridgeline hiking on Brushy Mountain (which does live up to its name). There were a few slight views of Rye Valley and the land to the north, but otherwise it's woodlands hiking - probably a

letdown for some after the broad expanses of Whitetop and the Mt. Rogers area. But it's a different kind of beauty, one greatly enjoyed by the four. The hike was capped off by a look at the impressive shelter located near the headquarters, and driving back through some back lanes rather than on Va. 16 to Marion.

Hike Report: Hiltons Fire Tower, November 13

Collins Chew reporting

This 6-mile hike provided spectacular scenery although none of what was promised. We started in fog, which lasted until near the top of the mountain. Then we broke out into clear air with blue sky. From the tower we looked out over a beautiful, unbroken cloud deck both to north and south. The clouds were higher to the south and were beginning to spill through the gaps of Clinch Mtn., southwest of Moccasin Gap. As we watched, they covered all of that section of the mountain and appeared as a great waterfall over the ridge. The group was so compatible that we talked all the way up and down. As we finished early, several went on to the Mendota Fire Tower. Hikers were Rodney Gray, Frieda Kuo, Lee Neeley, Kent and Nancy Wilson and Collins Chew.

A.T. Section Maintenance and Special Projects

October 22, 31, Trail Maintenance - Steps Near Carvers Gap

William R. Fritsch, Jr. reporting

On October 22 my son, William J. Fritsch accompanied me. We poured the concrete footings for a set of steps just south of the Carvers Gap parking lot. We also set up the cross members and frame for the steps. During the following week Ed Sacksteder and I completed steps except for minor grading and one cross piece. Began some minor grading and installation of three water bars to stabilize the bank above the steps. The steps were well used, and received compliments from five groups of hikers who had been on the trail for at least one night.

October 29, Meeting with New Watauga District Ranger

Steve Perri reporting

Summary: Morgan Sommerville and I met with Candace Allen, the new Watauga District Ranger, for an introduction to ATC and TEHC. We reviewed organization, history, activities, and roles in management of the A.T. We spent some time discussing Wilderness and the Revision Plan. We also emphasized our desire to work on the process for relocation requests to maintain a healthy feedback and update system. Emphasis on the Elk River relocation was made for the next approval after the Roan relocation package. Joe McGuinness indicated he was close to getting his part done for Roan Mountain, Round Bald, and Grassy Ridge and would send it to the Cherokee Office for a final public review and OK (probably will be complete before Jan). Candace seemed very receptive to listening and working through issues directly with her if we needed to discuss any USFS issues that she could assist us with. Total: 4 hours.

November 3, Install Waterbars Between Watauga Dam And Watauga Lake Shelter

Ed Oliver reporting

Frank Williams and Ed Oliver installed about a half dozen waterbars on the section of the Appalachian Trail between Watauga Dam and Watauga Lake Shelter. Total: 16 hours.

November 6, Erosion Control Maintenance with ASU Students, Trip #1

Bill Stowell reporting

We did not have the key to the gate so the wood for the shelter floor for the Boy Scout Eagle project had to be carried 2 miles to the shelter. We had to make additional trips to get the tools. The Eagle Scout project was for Graham Jarvis of Troop 4 from Asheville N.C. The project was to put a new floor in the shelter at Roan High Knob. After hauling the wood to the shelter, the rest of the group worked on installing water bars and steps on the A.T. near Toll House Gap. We lost some time because of the long walk to the work site but still got a lot of water bars and steps installed. I want to thank the TEHCC people who came out to help: Ed Oliver, Mary Cunningham, Joe Deloach, Craig Deloach, Frank Williams, Bob Peoples, Carl Fritz, Mike Floyd, Chris Garrett, and Bill Stowell. Also thanks to Scouts/supervisors: Graham Jarvis, Erwin Jarvis, Terry Ward, Jordan Lance, Dustin McMillan. Thanks also to ASU folks: Kay Smith, Kristin Rusborough, Anna Tucker, Khalisa Bolling, Jennifer Rudicil, Matthew Long, Elizabeth Meeks, Amy Voci, Amy Souther, Kristen Bright, Tess Phillis, Kathy-Jo Whisnant, Maranda Love, Erin McKinna, Ryan Thomas, Steve Ayers, Mike Satusky, Sara Lemberg. Total: 343 hours.

