

Note: To submit an article for the newsletter, send an email to:

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<u>NEXT TWO MONTHS</u>				
			<u>Leader</u>	
May 9-11	Bluestone River Trip (reservations required)	II-III	Terry Dougherty	423-323-2647 or 423-502-5177
May 10	John Hefferman Memorial Run	III-IV	T.B.D.	
May 18-20	Annual Hardcore Event with Thru-Hikers	Maintenance	Joe Deloach	423-229-1602
May 24-25	Novice Kayak Clinic	—	Scott Fisher	276-698-4644
May 24-26	APE's Memorial Day Soirée on the French Broad (Hot Springs, NC)	I-III	Bryan Hogan	276-546-3569
May 24	Bays in a Day	AA/2/A	Jake Mitchell	
May 31- June 1	AT Backpack: Grayson Highlands	AA/2/B	Jake Mitchell , Bill Fuller	
June 7-8	Swiftwater Rescue Class	—	Mike Morrow	423-292-3906
June 10 (Tues)	Lunch and Learn	Informative	Tim Schaefer	
June 14	Damascus Crawl	C/4/D	Jake Mitchell	
June 21	Beginner's Canoe & Kayak Trip – North Fork of the Holston	—	Ed Montgomery	423-247-7795

June 14	Pigeon and Lower Pigeon (Waterville Exit, I-40)	III and II	T.B.D.	
June 28	Nolichucky Gorge Trip	III-IV	T.B.D.	

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

Spring Dinner Meeting

Tim Schaefer Reporting

TEHCC held its annual Spring Dinner Meeting at the Eastman Lodge on Saturday, April 19th with seventy-two people attending. Bill Stowell's local waterfall slide show and Paul Worsham's excellent selection of beers and wines made the social hour very enjoyable and created great discussion points. From there we rolled into the Troutdale catered dinner which seemed to leave no one hungry, especially considering the rate they had to keep restocking the key-lime pies.



The presentations began with Morgan Sommerville of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy giving an update on the AT TN specialty license plate. The plate vote will go before the TN House on May 1st after which the last step to making this a reality is gathering at least 1000 commitments to purchase it. More information about the Tennessee plate can be found here, appalachiantrail.org/Tennessee_AT_License_Plate.

Jake Mitchell gave an update on the progress of the new TEHCC.org website. Jake and Bill Fuller have been working hard on this and hope to 'go live' in the near future so be on the lookout for the new site to appear one day! You can view the test site by clicking [here](#). Next were the awards presentations. Hiker of the Year was awarded to Kim Peters who received a walking stick. Ed Oliver received the Maintainer of the Year award and a \$25 Mahoney's gift certificate. The Stan Murray award and plaque went to Steve Banks for many reasons most notably of which was putting TEHCC.org on the world-wide-web. Terry Bowerman, District Ranger of the Nolichucky/Unaka Ranger District, awarded Forest Service volunteer patches for annual volunteer hours which was led by Carl Fritz who worked an amazing 818 hours on the AT in 2007. Club maintenance award patches for cumulative volunteer hours since our maintenance database was implemented in 1992 were also awarded; Ed Oliver is the first TEHCC maintainer to cross the 9000 hour threshold. Lastly 29 volunteers, each of who logged at least 60 hours of AT maintenance in 2007, received hats commemorating TEHCC's 60th anniversary of AT maintenance. Rounding out the evening was David Ramsey with his discussion on the Rocky Fork Tract Acquisition. Rocky Fork is a 10,000 acre watershed in East Tennessee that is rich in natural beauty. For generations the Rocky Fork tract has been privately owned but open to the public through a lease agreement with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. A potential sale of the property for residential development threatened this longstanding public access and the scenic and natural qualities of the tract. Thankfully various groups of local citizens, governmental entities, and many regional and national conservation groups have come together to purchase and protect the largest single unprotected tract in the entire Southern Appalachian corridor. The Conservation Fund, a group dedicated to protecting America's most important landscapes, is leading this conservation effort. Currently the owners have agreed to the sale for \$40 million under a multiyear funding plan

with the majority being federal and State of Tennessee contributions. David highlighted his presentations with amazing pictures that some couldn't believe were only a short drive away reminding everyone the need to protect this pristine section of the planet.

Photos from the meeting, all pictures courtesy of Tim Shaefer

Click on an image to view [full size](#)



Dale Douthat greets attendees



Ed Oliver receives award for 9000 hours from Carl Fritz



Social Hour



Joe Deloach announces maintenance award recipients



Paul and Lesa Worsham provide drinks during social hour



Awarding of the 60th Anniversary Hats



Lining up for Troutdale's dinner offering



Bill Elderbrock displays his new hat



Dinner Time!



