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<u>NEXT TWO MONTHS</u>				
			<u>Leader</u>	
Feb 4	Steele Creek Park (Bristol, Tenn.)	B/3/C	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388
Feb 10	APES/TEHCC Joint Winter Party	Fun	Mike Morrow	423-245-8045
Feb 18	Hot Springs - Tanyard Gap Loop	A/2/B	Mary Ellen Ress	423-349-6536
Feb 24	Annual Maintenance Dinner	Worthwhile	Carl Fritz	423-477-4669
Feb 25	Little Greenbriar Trail (SM900)	A/3/B	Garry Luttrell	423-239-9854
Mar 4	Rich Mountain Loop (Smokies Dayhike)	B/2/B	Neil Dotson	423-323-3493

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

TEHCC Celebrates 60th Anniversary!



The year 2006, marks the 60th anniversary of TEHCC. As a way of celebrating, we are encouraging our members to hike our entire TEHCC A.T. maintenance section from Spivey Gap, NC to Damascus, VA. (about 130 miles). A special tee shirt will be designed and awarded to those who complete the whole section in 2006.



Also, as a way of encouraging more

individuals to be hike leaders, a gift certificate from a local outdoors store will be awarded to those hike leaders who lead at least four hikes on the TEHCC section during the 2006 calendar year.

To be counted as an anniversary hike, a hike notice must be posted in the monthly newsletter and a hike report written and submitted for publication in the newsletter. To be eligible for the tee shirt, your name must appear on the hike report printed in the TEHCC newsletter. To be eligible for either of these awards, the hike must take place between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2006 and a hike report be submitted in time for publication in the February 2007 TEHCC newsletter. The awards will be presented at the Spring 2007 TEHCC Dinner Meeting.

To schedule hikes, please contact Neil Dotson, or phone (423-323-3493). Neil arranges hikes quarterly, sending out a call for hikes for the coming quarter about 6 weeks in advance; that's a good time to schedule a hike for the coming quarter, but Neil can add hikes at any time, and hikes beyond the coming quarter are always welcome.

If you have questions, feel free to contact any member of the Steering Committee.

[TEHCC Steering Committee](#).

So lets get out there and hike!

Smokies North Shore Road

Joe DeLoach reporting



At the time the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP) was formed, there was a road along the north bank of the Little Tennessee River in Swain County, North Carolina that ran west from Bryson City and connected some of the settlements and logging camps along streams such as Hazel and Eagle Creeks. When Fontana Dam was constructed in the early 1940's, the lake impoundment flooded this road. The forerunner of the U. S. Department of the Interior promised Swain County that a new road along the north shore of Fontana Lake would be built to replace the impounded old road. Construction on what has been termed the North Shore Road was begun in the 1960's, but only a few miles were built from Bryson City to around Noland Creek because of high cost and significant environmental impact (this section is often termed "The Road to Nowhere").

A controversy over whether to build this road has simmered to this day. Advocates claim that the federal government needs to fulfill its promise to the county and to descendents of the former residents to visit the graves of their ancestors, and tout the potential economic benefits of opening more access to the Park to one of the poorer counties in western North

Carolina. Opponents cite projected costs to build the road of \$500 million and possibly much more, the environmental damage and incursion into a largely primeval area that would result, other options that exist for the families to visit these areas, and offer an alternative of a monetary settlement of \$52 million to Swain County as a less expensive, less damaging, and more economically stimulating alternative. The Swain County Commission has voted in favor of the monetary settlement over the new road, but the U. S. representative for that district has much influence over the Interior Department budget and has earmarked money for its possible construction. The GSMNP has issued a draft environmental impact statement listing the full construction, the monetary settlement, and a no action alternative among others. Generally these statements identify a preferred alternative, but in this case none was identified. Information on the draft environmental impact statement can be found on a GSMNP web site at Northshoreroad.info. Among the impacts this new road would have would be to the Appalachian Trail, which crosses Fontana Dam and then runs up an old road that would become part of the new one. The new road would also likely be visible from Shuckstack Fire Tower and possibly other points along the Trail. For these reasons, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy is opposing construction of the new road and favors the monetary settlement to Swain County. This issue and the ATC position has been communicated to A.T.-maintaining clubs and a mechanism for comment is being established on the ATC web site at Appalachiantrail.org.

