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<u>NEXT TWO MONTHS</u>				
			<u>Leader</u>	
Dec 9	Buffalo Mountain Park Trails	B/2/A	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388

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

Opening Ceremony for Handicap Accessible Trail

Collins Chew and Carl Fritz contributing



Opening ceremonies for the new handicap accessible trail starting trail north of TN 91 were held on Friday, November 17. The event included a ribbon cutting and short speeches to celebrate the opening of the second official handicapped accessible section of trail on the entire A.T. Attending were representatives from TEHCC, ATC, US Forest Service, Weyerhaeuser (donors), construction contractors, The Nature Conservancy (also donors and cranberry caretakers) and the The Elizabethton Star.

The weather was cloudy, occasionally windy, and also with occasional misty rain and light snow. The cold misty rain and wind made us appreciate short speeches even more. Most attendees took a cool walk on this beautiful half mile section of trail to see snow covered trees on the nearby mountains. The Friday Hikers continued on for a 6.5 mile hike which was made very special by considerable stretches of rime ice decorating every twig with ribbons of ice over 1 1/2 inches wide in places. TEHCC maintainers also did some minor improvement of several approaches to bog bridges.

The Friday Hikers were: Olin Babb, Kathy and Jerry Case, Matthew Chew, Anne Cosby, Carol and Dave Dunham, Sam Robinette, and Collins Chew. The TEHCC Maintainers were: Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Bruce Cunningham, Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Tim

Stewart.

Click on photo to enlarge, all photos courtesy of Kathy Case



Rwanda "A Dark Past, A Bright Future"

Submitted by Garry Luttrell

Many TEHCC members have mentioned to me that they were not able to attend the Fall Dinner Meeting and see my presentation on Rwanda. I will plan on showing this program in CR 223 of the Employee Center, B-310, on December 11 at 6:30 pm. Contact me at or phone 239-9854, if you have questions.

TEHCC Rental Equipment: Kelty Expedition Tioga Backpack

Submitted by Vic Hasler, Rental Equipment Coordinator



If you are going to be the "sherpa" for your outing, then consider this HB-21 backpack. At a stated 5740 cubic inches, it is the largest of the TEHCC rental equipment. The external frame pack has a large center space with an internal divider plus six outside pockets to keep needed gear more accessible. I used it this past summer to carry two 2-person dome tents plus sleeping gear, clothing, and personal supplies for a weekend trip. Warning is to not overdo it as the large volume will allow significant weight to be packed.

This backpack is meant for larger hikers (5'6" or taller) with torso lengths in the 16-21 inch range. With the large size and external frame, this pack is designed for hikers who stick to established trails. There are a number of adjustments in the straps and frame that can be used to gain a more comfortable fit.

This pack may be the granddaddy of our fleet as existing information says that it was purchased in March 1990. Current replacement cost is around \$170. It is in very sound condition with no holes or sharp edges. The white strings in the picture were added by someone, but could be cut off. The black string is the pull down for the top cover and needs to be re-centered.



Reminder to Potential Eastman Chemical Company Retirees

If you plan to retire from Eastman and would like to continue receiving the TEHCC newsletter, please send Richard Colberg () an e-mail note with your home e-mail address (if you have e-mail at home) as well as your home street address. We prefer to send the newsletter via e-mail to save us time and money, and so you can receive it (and any late hike notices) in a more timely manner. However, we would also like your street address so we can still reach you if your e-mail address changes.

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

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

Buffalo Mountain Park Trails, December 9, 2006

Leader: Vic Hasler, 239-0388,

Rating: B/2/A

This hike will be a group choice once we meet, factoring in the weather and the need to be off the mountain before the gate closes at 5 p.m. Note the stiff rating as I am considering a grand circular hike of the perimeter trails – estimated to be six miles and up/down 1100' from the parking lot to Tip Top and around past White Rocks overlook. There are also a number of “geocache” containers to find using a GPS in high-tech orienteering. Meet at the usual spot by McDonalds in Colonial Heights at 8:30 a.m. for carpooling the 22-mile drive or at 9:15 a.m. at the park trailhead in Johnson City. Wear appropriate clothing layers for the likely cold weather (this hike will be postponed in case of heavy rain or icy roads). Bring snacks, lunch and drinking water in a daypack. Contact the hike leader by e-mail or call 239-0388 if you have any questions.

Special Activity and Trip Reports (*Past*)

Hike Report: Doe River Gorge; October 21–22, 2006

Submitted by Steve Falling

For our fall overnight cabin trip this year we again chose nearby Doe River Gorge (DRG). This beautiful, Hampton, Tennessee camp has well-equipped cabins that are available for rental during the non-summer months. We had the large cabin (a short walk across the river) which has two, large bunk rooms, great room with fireplace, kitchen, and deck overlooking the Doe River.