Bob Peoples



Master of Ceremony, Ed Montgomery



Ed Montgomery presents the Stan Murray award to Steve Banks



Morgan Sommerville (L) and Ed Montgomery (R)



David Ramsey giving presentation on the Rock Fork Tract acquisition



Jake Mitchell describes the new club web-site



Collins Chew (L) and Jake Mitchell (R)



Terry Bowerman presents Forest Service Awards



Steve Banks, recipient of the 2007 Stan Murray Award

If you attended the dinner, please let us know your thoughts on the event, what you liked and what you didn't like and if you didn't attend we would really like to know what would make you attend in the future. We would love to hear everyone's thoughts on location, time of year, weekend night versus weekday night, food selection, price, length, presentations, etc... Please send any comments to .



Appalachian Trail Maintenance Statistics for 2007

Joe DeLoach reporting

Each year, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy compiles information on AT maintenance from the 31 Trail-maintaining clubs and special crews such as Konnarock. For 2007 this amounted to a whopping 196,620 hours! Volunteer time is valued at \$18.77 per hour, computed by a nonpartisan coalition of charities and foundations, which amounts to a trail-wide contribution of almost \$3.7 million. Statistics such as this illustrate why AT volunteerism is considered to be the model for cooperative public-private management in the U. S., if not the world. Some of the details within this compilation should make us very proud. TEHCC contributed 11,008 hours of the total, about 5.6%. This is the fourth highest of the 31 trail-maintaining clubs. Clearly, we need to work a lot of hours, because we have the third-longest Trail section at 132.2 miles. (We had the fourth-longest section for many years, but passed the Green Mountain Club when we opened the Elk River relocation.) This means we've work 83.3 hours per mile of Trail; which is 14th out of the 31 clubs, and second among the eight clubs that have more than 100 miles in their maintenance section. Also impressive are our individual volunteer totals. In 2007, we had 519 Trail volunteers, second highest among all the clubs and more than 10% of the total for all the clubs. This can be attributed to our

recruitment of hikers, college students, and adopters, as well as TEHCC members; which is being recognized as a leading practice within the AT community. (The Georgia Appalachian Trail Club should be commended with almost 18,000 volunteer hours and 329 volunteers on their 75 mile section.)

In the early 1990's TEHCC routinely heard complaints about our section; including blowdowns and weeds not being cut, Trail sliding off the mountain, and steep and rocky sections that were difficult to hike and not well marked. While we still get the occasional report about stinging nettles and poison ivy, we hear a lot fewer complaints and many more commendations than we did in those days. In short, we are doing a lot of things well. A lot of people are to be thanked for these results, but it remains critical to keep bringing in new folks for our maintenance program. If you're in these statistics, thanks so much for all you do, and if you aren't yet, come help us!



2009 Appalachian Trail Conference, July 17 – 24 Castleton State College, Castleton, Vermont

Submitted by Jake Mitchell

As you read in the [April TEHCC newsletter](#), the ATC has announced plans for the 2009 biennial conference in Castleton, Vermont hosted by the Green Mountain Club. Some members of TEHCC have already expressed interest in attending. The conference has three separate fees – registration, conference and meals, and dorm room. Discounts are available for those who volunteer to register and greet guests, lead hikes, park cars, etc. TEHCC would like to participate. Plans are being made to drive to Castleton in a rented 15-passenger van and stay for about a week. The group would definitely do some hiking on the AT in Vermont and/or New Hampshire and other fun sightseeing. If you are interested in attending, please contact .

Rental Equipment Inspection Thursday, June 5, 2008, 5-7pm Eastman Recreation Center, Room 115

*Submitted by Vic Hasler, Rental Equipment Coordinator,
423-229-2557; .*

One benefit of TEHCC membership is the ability to rent some gear, such as that extra/lighter/bigger tent needed for an outing or perhaps a backpack to check out a frame design or so that your buddy can go on your next outing. Each year, the Steering Committee and several club members set up all of the tents and look over all of the other rental equipment to ensure that it is in good condition. So, if you would like to see all the equipment that the club has for



rent actually set up, then come help us out this evening. Pizza and drinks are provided for all volunteers. Let Vic know beforehand if you have preference on pizza and soft drinks/water provided (contact info above), or else just show up. If you cannot make this invitation, then take a look at the equipment links being set up on the TEHCC rental equipment webpage, tehcc.org/rental. The tents are done, so I will be focusing on the backpacks next. Any feedback on this continuing effort is welcomed.



Cumberland Trail Big Dig 2008

Come on out volunteers we need your help!