The TEHCC A.T. Committee has discussed this issue and believes that Club members and affiliates should be aware of the road proposal and the potential impact to the Appalachian Trail and GSMNP. The ATC web site above will provide a good source of information on ongoing developments in this issue and how to comment if you should wish to do so. Public meetings which are scheduled around the Smokies in February will also provide good avenues for comment. Information on these meetings can be found on the GSMNP web site, Northshoreroad.info.

Annual APES/TEHCC Joint Winter Party

Friday February, 10th 2006 (7:00pm – 11:00pm)

The 2006 annual APE's Winter Party will be another joint party with our friends from the Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club (TEHCC). The party will be at Eastman's Lodge.

Ed Montgomery will present an exciting slide show on featuring a multi-day canoe trip on San Juan River. It is sure to be entertaining.

San Juan River Trip 2005

"Rivers and canyons are magical places. They are serene, beautiful, captivating on the one hand; they are stark, hostile, foreboding on the other. The river is moody. One day it is but a trickle, w hisper, as it plays in its boulder-strew n bed; the next day it is a torrent, raging through the canyon, tripping its banks of sand, boulders, entire trees. But these are its privileges, here in the domicile of the mighty San Juan." - San Juan Canyons River Guide

Two parties of Apes traveled down the San Juan this past Fall and both experienced unique and memorable trips. This slide show summarizes the events of one of those trips and makes an attempt to capture the beauty and rage of the magnificent San Juan River. Older, retired, and somewhat warped Apes may enjoy the humor as well!

As in the past, we will have a covered dish dinner. The club will provide main dish, bread, soft drinks, ice, cups, plates, napkins, and eating utensils. Everyone should bring an appetizer, vegetable, salad, or desert, along with an appropriate serving utensil. Of course, it's BYOB if desired. APE's t-shirts, sweatshirts and stickers will be on sale. Start your holiday shopping early this year! For questions, call Mike Morrow at (423) 245- 8045. We will have exciting whitewater videos. Feel free to bring any videos you have to watch. Bring your used gear to sell.

So come on out and enjoy the fun, food and fellowship at the annual Joint APE's/TEHCC Winter Party.

Directions to Eastman's Lodge:

If you know how to get to Bay's Mountain Park, you know how to get there. When you get to the Y in the road that goes to Bay's Mountain Park to the left and Eastman Recreation area to the right, go right. The Lodge is on the left after you enter the recreation area. You can't miss it.

If you do not know how to get to the park, follow these directions: Get to (I-181 or I-26) / I-81 split and go north toward Kingsport. Exit the interstate at the Meadow view Parkway exit and make a left turn. You are now on Meadow view Parkway/Reservoir Rd. Follow the small brown signs that direct you to Bay's Mountain Park on Reservoir Rd. There will be a lot of curves in the road. Be sure not to veer off Reservoir Rd. in the turns. Other roads connect to reservoir in a few of the turns. There will be a large sign directing you to take a right off Reservoir to get to Bay's Mountain Park. Take this right. You will come to the Y in the road. Go right at the Y to enter the Eastman Recreation Area. The lodge is on the left after you enter the recreation area.

A.T. Committee Changes Leadership

Submitted by Steve Perri

A.T. Committee Chair Steps Down as a Past One Steps Back In

It is with mixed emotions I step down as the TEHCC A.T. Committee Chair. My term began in 1998, and after 8 yrs of service, I can say that I have definitely grown in my knowledge of the cooperative relationships by working with the USFS, ATC and other clubs and I have established a number of new friendships. I can also say that in many ways I'm a little relieved to turn things over to Joe DeLoach for his second term to carry on with the club's responsibilities. As I reflect back, there have been a number of "new challenges" the club has been involved in over this time beginning with the washing out of the bridges in Laurel Fork Wilderness, the winter rehabilitation project for Round Bald, the Putnam Mine, new cell towers near the trail corridor, proposed wind-powered generating farms, the reorganization of ATC and the 2005 biennial conference. So after all these changes and challenges, what could happen next?

In many ways I am fortunate and proud to have had the support and dedication of many volunteers; especially the members of the A.T. Committee and the retirees. Over the years, our club's reputation has been improved in the trail community by our club's ability to put more hours in to trail maintenance and by conducting more community events. This credit can be attributed to several key people including Bill Stowell for carrying on and expanding our Adopt-a-trail program, Bob Peoples and Ed Oliver for starting and coordinating the Hardcore Program and the ASU Fall orientation program. Bob continues to recruit thru-hikers and college students to do volunteer work as a means of educating users of the trail of the need to put effort back in to the Trail since it needs TLC over time.