Saturday we moved into the cabin, then after lunch took a short hike in the gorge. Next we drove up to Dennis Cove and hiked the A.T. down to Laurel Falls. The autumn colors were almost at their peak and the hikes were beautiful on this sunny Saturday. Ellen showed her fly fishing skills in the river near the cabin by catching a couple trout. From the food we packed in, the ladies made a delicious Italian dinner that evening. Mark Cox showed his

puzzle solving skills by leading his team to victory in a jigsaw puzzle race that night (three teams with three identical 300-piece puzzles). Sunday morning we had a breakfast of eggs, sausage, cinnamon rolls, coffee, juice, etc. On Sunday morning we packed up and returned to the main camp area. That Sunday was also the day of DRG's yearly open house with many activities to enjoy, including train rides up the gorge.

A great time was had by all and reservations will be made to return there again next year. The overnight hikers were Steve and Julie Falling; Matt, Laurie, Rebecca, Anna and Timothy Barker; Mark, Karen, Sarah and Andrew Cox; Greg, Beth, Katy and Lauren Neal; and Penie Lester, Dong Zhang, Ellen Turner, and Alan and Billie Wonders.

click on photo to enlarge, photos courtesy of Steve Falling



Anniversary Hike: Cross Mountain to Watauga Dam Road, October 27, 2006

Kent & Nancy Wilson reporting

On this rainy and windy day, we hiked from Cross Mountain to Watauga Dam Road. Nancy said as we were hiking that it was better than being at work; however, it would have been more fun on a pretty day. The trail was in pretty good shape. We only met four other hikers (backpacking - three of them in blue jeans and no rain gear). This finished the anniversary hikes for Nancy. Making this hike were Kent and Nancy Wilson.

Anniversary Hike: Indian Grave Gap to the Nolichucky River, November 3, 2006

Kent Wilson reporting

Since Nancy was out of town, I had Miss Janet shuttle me for this hike. It was a beautiful day for a hike. It was pretty cold in the shade (still frost and ice, even in the afternoon), but very warm in the sun. The views of Erwin were outstanding. This completed the anniversary hikes for Kent.

Hike Report: Smokies 900 miler, Hiker's Choice, November 24, 2006

G. S. Luttrell reporting

The hiker's choice of trails for the day was made at the Wye; we decided to start and finish at the Cades Cove picnic area. The route included the Anthony Creek and Bote Mountain

trails up to Spence Field for lunch; then, the A.T., Russell Field, and Anthony Creek trails back to the picnic area for a total of 13 miles. Even though it was late November, it was an outstanding day for hiking; warm and sunny. Enjoying a view of Thunderhead and Rocky Top from Spence Field are hikers Debi Berry and Garry Luttrell (see photo).



Anniversary Hikes, for the record

Dave and Carol Dunham reporting

Carol and I have completed all of the hikes for the Eastman section this year. Here is the list of hikes and dates completed:

- Spivey Gap to Chestoa...Nov. 13, 2006
- Chestoa to Indian Grave Gap...May 28, 2006
- Indian Grave Gap to Iron Mountain Gap...Sept. 22, 2006
- Iron Mountain Gap to Hughes Gap...July 28, 2006
- Hughes Gap to Carvers Gap...Nov. 25, 2006
- Carvers Gap to Yellow Mountain Gap...June 30, 2006
- Yellow Mountain Gap to 19E...June 16, 2006
- 19E to Bitter End...April 21, 2006
- Bitter End to Dennis Cove...March 31, 2006
- Dennis Cove to Shook Branch...May 5, 2006
- Shook Branch to Watauga Dam Road...March 3, 2006

- Watauga Dam Road to Tenn. 91...June 2, 2006
- Tenn. 91 to Low Gap...March 17, 2006
- Low Gap to Damascus...Nov. 4, 2006



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

Reporting: CB Willis for the Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: October 30, 2006

Purpose: Regular fall maintenance

Location: Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap to Iron Mountain Gap; also Section 17 to where the A.T. crosses the gravel road

People: Faye Guinn, Howard Guinn, Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko

Summary: We renewed blazes and cleared 9 trees from trail from Greasy Creek Gap to Iron Mountain Gap. We have one large tree about 2.5 miles north of Iron Mountain Gap to cut later. It is about 5 feet above the treadway and trail is passable. The tree is 20 inches plus in diameter. We also cut one tree south of Iron Mountain Gap.