All meals, tools and training will be provided

When: May 1st through June 14th (everyday of the week)

Where: Sundquist WMA...Campbell-Scott County

Details: Our goal this year has been to connect Cove Lake State Park to Frozen Head State Park with one continuous backcountry trail. We began this project with our alternative spring break program in late February. The students, wagon masters, and a few volunteers were able to complete approximately 4 miles of trail! Trail building was started beside Lick Creek and then up Cave Branch. The remaining distance to connect these two sections is approximately 4 miles! With your help, we can do this!

Lodging: We will be staying at Stony Fork Community Center, electricity, water, and hot showers available. Please bring your own bedding (cots, air mattresses, sleeping bag etc...) and toiletries.

Ways you can help:

Trail builders...volunteer to build the Cumberland Trail 1 day or more!

Cook...help prepare meals for hungry trail builders

Donate Food...many hungry trail builders to feed

Sponsor...every dollar goes toward building the trail

Donate Materials...tools, lumber, sign post, etc...

Registration: Please register at least two days in advance

<http://www.cumberlandtrail.org/>, cumberlandtrail@rocketmail.com

Help Wanted: Volunteer for Membership Coordinator



The club is seeking one or two individuals to maintain our membership database. Duties include adding the names and contact info of new members to an Excel database, sending out email notices, and printing and mailing newsletters to members without internet access.

If you are interested in helping the club by taking on any or all of these responsibilities, please contact any member of the [Steering Committee](#).



TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Tom Boyd
Hal Yungmeyer
Adam Hillman

Linda Branch
Charles Paessler
Kelley Moran

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

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

Bays in a Day, 10+ Miles, May 24, 2008

Leader: Jake Mitchell,

Rating: AA/2/A

Jake will be deviating from the norm and leading a non-AT hike. Bays in a Day will be an all day hiking extravaganza at Bays Mountain in Kingsport. The crew will most likely start off the day by meeting at the parking lot atop Bays Mountain. From there, a shuttle will be arranged to Laurel Run Park in Church Hill. The hiking will commence with the climb from Laurel Run Park up to Bays Mountain. The crew will then hike as many trails on Bays Mountain as possible until the park closes, the sun goes down or everybody gives up. Lunch will either be packed in or at the vehicles depending on the consensus. The route(s) and length of the day are arguable based on your kindness to the hike leader. If you want to participate, half-participate, or provide lunch for weary hikers, contact Jake Mitchell, .



AT Backpack: Grayson Highlands, 17 Miles, May 31-June 1, 2008

Leaders: Jake Mitchell, , Bill Fuller,

Rating: AA/2/B

Jake and Bill will lead a hike in the beautiful Grayson Highlands on May 31st and June 1st. This will be an all-day Saturday and Sunday hike at a moderate pace. The plan is to arrive at the AT crossing of VA 603 near Troutdale, VA no later than 10am on Saturday. From there, Jake and Bill will arrange a shuttle from VA 603 back to Elk Garden on VA 600. Once the hike commences, we will ascend into the Lewis Fork Wilderness. About 3.5 miles in, we will arrive at the Mount Rogers side trail. We will take a detour off the AT to visit the highest point in Virginia for a photo op and lunch. After departing from Mount Rogers, we will make our way through the Grayson Highlands and the ponies to Wise Shelter for the evening. First day mileage is about 9 miles. On Sunday morning, we will leave the Wise Shelter and make our way to VA 603 passing by the Scales and Old Orchard Shelter. Second day mileage is about 8 miles. Participation is not encouraged - it is demanded!

Lunch and Learn

Eastman Employee Center, Room 223

June 10, 2008 – 11:30am-1:00pm

Tim Schaefer,

The Steering Team would like to implement informal lunch-time gatherings where participants can bring their lunch and sit down learn about topics related to hiking and paddling. Topics may include information about local trails or paddling opportunities, gear reviews, photography tips, training for hike leaders, etc. This will be the first of such meetings and will cover some of the new features available on our up-dated web-site. Stay tuned for further details.

If you have any suggestions on future topics, please contact .

Damascus Crawl, June 14, 2008

Leader: Jake Mitchell, 423-963-8654;

Rating: C/4/D

Do you know someone who doesn't enjoy seeking fellowship with the wilderness? The Damascus Crawl is the event for you! Consider it a very sneaky way to get that "someone" to hike the Appalachian Trail without ever leaving the comforts of the city life and for you to window shop some of the fine hiking retailers of Damascus. Plans are to meet at the standard Colonial Heights meeting spot between McDonald's and State of Franklin Bank at 3pm. From there, we will carpool to Damascus. Anyone interested in meeting somewhere along the way is welcome also. Upon arrival, we will park at the Water Street parking area beside the city park and commence the Crawl. We will leisurely stroll the AT through the city park, downtown Damascus and along US 58 until the AT ascends into the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. We will then retrace our steps back to downtown and patronize one of Damascus's fine eating establishments. Return time to Kingsport should be between 8 and 10pm. If you are interested in duping your "someone" into hiking the AT and enjoying a good meal, contact the hike leader.