Steve Perri at Southern Highlands 2005

Our retirees also have done a tremendous amount of work over the years doing all kinds of projects on Tuesdays and on many other Saturdays. With all this support, we have been able to take advantage of more Konnarock Crew time over the years requesting 3 to 5 weeks per year whereas most clubs ask for 1-3 weeks per year. As we have been able to bolster all this work above and beyond our regular or traditional maintainer's level, we have been able to double the number of maintenance hours per year.

The most satisfying part of my responsibilities has been working with the many dedicated volunteers and agency partners. Through my role as the A.T. Committee Chair, I relied very heavily on the advice of former club leaders. In the absence of my responsibilities in this capacity, I would not have the opportunity to get to know people like Collins Chew, Carl Fritz, Darrol Nickels, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples and John Thompson. I would have especially missed the opportunities to get to know Frank Oglesby and Ray Hunt. Bruce Cunningham was "My Guy Monday thru Friday" doing lots of my leg work during my working daytime hours and facilitating a lot of the biennial planning. I have had the pleasure to work with Morgan Sommerville over the years and have learned a great deal from his outdoor ethics, philosophy and unique style working with others. My internal cross-check between ATC matters and the club I have heavily relied upon Ray Hunt and Steve Wilson for lots of sound advice. Within the USFS I have been fortunate getting to know and work with district rangers Terry Bowerman, Candace Wyman, and Paul Bradley. Within ATC in Harpers Ferry, I had the opportunity to work with the new Directors in planning for the biennial conference including Karen Kinney, Marty Bartels, and Mari Omland.

So it is with great pleasure that I can say whew! The only regret that I have is that I wasn't able to get our Local Management Plan finished during my term. I do plan on working with Steve Wilson to put the finishing touches on it so we can circulate it for approval and hopefully post it on the website to make it more accessible. As I was preparing for the Putnam Mine deposition, I went back to our LMP for our historical policies and found this to be a valuable resource. Hopefully we can put it in place again for any future challenges that Joe DeLoach may have to refer to!

Naming a Shelter and Providing a Tribute to Ray Hunt

Joe DeLoach reporting

This summer, we will construct our first new shelter in 25 years, along the Elk River Relocation we opened a couple of years ago. This shelter has been badly needed as there is currently a walk of about 20 miles between shelters. We have a location selected, a design approved, materials purchased, and workers lined up (though we can always use volunteers - look for notices in the spring). But, we can't just call it "that new shelter" - we need a name. We're soliciting Club members and affiliates for names. Although we have a couple of existing shelters named for individuals (Stan Murray, Clyde Smith), this practice is discouraged in favor of place names on a map (such as No Business Knob and Watauga Lake) or other geographical or historic features (such as Overmountain Victory and Double Springs). The new shelter is not located right at or very near a mountain top, gap, or major stream, so there is not an obvious name for it. If you'd like to offer suggestions, please contact Joe at 423-229-1602 or at .

Although we aren't planning to name the new shelter after an individual, the A.T. Committee

strongly desires to establish a suitable tribute to Ray Hunt, who did so much for our Club and for ATC. A couple of suggestions have been made. Ray pushed very hard and successfully for a walkway to be added to the bridge over the Nolichucky River at Chestoa, and one suggestion was for a bronze plaque honoring Ray to be embedded in the concrete of the bridge and walkway where hikers could see it. Another suggestion was to utilize the Forest Service information kiosk at Carvers Gap and have information about Ray and possibly others that have made such substantial contributions to the A.T.; Stan Murray and Frank Oglesby come to mind. A third suggestion was to build a suitable memorial at the new relocation in the open area on Cross Mountain. These suggestions aren't mutually exclusive, and we would welcome any others. We should consider permanence and protection; unfortunately, vandalism is pretty common throughout our Trail section. Again, if you have ideas for a suitable tribute to Ray or want to cast a vote in favor of any of these suggestions, please contact Joe at the above telephone or e-mail address.

TEHCC Welcomes New Members



Bob Hembre
Vitaly Nazarov
Tony Norton
Shelley
Stahlman

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](#).