Reporting: Bill Stowell

Date: October 30, 2006

Purpose: Check shelter and leaning tree

Location: Section 19, Curley Maple Shelter

People: Bill Stowell, Craig Deloach

Summary: We hiked in to Curley Maple Shelter to look at a large tree leaning over the shelter. We took photos and forwarded to Carl Fritz.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: October 31, 2006

Purpose: Relocate trail

Location: Section 11b, About 0.75 mile south of Moreland Gap Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Bruce Cunningham, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

Summary: We caulked some minor roof holes in Moreland Gap Shelter. We also installed some water bars in a section of the trail between relocations. Most importantly, we completed the trail relocation trail south of the shelter. In this area we only have one more approved relocation and it is trail north of the shelter.

Reporting: CB Willis for the Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: November 6, 2006

Purpose: Clear trail of reported blowdowns

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to Low Gap

People: Faye Guinn, Howard Guinn, Mike Hupko

Summary: We cut 7 trees from across the trail and 8 leaning trees near the trail. We cleaned out the gutter at Cherry Gap shelter and cleaned out several water bars.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: November 11, 2006

Purpose: Relocate trail

Location: Section 16b, Just trail north of Weedy Gap

People: Paul Benfield, Bruce Cunningham, Mary Cunningham, Mike Hupko, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Brandon Bragg, Diego Troya, Aurora Modovanyi, Kevin O'Donnell; Students: Michael Sherburne, Grace Palmer, Emily Ball, Heather Walling, Jamie Pore, Alesia Leggett, Timothy Pharis; and Hiker: Mike Speed

Summary: Thanks to Kevin O'Donnell, seven ETSU students, and some new volunteers, over 400 feet of new trail was dug. Everyone was within ten minutes of the vehicles before the rains started.

Reporting: CB Willis for the Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: November 15, 2006

Purpose: Checking out trail

Location: Section 17 and 18, Low Gap to Indian Grave Gap

People: Faye Guinn, Howard Guinn

Summary: We checked out trail for damage from the recent storms. We removed several small limbs, two logs and a tree top. There are 8 blowdowns that will require chainsaw work; 3 of them need to be taken out. Other small blowdowns are in the last mile of the trail. We will take care of all the blowdowns ASAP.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: November 17, 2006

Purpose: Opening ceremony for accessible trail and repairing bog bridges

Location: Osborne tract Section 4b and south of TN 91 Section 5

People: Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Collins Chew, Bruce Cunningham, Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

Summary: The primary event was opening ceremonies for the new accessible trail starting trail north of TN 91. Many people were in attendance including representatives from TEHCC, ATC, US Forest Service, Weyerhaeuser, Nature Conservancy, and news media. Most took a cool walk on this beautiful trail to see snow covered trees on nearby mountains. We also did some minor improvement of several approaches to bog bridges.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: November 21, 2006

Purpose: Rehab trail and cut blowdowns

Location: Section 12d, Bog Bridges just south of Campbell Hollow Road, High Point to 19E

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

Summary: With blue skies and snow in the mountains and trees, we were treated to some picturesque views of Beech, Grandfather, Roan and Unaka Mountains. We completed trail rehab at the lower end of High Point to eliminate the cutting of a switchback and lessen the grade. We installed some locust posts for blazes in the middle of High Point to reduce confusion between the A.T. and the many ATV paths. We also cleared blowdowns from High Point to 19E, and transported flat rocks to use as supports under the wooden supports for the bog bridges near Campbell Hollow Road.

Reporting: CB Willis for the Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: November 23, 2006

Purpose: Clear reported blowdowns

Location: Section 18, Indian Grave Gap to A.T. crossing of FS 230

People: Howard Guinn, Faye Guinn

Summary: We started toward Low Gap to clear known blowdowns. The gate was open only because someone had pulled the post. Hunters had gotten stuck in the snow and ice and had to be pulled out. The ice was so bad we turned around and worked from Indian Grave Gap where we cleared 5 blowdowns and removed all the small debris that was on the trail.

Reporting: Bill Berry

Date: November 24, 2006

Purpose: Clear trail of blow downs and cut where needed

Location: Section 20b, From Spivey Gap, 3.5 miles toward Temple Hill Gap

People: Bill Berry

Summary: Some dead trees were down, which I cut before they could fall on trail. I also cut several downed tree limbs. Overall, trail is in good shape.

Reporting: CB Willis for the Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: November 27, 2006

Purpose: Clear known blowdowns

Location: Section 17, Switchback on south side Unaka Mt to switchback on north side near Low Gap

People: Mike Hupko, Howard Guinn, Faye Guinn

Summary: We cut and removed 12 trees that were across the trail and 9 dead or leaning trees near the trail. Our trail is now clear of known blowdowns and this is probably our last maintenance trip for the season.