Special Activity and Trip Reports (*Past*)

AT: TN 91 to Damascus, VA, 21.3 Miles, March 28-29, 2008

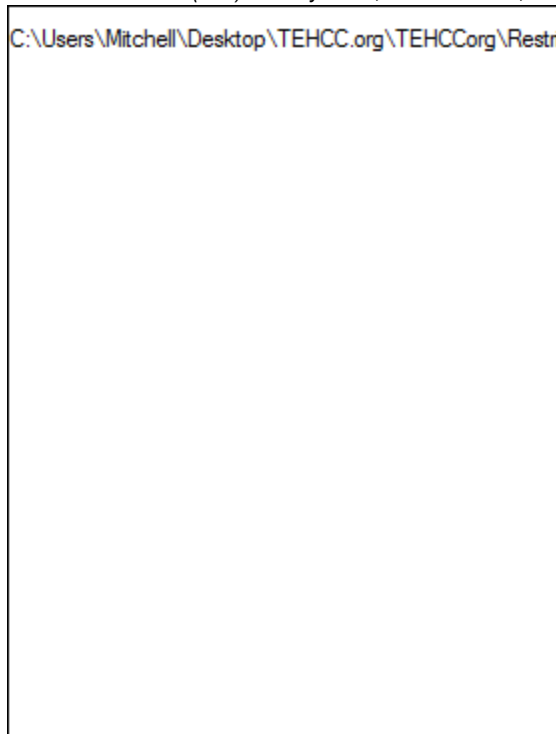
Jake Mitchell reporting

The trip could have been titled "A Walk in the Clouds." On Friday, Tim Schaefer and I met Johnny Jobe (new member) in Bristol for lunch. After blitzing the Pizza Hut buffet, we drove to Damascus and left Johnny's car. Prior to hitting the trail, we decided that the chance of rain was too great to bypass Double Springs Shelter and that turned out to be a good decision. With that in mind, we took our time hiking through Osborne Farm. The leisurely stroll through the fields was a nice change from the tunnel effect the trail can have in the woods. The views were not as good as we hoped, but we could see the entire farm through the drizzle. Upon arriving at Double Springs around 4:30, we dropped our gear and relaxed. The water source was flowing well so we took time to filter water before fixing dinner. We all enjoyed gourmet dinners thanks to dehydration. Jake had Jamaican Jerk chicken. Tim had pot roast and mashed potatoes. Johnny had two servings of Ramen noodles. About the time it got dark, the clouds opened up. The rain stopped very little until morning so we were happy to be in the shelter. On Saturday morning, we proceeded to eat breakfast and break camp. As we were putting the finishing touches on our packs, the rain started again. We sucked it up and covered up. The rain lasted a short time and we were able to pull our hoods off. We hiked the rest of the day in a drizzle and heavy fog. Our only

views were on the descent into Damascus after eating lunch at Abingdon Gap Shelter. All in all, it was a great tune up for the 2008 hiking season and fun was had by all.



Pre-hike festivities at TN 91: (L-R) Johnny Jobe, Tim Schaefer, Jake Mitchell



Wandering why Jake got him into this: Johnny Jobe

C:\Users\Mitchell\Desktop\TEHCC.org\TEHCCorg\Rest

Glad to be off the mountain: Tim Schaefer



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

Reporting: Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: March 24, 2008

Purpose: Spring maintenance to prepare trail for through-hikers

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

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

Summary: We cut an 8-inch tree and a 15-inch tree from across the trail about 0.5 mile and 2.5 miles in from Iron Mountain Gap (IMG). We cleared leaves from water bars, cut six dead standing trees near the trail, and set one post with blazes in the apple orchard. We also put up two AT foot-traffic-only signs on the north and south sides of Weedy Gap.

There are signs of four-wheelers going south toward IMG and two wheelers going north toward Greasy Creek Gap from Weedy Gap.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: March 25, 2008

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 11b, Just trail south of Hard Core Cascade

People: Carl Fritz, Tim Stewart

Summary: Tim had already scouted his section and found a tangle of three blowdowns near Hard Core Cascade. We removed the blowdowns and were able to dig out the one

root ball that was on the trail.

