

# THE TENNESSEE EASTMAN HIKING & PADDLING NEWS

November 2005

www.tehcc.org

**Note:** The deadline for submitting articles and photos for next month's newsletter is the 15th of the month!

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<a href="#"><u>NEXT TWO MONTHS</u></a>				
			<u>Leader</u>	
Nov. 4	Fall Dinner Meeting	Fun	Vic Hasler	
Dec. 3	Rich Mountain Loop (Smokies Dayhike)	B/2/B	Neil Dotson	423-323-3493

*For an explanation of the hike ratings, see [Hiking Schedule](#).*

## Seeking Nominees for the TEHCC Steering Committee

*Submitted by Vic Hasler*

TEHCC is seeking nominees for the Steering Committee. This six member group is responsible for managing all the affairs of the club. Primary responsibilities are overseeing and approving the spending of the club's money, giving out annual awards and planning the dinner meetings that are held twice per year. Membership on the Steering Committee a good way to become familiar with club activities and to get to know other TEHCC members. You do not need to be an experienced hiker/paddler or be familiar with trails/rivers in this area to participate. You do, however, need to be a current Eastman employee, LSE or retiree. Elections will be held in December and elected members start their term in January. Steering Committee members serve a two-year term and three new members are elected each year. So if you want to meet new people, help spend other people's money, put on a great party, or know of someone else who might be interested, please contact Kent Wilson (), Vic Hasler (), or any other [Steering Committee member](#).

## **Rental Equipment: HT-6 - 2 Person REI Half Dome Tent**

*Submitted by Vic Hasler, Rental Equipment Coordinator,*

HT-6 is the club's new REI Half Dome 2 backpacking tent just purchased in September 2005 for \$143 with organizational discount and free shipping (lists as \$159 plus shipping and tax). It replaced a similar REI model for HT-6, which is still available as cheap rent HT-7. The newer tent has separate doors on both long sides for rolling out in the morning and vestibules for those stinky hiking boots.

A two person tent means just enough floor space for two people to sleep. Better arrangement would be heads at opposite ends so that more shoulder space would be available. Separate 10 sq.ft. vestibules give individual storage areas under cover, but on the ground so should definitely leave shoes outside. It has a ceiling net to store some items off the floor. Its 5 lb, 12 oz weight is a bit heavy for one person, but good for splitting up. The two thin aluminum poles and six stakes can be carried by one person, while the other has the tent, fly, and a plastic sheet to use as a ground cloth. It is quickly assembled into a free-standing tent even by one person. Instructions are printed on the bag. The fly has colored coded tabs to get it on the right direction. Be careful with the orange ultralight poles as they can readily bend too much, thus a repair spool piece is included. The washtub bottom design has factory-taped seams, but I went ahead anyway and sealed the outside seams up to the breathable fabric. Remember to get six stakes from Bldg 310 as spreading the fly vestibules requires two.

It will be displayed at the Fall Dinner meeting, and then available for rent shortly thereafter. Check out our new addition.



## **TEHCC Welcomes New Members**

Mandi Aubrey  
Richard A. Dye  
Linda K. Proffitt

New members are eligible for a free dinner at the next Dinner Meeting.

## **Scheduled Hiking, Paddling and Trail Maintenance Opportunities (Future)**

For an explanation of the hike ratings, see [Hiking Schedule](#).

**Hike: 900 miler, Roundtop Trail, November 5, 2005**

*Leader: G. S. Luttrell, 423-239-9854*

This hike has been cancelled. I'll try to schedule a day hike in December.

**Smokies Dayhike: Rich Mountain Loop, December 3, 2005**

*Leader: Neil Dotson, 423-323-3493; Rating: B/2/B*

I've lost count, but I just keep trying on this one; maybe it will happen this time! Rich Mountain is in the western part of the Smokies, lying on the north side of Cades Cove. This 8.5-mile loop uses the Rich Mountain Loop Trail, Indian Grave Gap Trail, and the Crooked Arm Ridge Trail to make the climb from 1900 ft to 3700 ft and back down again. This hike is somewhat complementary to Garry Luttrell's hike a year ago from Cades Cove to the Wye — where he went east from the Crooked Arm trail, this hike will explore the loop just to the west (see his report and pictures in the January 2005 newsletter). With leaves down, we should enjoy more numerous and more expansive views — and each of the three trails we use have advertised views even when the leaves are in place: views of the main spine of the Smokies to the south, and of Cades Cove lying between. Perhaps there will be snow, underfoot or in the distance. Closer at hand, we will see the several different forest types, Crooked Arm Falls, the John Oliver Cabin (from early 1800's), and a fire tower site. We will meet in Colonial Heights in the parking lot between McDonalds and the bank at 7:00 a.m. - yes, the hour is early but it is a long drive to the entrance of Cades Cove where the trailhead is, and the days will be getting short. Please call for more information as the time approaches. Watch the weather; dress appropriately for a late fall / early winter hike and do bring lunch and adequate water. Depending on the hour we may eat out on the return trip.