Steele Creek Park Trails (Bristol, TN) February 4, 2006

Leader: Vic Hasler, 423-239-0388;

Rating: B/3/C

Steele Creek Park is the third largest city park in Tennessee. Plans are to make a complete circle of the park lake while going from the front entrance to the Rooster back entrance, including Hemlock Hollow, High Ridge, Lake Ridge, and Lakeside with possible spur to Quarry Cave and Rock Cut trails. The total distance is estimated to be around 5 miles at a leisurely pace. Meet at the Colonial Heights location at 9:30AM or the Steele Creek main parking lot at 10:00ish (park opening time) with water, light lunch, and appropriate clothing (will cancel in case of heavy rain/snow that day since hiking for enjoyment). There is a \$1/car entrance fee. Please email or call the leader if you have any questions and to let me know if you are coming so I have a headcount.

Hot Springs - Tanyard Gap Loop, February 18, 2006

Leader: Mary Ellen Ress, 423-349-6536;

Rating: A/2/B

This will be about a 11.2 mile loop hike out of Hot Springs, N.C. We will start out by going 7.2 miles north on the A.T. from Hot Springs, then 4 miles on the Roundtop Ridge Trail ending up back at Hot Springs. There is quite a bit of elevation gain on the A.T. to Tanyard Gap, making this a moderately difficult hike. Be sure to bring food and water and dress appropriately for a winter hike. Also, since the weather can be unpredictable, it's best to let me know you're coming in case I have to cancel or reschedule the hike due to icy roads, etc. Meet next to the McDonalds in Colonial Heights at 8 AM.

Annual Maintenance Dinner - Friday, February 24, 2006

We will have our annual dinner to kick off the main maintenance season on Friday, February 24 at the Eastman Lodge.

5:30 Social Time
6:00 Dinner
6:30 Meeting and Open Discussion

Mary Cunningham and Ed Oliver have graciously volunteered to provide dinner again. If you have been before, you know you can't beat the quality for the few dollars cost.

I will have a packet of information for each maintenance section.

Please contact Carl Fritz (423-477-4669 or) to let me know how many people may come for dinner, so we can plan accordingly.

Little Greenbriar Trail, 900 miler, February 25, 2006

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

Rating: A/3/B

This hike will involve 1900 feet of climbing the Little Greenbriar Trail, then a 1700 foot descent of the Laurel Falls Trail to Fighting Creek Gap. Total hike distance is 8.3 miles. Contact the hike leader to get further details and reserve a spot.

Smokies Dayhike: Rich Mountain Loop, March 4, 2006

Leader: Neil Dotson, 423-323-3493

Rating: B/2/B

I know this risks merely being a running Hiking Club joke, the Hike That Never Was, but here goes again. Unless erosion has worn it away since I first scheduled this hike, Rich Mountain is still in the western part of the Smokies, standing 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 feet to 3700 feet 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 still be short. Please call

for more information as the time approaches. Watch the weather; dress appropriately for a late 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*)

Little Stony Creek, Saturday, January 8, 2006

reported by Mary Ellen Ress

12 people and one dog made this delightful hike up beautiful Little Stony Creek in the Jefferson National Forest, just north of Dungannon, Virginia. The day started out cloudy and a bit nippy, and although there was no ice on the waterfalls, we hiked most of the way in snow and saw plenty of icicles of all sizes hanging from the cliff walls. There are two significant waterfalls in the gorge, and many smaller cascades. When we reached the road at the upper end of the gorge, we turned right for about a half-mile and then on out to a viewpoint looking down into the gorge we had just hiked up. The sun warmed us enough to enjoy lunch on the rocks before we headed back down to the starting point in the Hanging Rock Recreation Area. Hikers for this approximately seven mile trek were (from left to right below) Rodney Baker, Taylor Pickard, Mike and Tina Dexter (first timers with our club - welcome!), Emily Baker, Rolla Wade, Phyllis Cairnes, Kim Peters, Kat Johnson, Piper the dog, Mary Ellen Ress, and Jack and Jeannette Ralston (not in picture).





Icicles along the trail



Emily examines some icicles



The Lower Falls



The Upper Falls



Mairzy and Kat along the creek



Picking a lunch spot



Lunch



Lunchtime view

A.T. Section Maintenance and Special Project Reports (Past)



Name: Carl Fritz

Date: December 28, 2005

Purpose: Cut Hazard Trees and Continue Bridge Repair

Location: Section 8, Shook Branch Recreation to 1 mile north of US 321

People: Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver

Summary: We felled six large dead pines in the camping areas north of US 321. These were hazard trees and a couple would almost certainly have come down this year. We also cleared two minor blowdowns from the trail. Then we installed lag screws in the hand rail on the foot bridge at Shook Branch Recreation Area.