Reporting: Bruce Cunningham

Date: March 25, 2008

Purpose: Clear blowdowns and repair trail

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap to Greasy Creek Gap, south end of section

People: Bruce Cunningham, Ed Oliver, Ted Mowery, Jim Foster, Ken Buchanan

Summary: Snow, snow, snow! The higher we went the deeper it got! We removed a 15-inch blowdown, but decided against further trail work.

Reporting: Michael Ray

Date: March 27, 2008

Purpose: Spring maintenance trip

Location: Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US 19E

People: Dale and Seth Douthat, S.C. Robinette, Steve Poteat, Carl and Michael Ray

Summary: On this beautiful early spring day, we got out for our first maintenance trip of the season. We used two string trimmers and hand tools to cut back brush and briars. Most of what we cut was old growth from last season that was a step or two off the main trail corridor. All blazes in both directions were repainted. One large bag of trash was picked up at the Buck Mountain road crossing. Recent ATV activity was observed in a few places between Isaac Cemetery and about 0.2 mile north of Bishop Hollow. There were no blowdowns on this trip.

Reporting: Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: March 28, 2008

Purpose: Complete the new relocation

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to about 0.5 mile south

People: Ed Oliver, Harry Ford, Faye Guinn, Howard Guinn, Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko, Carl Kincheloe, Jerry Mayne, Susan Peters, Malcolm Wolf

Summary: We finished the trail relocation from Iron Mountain Gap south for about 0.5 miles and opened it for hikers. We cleared leaves from about 200 feet of trail, dug about 150-200 feet of trail, lopped where needed, painted new blazes, obliterated old blazes, removed old signs, and placed new AT sign and distance sign. Trash was picked up along the new section and at Iron Mountain Gap. Six hikers arrived at Iron Mountain Gap and hiked the new location before we left.

Reporting: Tim McClain

Date: March 29, 2008

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 3b, Spring to U.S. 421

People: Tim McClain

Summary: I inspected for blowdowns and removed three. I also cleared water bars and did some lopping.

Reporting: Benjamin Trotter

Date: March 30, 2008

Purpose: Check on Overmountain Barn Shelter

Location: Section 14a, Overmountain Barn Shelter

People: Benjamin Trotter

Summary: I checked on the Overmountain Barn Shelter because of concerns listed by

hikers through the forums. The privy was trashed more than normally with glass, cans, and trash. Some recent campers apparently dumped a chest full of ice and water on the lower platform and in the breezeway. I broke up the ice and swept as much water as I could off the platform. I picked up a sack full of trash before leaving.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: April 2, 2008

Purpose: Cut blowdowns and repair water source

Location: Sections 1, 2, 3a, from Damascus to spring between US 421 and McQueens Gap

People: Ken Buchanan, Bruce Cunningham, Bill Elderbrock, Carl Fritz, Mike Hupko

Summary: We covered 12.5 miles and cleared all problem blowdowns. Bruce and Bill cleared two minor blowdowns on Section 3a. They also spent 90 minutes reworking the spring at Abingdon Gap Shelter. Ken, Mike, and Carl cleared all problem blowdowns into Damascus. Twenty-nine required the chainsaw with several being 20 inches. We also cleared probably 15 with a handsaw or by physically moving them. We left more than a dozen easy step-overs.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: April 2, 2008

Purpose: Dig trail relocation

Location: Section 12d, North of Bear Branch

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery, Ed Oliver

Summary: Paul, Ted and Ed worked on several very tough sections on the relo and built 50 feet of trail using rocks, logs, etc. It was rumored that they may have continued the tradition of stopping for an ice cream cone.

Reporting: Bill Berry

Date: April 5, 2008

Purpose: Clear Trail

Location: Section 20b, Spivey Gap to No Business Shelter

People: Bill Berry

Summary: I cleared blow downs and cut annual growth. The trail is clear from Spivey Gap to shelter.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: April 5, 2008

Purpose: Look for Konnarock campsite and work-site access route

Location: Section 14a, Various roads on the North Carolina side of the Roan Highlands

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: I scouted near several roads leading toward Hump, Little Hump, Big Yellow, and Yellow Mountain Gap (including Grumpy Hughes Lane), looking for potential campsite locations for the Konnarock Crew. Camping at the Barn could be an option, with the risk that the gate would be blocked if the Crew needed to drive out. The best location I found is in the upper reaches of Roaring Creek Road. It is an old Christmas tree plantation with some nice grassy meadows, two good streams, and a gated road that could be driven behind with much less risk of blockage. I also found the starting point for an easier route to the work site than the AT. Because of pea-soup fog, I waited until the next day to scout it out.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: April 6, 2008