November 13, Erosion Control Maintenance with ASU Students, Trip #2

Bill Stowell reporting

We had the key to the gate this time so we got an early start installing water bars and steps on the A.T. near the old Hotel site. We also completed a relocation of a steep section by using an existing old trail. We got a lot of work done using up the supply of previously cut water bars and steps. I want to thank the TEHCC people who came out to help: Ed Oliver, Mary Cunningham, Frank Williams, Bob Peoples, Carl Fritz, Steve Perri, Kathy McDavid, and Bill Stowell. Special thanks to Appalachian State University folks: Michele Croteau, Mindy Baldinger, Jonathan Bronner, Seth Folsom, Cara Lovejoy, John Neal Moore, Amanda Perez, Eleanor Quinn, Heather Robertson, Allison Voss, Anna Williams, Danielle Allen, Stewart Bradshaw, and Tim ?. Special thanks also to the East Tennessee State University folks: Kevin Odonnell, Catherine Strain, Megan Gregory. Total: 225 hours.

November 16, Flag Relocations On Campbell Hollow Relo

Ed Oliver reporting

Bill Elderbrock, Frank Williams and Ed Oliver from TEHCC and Morgan Sommerville and Ben Lawhon from ATC walked from Elk River Falls along the ridge above Jones Branch to Campbell Hollow Road. We wanted to see if there was any reason to put the Elk River relocation on the ridge on the north side of Jones Branch so that hikers might be able to see Jones Falls. We also inspected the Campbell Hollow relocation. We flagged two modifications to the Campbell Hollow relo. Both of these flag lines were at steep places on the original relo. We judged that the path up the ridge at Jones Branch is too steep. We may do one more trip in this area in the near future. Ben inspected the open areas along the Elk River. Total: 55 hours.

November 20, Erosion Control Maintenance with ASU Students, Trip #3

Bill Stowell reporting

This was the third work trip with Appalachian State University students. We met at 19E and hiked in above Apple House Shelter to install water bars and some other erosion control in the area. Again, we got a lot of work done installing water bars and water diversion ditches. Also a larger drainpipe under the trail was cleared out and the side shored up with rock and log cribbing. I want to thank Kevin Riley (ASU) and his students - Tim Holcomb, Keaton Baines, Rodney Melton, Brian Fox, Randy Walker, Hilary Loynes, McKinley Johnson, Kyndra Boudolf, Caroline Gore, McClure L. Jackson, Jenny Newcomb, Khalinda Goergen - for a great effort. Also I want to thank Bob Peoples and the thru-hikers - Ronald Batchler (Seiko), Lee Harper (Sage), and John Wheeler (Wheels); and the TEHCC people - Ed Oliver, Frank Williams, Mary Cunningham, Kevin Odonnell, Carl Fritz, Bill

Elderbrock, and Bill Stowell. Total 168 hours.

November 27, Roan Mountain, Carvers Gap to the Cloudland Hotel Site

William R. Fritsch Jr. reporting

My son, William J. Fritsch and I cut blowdowns and inspected general trail conditions in order to plan future work trips. As we descended from the Cloudland Hotel site we confirmed the bad weather report. There were pools of water everywhere, and thawing ice added to a heavy surface accumulation. Many drainage ditches were working fine, but others were blocked, and we cleared what we could. We need to consider setting some logs in place in several of the low lying areas to help hold back erosion and keep a steady drainage from allowing large muddy spots to form. There were at least a dozen places where drainage was inadequate. The newly installed water bars were largely intact, and the upper trail section presented no problems. Total: 6 hours.