**Special Activity and Trip Reports (Past)**

**Hike Report: Laurel Fork Falls, October 1, 2005**

*Neil Dotson reporting*

We were granted a great day for a hike — pleasant temperatures and only a slight haze in the air, but not enough to obscure any view within the gorge. Children do wonderfully on a hike with a reason for it all, and the reason for this hike is the falls. The falls were in good form despite little rain. At the falls, Jack was kind enough to lead some of the more goat-like among us (Neil, Eric) on the trail — no, not "trail": on the way to the top of the falls. That's a real delight I'd never enjoyed before; besides the good view down to the base of the falls, there are a few deep pools, decorated with erosion patterns, that would have been inviting on a blazing day. On return leg of the trip, three of us (Michael, Eric, Neil) took the side trail to the summit of Potato Top, a steep knob around which Laurel Fork runs. No tubers at the top, just a great view of the facing wall of the gorge, and the cliff which only *looks* like the top of a mountain from the falls. The approach to Potato Top is a narrow ridge that allows the hiker the delight of stereophonic waterfalls: the big falls are on one side and another, inaccessible set are on the other. Not counting the extra excursions, this is only a 2½-mile hike, and I highly recommend it! Hikers were Jack and

Jeanette Ralston, Michael Ekart (not shown in the picture) and his son Eric, Neil Dotson and the twins, Elizabeth and Daniel. Pictures courtesy of Michael Ekart.



*click on image to enlarge*



### **Trip Report: Smokies 900 miler, Dry Sluice, October 21-23, 2005**

*G. S. Luttrell reporting*

The original plan, starting at Newfound Gap and ending on Straight Fork Road, had to be scrapped due to no available campsites at Enloe Creek. So, we did a figure eight trip, starting and ending at the Bradley Fork trailhead at Smokemont campground. Friday, we hiked up to Cabin Flats Campsite #49, set up our tents and hammocks, then day hiked up and back the Dry Sluice Trail. Saturday's hike was to Upper Chasteen Creek Campsite #48, via Bradley Fork, Hughes Ridge, and Chasteen Creek Trails. Finally, we completed the 28-mile figure eight by hiking the Smokemont Loop Trail back to our starting point at the campground. We saw the distant flashes of lightning in the



Tennessee Valley on Friday night, but we had very little rain on our side of the Smokies. The fall colors were just beginning to emerge, as can be seen on the attached photos. Shown in the Bradley Fork Trailhead photo, hikers included Debi Berry, James Foster, Kim Peters, Randall Simpson, J. G. Campbell (first time backpack), and Garry Luttrell.



Hikers at the end of the trail, left to right: Debi Berry, James Foster, Kim Peters, Randall Simpson, J.G. Campbell, Garry Luttrell

*click on image to enlarge*



J.G., Randall, James and Garry ready to start out on Friday.



Fall Colors on the Smokemont Loop Trail.



Trestle bridge on Cabin Flats Trail.



Debi and J.G. prepare dinner.



Garry listening to the Tennessee game on Saturday.



Hammock Camp.



James shows off his home for the night.



Randall waits for nightfall.



Garry on the Smokemont Loop Trail.

## Appalachian Trail Section Maintenance and Special Project Reports (*Past*)

**Name:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** September 27, 2005

**Purpose:** Repair wet area, cut weeds and install water bars

**Location:** Section 12, Elk River to 0.5 mile north of Sugar Hollow

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Bruce Cunningham, Carl Fritz, Darrol Nickels, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples

**Summary:** We cut the weeds along the Elk River. We also cut three blowdowns south of Sugar Hollow. Across from Splash Down Falls we installed five water bars and sixty feet of turnpiking. There was an extremely muddy hole during the spring and for much of the summer at the base of a long down hill on the old road. Horse people are determined to use the Trail to go to Jones Falls. They have cut and destroyed the barbed wire fence at the stile. We welcome ideas to discourage horse people from using A.T. in this area.