Purpose: Dig trail relocation

Location: Section 12d, North of Bear Branch

People: Paul Benfield, Bruce Cunningham, Mary Cunningham, Joe DeLoach, Bill Elderbrock, Carl Fritz, Mike Hupko, Ted Mowery, Otto, Bob Peoples, Ed Oliver, ETSU: Elizabeth Rand, ASU: David Hutchison, Shari Galiardi, Brooke Loftis, Kevin Guinn, Selina Biacinto, Justine Jones, Katharine Brannun, Joel Barrichlow, Kara Brown, Maddie Kasper, Ashley Galleher, Erin O'Malley, Thomas Allen, Devin Donnelly (DOCTOR), Eric Woodridge, Adrian Tambor, Kevin Sykes (SPROUT), Erin Abernety, Hiker: Mark Thompson (THE GENERAL)

Summary: With a power performance by 18 from ASU, one from ETSU, one hiker, and 11 TEHCC members we dug about 350 feet of difficult trail. We spent the day installing locust side logs and steps, plus some rock stepping stones. Another day of work here will complete all the relocations in this area.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: April 6, 2008

Purpose: Find access route to the Little Hump work site

Location: Section 14a, Side of Big Yellow Mountain to Little Hump

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: After the work trip near 19E, I drove up to the start of the access route to Little Hump. Walking at a brisk pace, it took 31 minutes to reach the AT at the saddle between Big Yellow Mountain and Little Hump, and 11 minutes more to reach the flag-line near the top of Little Hump. Most of this route is on an old road on a fairly level grade, starting on private land and moving into the Pisgah National Forest. This road could be a camping option for the Konnarock Crew. The latter one-third is a faint path with some steeper sections through open woods, which had been flagged most of the way. I tied some more ribbons on the way back. From the starting point, this route is about 1.1 miles to the AT. This makes it only 0.1-0.2 miles shorter than the distance from Yellow Mountain Gap, but there is no steep section like the climb from the Barn to Little Hump.

Reporting: Bill Fuller

Date: April 6, 2008

Purpose: Paint blazes

Location: Section 9b, Hampton Trail

People: Bill Fuller, Campbell Fuller

Summary: We painted the majority of the blue blazes in both directions from the Hampton trailhead to the junction of the A.T. We also added a few new blazes in certain needed areas.



Campbell was a little short to paint, but he held the paint can and carried supplies.



Bill taking a break

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: April 6, 2008

Purpose: Cut rhododendron growth and clean waterbars

Location: Section 12b, Walnut Mountain Road to Sugar Hollow Creek

People: Steve Wilson, Jill Wilson

Summary: We had a beautiful spring day for maintenance and spent it lopping rhododendron growth and cleaning water bars on this new trail. The section is officially 3.6 miles, but we added some distance by leaving our car at the Elk River Big Falls parking area. We saw seven through-hikers and one section-hiker on the trail. The shelter is in good shape and we replaced the log book. The new bear-warning sign was placed in the shelter and the cleanup-pits sign was nailed back up. There was no evidence of ATV nor horse traffic on the trail.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: April 8, 2008

Purpose: AT Committee meeting

Location: Kingsport

People: Collins Chew, Bruce Cunningham, Mary Cunningham, Joe DeLoach, Bill Elderbrock, Ed Oliver, Kim Peters

Summary:

1) The need to maintain AT side trails was discussed at the ATC Southern Partnership Meeting (SPM) in March. We have a few such trails identified in our guidebook: the blue-blazed trail from Hampton, the Overmountain Victory Trail to Yellow Mt. Gap, and the Backbone Rock Trail. A few others are on the maps which accompany the guidebook. Also at the SPM meeting, we were awarded an extra week of Konnarock Crew time for work in the Roan Highlands this summer. Our request for five weeks in 2012 was cut back to four, and our request for five weeks in 2013 was cut back to three.

2) HardCore 2008 will be on Sunday and Monday, May 18-19, with hiker return on Tuesday, May 20. On Sunday we'll work on the Little Bald Knob portion of the Unaka Mt. relocation, and on Monday we'll work near Grassy Ridge on the Roan Highlands relocation. The group will be limited to about 100 hikers, as was done last year. We don't

know if the Eastman 15-passenger van will be needed, but will reserve it and solicit volunteers to drive. We've asked the Forest Service to reserve the picnic shelters at The Laurels to feed the hikers on Sunday May 18, and we need to ask them to borrow tools for this big crew. The Monday feed is planned for Kincora; costs to be covered by a NC AT license plate grant. We'll check with Carl Fritz about patches and rockers for the hikers. Kim will talk to Tim Stewart about helping with the hiker signup in Damascus.