Name: Carl Fritz

Date: January 3, 2006

Purpose: Trail Rehab

Location: Section 20, Just north of Spivey Gap

People: Ken Buchanan, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples

Summary: We continued rehab of trail near Spivey Gap. We conceded to the rain after lunch. One more trip will complete this rehab. A couple of gentlemen in their seventies picked this day to take their first hike on the A.T.. They had been promising each other for several years and today was the day. They hiked two miles north, returned and started hiking trail south. They were having a great time inspite of the rain.

Name: Joe DeLoach

Date: January 7, 2006

Purpose: Cut Blowdowns and Briars

Location: Section 12, 19E to High Point

People: Craig DeLoach and Joe DeLoach

Summary: We set out for a recreational hike but carried a saw which was put to use on a

pine tangle at the bottom of Bishop Hollow, a maple on the old road below High Point, and a few smaller blowdowns and briars. We left two blowdowns on the old road that were easy for hikers to get through, but would provide some deterrent to ATV's and horses. Trail is clear. The short sidehill relo we put in a few years ago just below High Point is turning into a ditch and could use a few waterbars and some rehab. The stile south of Bishop Hollow is gone and the barbwire fence is broken. Lots of bottles and other trash has been dumped at Bear Branch Road.

Name: Carl Fritz

Date: January 10, 2006

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 20, Just north of Spivey Gap

People: Paul Benfield, Bruce Cunningham, Bill Elderbrock, Dave Dunham, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples

Summary: We completed one rehab section we have been working on by completing the digging and installing a couple of side logs. We started a small rehab section beginning right at the old road. It was great to have shirt sleeve weather in the middle of January.

Name: Old Timers Hiking Club - CB Willis reporting

Date: January 11, 2006

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to Cherry Gap Shelter

People: Faye Guinn, Howard Guinn, Dave McMillin, Gil Derouen, Daryl Loyd, Tim Shipley, Carl Kincheloe, Mike Hupko, CB Willis

Summary: Cleared three trees from the trail and removed other debris as needed. Checked the spring at the shelter where we had re-worked and installed new pipes in the fall. The flow was great; estimated at 2-gallons per minute.

Name: Joe DeLoach

Date: January 15, 2006

Purpose: Cut Blowdowns, Briars and Brush

Location: Section 19, Indian Grave Gap to Nolichucky River

People: Craig DeLoach, Joe DeLoach, and Bill Stowell

Summary: Craig and Bill started at Indian Grave Gap and worked south. Joe started later at the outfitter site and worked from there to Chestoa and back. All used hand tools. We also cut two large blowdowns with a chainsaw just south of the outfitter site. There are five blowdowns on the steep section between Jones Branch and the shelter that will need to be cut with a chainsaw.

Name: Old Timers Hiking Club - CB Willis reporting

Date: January 20, 2006

Purpose: Inspect Section and Do Needed Maintenance

Location: Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap to Iron Mountain Gap

People: Howard Guinn, Faye Guinn, Mike Hupko

Summary: Removed about 10 small downed trees from trail. Identified future work. Need to cut 8 large trees lying across the trail using chainsaw, clean out water bars and dips, replace a step near the Apple Orchard, and rework the spring near the Apple Orchard.

Name: Steve Perri

Date: January 20, 2006

Purpose: Conference Call with USFS on Relos

People: Steve Perri, Joe DeLoach, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver

Summary: We discussed A.T. relocation responsibilities between the Appalachian Ranger District and the Unaka. The Appalachian Ranger District agreed to take the lead on rels between Grassy Ridge and Yellow Mt Gap and the Unaka will take the lead on Big Bald. We agreed to time tables to start NEPA's and estimated time for approval vs our previous discussion with the Watauga.

Name: Joe DeLoach

Date: January 22, 2006

Purpose: Blowdown Clearing and Trail Inspection

Location: Section 1, Damascus to campsite 2 miles south

People: Craig DeLoach and Joe DeLoach

Summary: The Mt. Rogers A.T. Club hiked from Damascus to the state line on New Year's Day and reported a large blowdown obstructing the Trail at the campsite about 2 miles from Damascus. Their report was accurate; it was lying lengthwise in the Trail and was too big for hand tools. We cut it out just before a January thunderstorm hit, with lightning a little too close for comfort. We cut a few other small trees, none of which were serious obstructions. The Trail is clear to this point.