**Name:** Joe DeLoach

**Date:** September 28, 2005

**Purpose:** Meet with landowner who owns land near Hump Mountain

**People:** Joe DeLoach

**Summary:** I joined David Ray from SAHC in a discussion with a landowner who owns 450 acres in Tennessee below Bradley Gap and who is advertising development of a gated community on his property. We discussed conservation options and our interest in seeing at least the upper portion of his land protected.

**Name:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** October 11, 2005

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 17, south of Iron Mt. Gap

**People:** Paul Benfield, Bruce Cunningham, Dave Dunham, Carl Fritz, Mike Hupko, Darrol Nickels, Ed Oliver

**Summary:** We finished rehabing a long section of trail south of the gap.

**Name:** Jim Foster

**Date:** October 13, 2005

**Purpose:** Check trail for obstructions and blowdowns

**Location:** Section 16, Hughes Gap to Greasy Creek Gap

**People:** Jim Foster

**Summary:** I walked the trail from Hughes Gap to Greasy Creek Gap and back removing 8 small-to-medium size blowdowns. I also cleaned out waterbars and checked the shelter. Everything looked good.

**Name:** Joe DeLoach

**Date:** October 15, 2005

**Purpose:** Inspect development below Bradley Gap

**Location:** Section 14, Bradley Gap

**People:** Craig DeLoach and Joe DeLoach

**Summary:** The owner of the land in Tennessee below Bradley Gap has publicized development of an upscale gated community on his land, which is visible from Hump Mountain. Craig had reported seeing a new road coming up from Shell Creek. We walked from Yellow Mt. Gap to Bradley Gap and took pictures of the road, which looks to be about a mile below Bradley Gap. Joe is meeting with the Forest Service, ATC, and SAHC on October 27 to discuss protection of the A.T. from this development. The Trail was in very good shape; weeds and briars were cut back very well and no blowdowns. The turnpike that we built a few years ago near Bradley Gap could use some more work; pretty wet on the treadway even with the dry weather.

**Name:** John Arwood

**Date:** October 16, 2005

**Purpose:** Check trail conditions

**Location:** Section 7, North on trail from Watauga Dam Road

**People:** Catherine Batts and John Arwood

**Summary:** One mile north of Watauga Dam Road we found a large blowdown across the trail, which had taken a mass of rhododendrons down with it. We cleared the rhododendrons and other debris, but the tree was too large for the tools on hand. We will return with the cross-cut saw to finish the job. Clearing the rhododendrons will allow hikers to remain on the trail rather than doing a bypass. The tree can be stepped over if your legs are long enough.

**Name:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** October 18, 2005

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 11, Moreland Gap Shelter

**People:** Paul Benfield, Bruce Cunningham, Dave Dunham, Carl Fritz, Peter King, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples

**Summary:** On a great fall day, we improved 700 feet of trail to the water. The new second source of water is holding up very well during the dry weather. We added a couple of water bars and seven steps to this trail, also. We redid some log steps which

were installed this summer during the Konnarock Crew time.

**Name:** Joe DeLoach

**Date:** October 19, 2005

**Purpose:** Cut blowdowns and lop brush

**Location:** Section 19, Indian Grave Gap to Curley Maple Gap

**People:** Craig DeLoach

**Summary:** This section was in pretty good shape, no major blowdowns and weeds weren't bad. Section is clear.

**Name:** Joe DeLoach

**Date:** October 20, 2005

**Purpose:** Cut blowdowns and lop brush

**Location:** Section 19, Nolichucky Raft Site to Curley Maple Gap

**People:** Craig DeLoach

**Summary:** This section had a lot more work than the next section north, with numerous small-medium blowdowns and much lopping needed. One large blowdown remains at the head of Jones Branch which will require a chainsaw to clear.

**Name:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** October 22, 2005

**Purpose:** Dig new trail

**Location:** Buffalo Mt. Park in Johnson City

**People:** Bruce Cunningham, Joe DeLoach, Tom Dosser, Carl Fritz, Mike Hupko, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples

**Summary:** Seven TEHCC members along with one south bound hiker and 32 folks from Appalachian State University started construction of a new trail on Buffalo Mountain. Some students were members of the ASU Trail Maintenance Club; most were freshmen from two orientation classes. The two professors also helped.