3) The Mt. Rogers Appalachian Trail Club has been carrying out an exotic/invasive plant eradication program in Damascus, including in the town park, which is on our maintenance section. Since they have built momentum in this activity, we'll discuss the possibility of them continuing it.

4) We finalized the agenda for the April 30 AT Partnership Meeting with the Forest Service and ATC.

5) Andrew Downs from ATC has requested help on a Trail assessment covering about half our section this year. We're confirming which sections may have already been covered, then will solicit volunteers to help Andrew with this activity through the summer.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: April 8, 2008

Purpose: Put wire on bridge steps and measure shelter roof

Location: Section 19, Nolichucky River to Curley Maple Gap Shelter

People: Jim Foster

Summary: I installed two pieces of wire on steps of second bridge going north. Also, for future reference, I measured the shelter roof. I cut or removed seven blowdowns on my way out. There's one 24-inch blowdown about 0.4 miles from the USA Raft parking area (trail north).

Reporting: Bruce Cunningham

Date: April 8, 2008

Purpose: Finish relocation at Bear Branch

Location: Section 12d, Bear Branch Road north

People: Tupperwear, Loafy, Dorothy, Hoedown, Bruce Cunningham, Bill Elderbrock, Bob Peoples, Ed Oliver, Paul Benfield, Ben Trotter, Ted Mowery

Summary: We completed the new trail relocation.



Hikers Tupperware, Loofy, Dorothy, and Hoedown receiving patches from Ed

View of the newly opened Bear Branch relocation from the bridge

Reporting: Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: April 9, 2008

Purpose: Complete needed repairs and check trail

Location: Section 17, Cherry Gap Shelter to Low Gap

People: Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko

Summary: We checked the picnic table at Cherry Gap Shelter for needed repairs, reworked about 50 feet of treadway, rebuilt three water bars, removed three trees from the trail, and identified about 100 feet of treadway needing work. The hemlocks near the shelter are infested with hemlock woolly adelgid. The first spring is delivering about one gallon per minute and the second spring is delivering about 4 gallons per minute. We saw five hikers on the trail. The spring beauties are starting to bloom and we saw one trout lily in bloom.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: April 10, 2008

Purpose: Cut blowdowns

Location: Section 11a, Dennis Cove Road to Canute Place

People: Bob Peoples

Summary: Bob hiked his section and cleared all blowdowns.

Reporting: Garry Luttrell

Date: April 11, 2008

Purpose: Maintain trail

Location: Section 15b, Hughes Gap to Cloudland

People: Garry Luttrell

Summary: Since the thunderstorms were delayed until later in the afternoon, I decided to walk through section 15b to clear blowdowns and see what else is needed. I put the saw to use several times, clearing blowdowns and limbs from the trail. The blazes from Hughes Gap to Ash Gap are in poor condition and need to be refreshed, but I didn't have the white blaze paint with me. The blue blazes to the water source (low flow) at Ash Gap are in good shape.

Reporting: Bill Berry

Date: April 11, 2008

Purpose: Clear trail

Location: Section 20b, Devils Creek to Temple Hill Gap

People: Bill Berry

Summary: I cleared blowdowns and cut annual growth. The trail is clear from Devils Creek to Temple Hill Gap.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: April 11, 2008

Purpose: Clear blowdown

Location: Section 19, About 0.4 mile north of Nolichucky outfitter site

People: Craig DeLoach and Joe DeLoach

Summary: We received a report of a big blowdown on the lower section of Jones Branch. Although it was big, 20 inches or maybe a bit more, it was easy to walk around without

eroding the Trail and was not too difficult to cut.

Reporting: Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: April 18, 2008

Purpose: Spring inspection and clean up

Location: Section 17, Low Gap to Cherry Gap Shelter

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

Summary: We repaired the picnic table at Cherry Gap Shelter, cleaned up around the shelter, put up bear-warning sign in the shelter, repaired about 25 feet of treadway, and rebuilt about 25 feet of treadway where the roots were a problem. We saw six through-hikers.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: April 18, 2008

Purpose: Purchase a trimmer mower

Location: Newland plus Bear Branch

People: Bruce Cunningham, Carl Fritz

Summary: We traveled to Newland to pick up a DR Power Trimmer which we purchased with a NC license plate grant. Also, we stopped at Bear Branch to drive several long stakes at a side log on the new trail. Honeymoon with trasher is apparently over; we cleaned up the one garbage bag of trash.