We had received another report of mountain bikers using this section and not yielding to requests from local residents to quit biking on the A.T. We spoke to those residents who said they thought they had convinced the bikers to stay off the A.T.; they said they would inform authorities if this continued. One resident has a class at Emory & Henry that adopted the section in the Big Laurel Branch Wilderness about ten years ago; and they may be interested in resuming adoption of a section, possibly this one. We did not notice adverse impacts from the mountain biking, but it would pose a danger to hikers.

Name: Carl Fritz

Date: January 24, 2006

Purpose: Relocate Trail

Location: Section 17, Just south of Iron Mt Gap

People: Paul Benfield, Bruce Cunningham, Bill Elderbrock, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples

Summary: We did some tidying up of trail dug with students from Watauga College in the fall. We installed almost a dozen steps and a side log at an old road intersection. We hope the steps will discourage horse traffic.

Name: Carl Fritz

Date: January 24, 2006

Purpose: Record Trail Relocation for Archaeologist

Location: Section 16b, North of apple orchard

People: Ed Oliver, Mike Hupko

Summary: Ed Oliver and Mike Hupko recorded distances, side hill slope and digital photographs of trail relocation to submit to U.S. Forest Service.

Name: Carl Fritz

Date: January 25, 2006

Purpose: Recruit ASU Students; Arrange Maintenance Trips

Location: Appalachian State University

People: Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples

Summary: Ed Oliver and Bob Peoples representing TEHCC, and Julie Judkins and Ted Wilson representing Konnarock Crew, attended a fair at Appalachian State University. The students showed considerable interest in Konnarock crew. There may even be some leader applications. The Appalachian Trail Club arranged three maintenance trips with our club for Saturdays in February and March.

Name: Joe DeLoach

Date: January 26, 2006

Purpose: First A.T. Committee Meeting of 2006

Location: Kingsport

People: Steve Banks, Bruce Cunningham, Joe DeLoach, Bill Elderbrock, Carl Fritz, Mike Humko, Darrol Nickels, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Steve Perri, Kim Peters, Bill Stowell, John Thompson

Summary: The Committee recognized Steve Perri's eight years of service. Club officers were reviewed and are posted on the web site. Trail relocation priorities and timing were reviewed. We support the Scott Booher Tract relocation proposed by the FS and ATC and observed by Ed and Bruce, but not as a higher priority relative to those on our list through at least 2010. We'll ask for four weeks of Konnarock time for 2008 and 2009, and request that 2006 Konnarock time be fully devoted to the Unaka Mountain relo. We will finish White Rocks with Club and student volunteers. We had some suggestions but did not agree on a name for the new shelter and will solicit ideas from the Club. We will also solicit ideas for an appropriate tribute to Ray Hunt. The Osborne Tract handicap-accessible relo has not been started; waiting for the ground to freeze. We favor Darrol's proposal to plant more apple trees at Weedy Gap, as long as the Forest Service does not object due to more difficult mowing. The A.T. Committee favors taking a Club position against the Smokies North Shore Road similar to that of ATC. Joe will check into this. We'd like to complete work on our Local Management Plan revision; Steve Perri will solicit volunteers.

Name: Collins Chew

Date: January 27, 2006

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 5, Tenn 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter

People: Janice Alley, Mike Alley, Olin Babb, Charles Beggerow, Lee Bockman, Ken Buckhanan, Steve Cathcart, Collins Chew, Anne Cosby, June Donaldson, Carol Dunham, Bob Harvey, Jan Mather, Chuck Mather

Summary: The Friday Hikers cleared the A.T. from Cross Mountain to Iron Mountain Shelter in glorious weather. We cleared all blowdowns except for easy stepovers, clipped briars, etc. to leave the trail clear and in good shape. Blazes are in good shape, also. Several of the about 10 significant blowdowns were challenging as our bow saw was too small to saw all the way through some, and the pruning saw was small also.

Photos courtesy of Bob Harvey



The Friday Hikers Maintenance Crew



Ken Buchanan attacks the biggest blowdown of the day - with a bow saw.



The Friday Hikers' outstanding-achievement award is jointly shared this week by Ken and Collins, who labored mightily to improve the trail