Reporting: Garry Luttrell

Date: April 18, 2008

Purpose: Paint blazes

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel to Hughes Gap

People: Garry Luttrell

Summary: This was a follow-up trip to paint blazes in both directions, from Hughes Gap to Ace Gap and return.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: April 19, 2008

Purpose: Dig trail relocation

Location: Section 16b, Just trail north of Iron Mountain Gap

People: Daryl Anderson, Paul Benfield, Bruce Cunningham, Mary Cunningham, Carl Fritz, Mike Hupko, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Ben Trotter, ETSU: Kevin O'Donnel, Elizabeth Rand, Aaron Cupp, Diana Mozen, Tom Mozen, ASU TRAIL CREW: Jenny Thomas, Matt Parsons, Brendan Smith, Andy Kruse

Summary: In spite of threatening rainy weather, we had a great day digging the new relocation just north of Iron Mt. Gap. We successfully dug about 550 feet of trail with many thanks to ASU Trail Crew and those from ETSU. This relocation requires one more good day of digging.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: April 19, 2008

Purpose: Install pin flags and prepare relocations

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to Little Bald Knob

People: Ed Oliver, Kim Peters

Summary: Ed and Kim installed pin flags north of Iron Mountain Gap (IMG) and in two remaining relocations south of IMG to Little Bald Knob. These latter two relos were laid off

in about 150-foot sections for Hard Core.

Reporting: Collins Chew

Date: April 20, 2008

Purpose: Measure Bear Branch relocation

Location: Section 12d, Bear Branch Road to Bishop Hollow

People: Charlotte Chew, Collins Chew

Summary: We rolled the recently opened relocation between Bear Branch and Bishop Hollow. The new relocation adds 0.1 mile and the earlier relocation added 0.1 so there is now 0.2 mile additional. It is 1.1 miles from U. S. 19E to Bishop Hollow and the section, Dennis Cove to U. S. 19E, is now 24.3 miles.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: April 21, 2008

Purpose: Maintain trail

Location: Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter to TN Hwy 91

People: Paul Benfield

Summary: I cut weeds with the string trimmer on the accessible trail, cut back growth, and removed two fallen trees from the Trail.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: April 21, 2008

Purpose: Konnarock Project scouting trip

Location: Section 14a, Vicinity of Little Hump Mountain

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: I met with the two Konnarock Crew leaders, Christine and Ted, and one assistant, Adam, to scout the Little Hump work site and camping options. We walked the entire route of both the main relocation descending Little Hump and a shorter one close to Bradley Gap. The deer must have enjoyed nibbling the flags through the winter. We retied most of them, and may get to do so again when the work starts in June. Except for one short rocky area and some marking care needed in the open area of Little Hump, this looks like a fairly straightforward project. We went in through private land where we have permission from the homeowners. The walk is easy, slightly more than 30 minutes to the AT. The road, while in good condition, is quite steep and really burns the brakes going down. Some volunteers may prefer the harder walk from Yellow Mountain Barn or another route from the end of Roaring Creek Road. The day's highlight was a very small bear cub, no larger than a beagle, which was screaming for its mother and headed up a tree close to us. We took a moment to enjoy seeing this beautiful little creature, then hustled out of the vicinity before Mama showed up. That sighting likely influenced the crew leaders' preference for a campsite just off Roaring Creek Road near the end of the road. They agreed that the risk of getting blocked in is too great when parking behind the gate on the road leading to the barn. Our crew leader for this year is Ted, a recent VPI forestry graduate with experience working on western trails. There is an opening for another assistant.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: April 22, 2008

Purpose: Cut reported blowdown and check trail for obstructions

Location: Section 16a, North of Clyde Smith Shelter to Greasy Creek Gap

People: Ken Buchanan, Jim Foster

Summary: We cut a reported blowdown north of shelter. We then checked trail north and south to Greasy Creek Gap, the shelter, and the water source. We picked up trash and cut one more blowdown from the trail.

Reporting: Bill Fuller

Date: April 22, 2008

Purpose: Maintain trail

Location: Section 9b, Hampton blue-blaze to Pond Mountain

People: Bill Fuller, Shannon Combs

Summary: We lopped weeds and brush on the blue-blaze, then continued lopping on the A.T. up Pond Mountain. As daylight was running out, we turned around close to where the future relays begin. We plan to return soon to finish. We also cleared one medium-sized blowdown and picked up trash on the blue-blaze and at the parking area.

Reporting: Old Timers Hiking Club

Date: April 23, 2008

Purpose: Maintain trail and spring area

Location: Section 16b, Weedy Gap to Iron Mountain Gap

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

Summary: We re-worked the spring at the apple orchard, re-built and rocked the path near the spring, and cleaned out the water bars from Weedy Gap to Iron Mountain Gap. We met 15 hikers; six spent the night at the apple orchard.