



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

April 2010

[tehcc.org](http://tehcc.org)

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To submit an article for the Newsletter, send an email to: [news@tehcc.org](mailto:news@tehcc.org). Articles should be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

## **From the Chair**

*(Steering Committee Chair Tim Schaefer)*

Has the handful of wonderful weekends started to get you excited about being outdoors again? It sure has for me, although this year it is being spent more on building up and preparing our vegetable gardens, as we would like to be more self-sufficient this year. Throwing into the mix two young children complicating trips to even the grocery store, I sure haven't been out on the trails much lately. Eventually the beds will be built, filled with dirt, and the seeds in the ground and I'll have more time for fun on the water and on the trail with the kids.

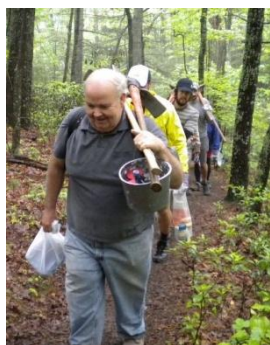
I'm sure we're all well seasoned professionals, but reminders can never hurt. This can be a dangerous time of year for being outdoors. The warm weather at your home can fool you into not packing the extra jacket or the gloves, meanwhile temperatures can vary significantly with only a few hundred feet of elevation or some clouds rolling in. It is likely we will find snow at the upper elevations through April this year. Throw in a risk of

getting stuck in a storm or lost and inadvertently turning your outing into an unplanned overnight trip, a day hike could turn disastrous. So think it through and bring what's important.

Speaking of wild weather, the winter of 2009-2010 has sure wreaked havoc on our trails. If you're out hiking, especially on the AT, and notice any trail issues, be sure to let members of our AT Committee ([atchair@tehcc.org](mailto:atchair@tehcc.org) or [atmaint@tehcc.org](mailto:atmaint@tehcc.org)) know. The biggest issue has been trees knocked down by the high winds and heavy snow. If you can let them know as you find issues it will help them prioritize activities as they prepare our section for the fast approaching 2010 season. Or even better, offer to help them out on the next maintenance outing, as help is always needed at all skill levels.

We are on the home stretch for making the TN AT plate a reality. We have over 780 AT plate applications! It's getting pretty safe to say this is a sure thing, so don't hesitate, mail in that application today. Hopefully not a likely scenario, but you can rest assured that if the plate does not happen, your funds will be refunded to you. But let's think positive, we're going to make it! We all use these trails, quite often with no parking or daily fee, easily forgetting about all of the time and cost it takes to keep the trail in the condition you found it in. The TN AT plate makes it easy to support them while also advertising to others your commitment to the AT. So please also tell your friends and family, anyone you know that has benefited from the trails in Tennessee.

## **Appalachian Trail Conservancy Volunteer of the Month - Ed Oliver**



*Joe DeLoach reporting*

In May 2008, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy started a national Volunteer of the Month program, whereby AT volunteers could be nominated for particularly meritorious service. Carl Fritz received this award in February 2009. In March 2010 we had our second awardee - Ed Oliver! Ed's write-up can be found on [ATC's website](#). A TEHCC volunteer since the 1970's, Ed has amassed well over 10,000 hours of volunteer time on the AT since 1992, considerably more than any other Club member. Ed is not just a worker; he is also the "brains" behind many of our projects. A strong participant in the AT Optimal Location Review dating from the 1980's, Ed laid out just about all the relocations we have done since then. He is well known for his skills at trail design. Among the awards Ed has received are the TEHCC Maintainer of the Year four separate times (he would have received it more if he hadn't asked that the award be spread around), the Stan Murray Award in 1998, ATC's Silver Service Award denoting 25 years

volunteering to the AT in 2001, was named one of three TEHCC members to ATC's 75th Anniversary Volunteer Honor Roll in 2000, and received the Volunteer Kingsport Award for Volunteer Excellence in 2002. In 1995, Ed was named Tennessee Trails Volunteer of the Year. Many of us have learned much from working with Ed and we're very happy to see him receive this recognition. Congratulations Ed, and thanks for all you do for the Club and the AT!!

## Maintainers Dinner Meeting February 26, 2010

*Carl Fritz reporting*

The kickoff meeting for 2010 AT maintenance was well attended. We enjoyed the baked spaghetti, tossed salad, garlic bread and desserts prepared by Mary Cunningham and Ed Oliver. We reviewed our 2009 achievements, handed out awards, discussed major projects for 2010, and discussed 2010 maintenance.

### Summary of 2009 Major TEHCC Maintenance Accomplishments

- Maintained 135 miles of the AT (3<sup>rd</sup> longest section of the 30 clubs)
- Rehabbed over 0.4 miles
- Built close to 3 miles of new sidehill Trail
  - 1.1 miles between Grassy Ridge and Bradley Gap; at least one year ahead of original schedule, only two relocations remaining, several completed
  - 0.7 miles around Watauga Lake, only one relocation remaining
  - 0.6 miles north of Wilbur Dam Road; completed in December
  - 0.1 miles south of Damascus; completed in February
  - 0.4 miles near Cherry Gap; completed in April
- Injury-free year

### Individuals Cumulative Hour Awards 2009

Note that many of the 50 and 100 hour achievers are hikers who regularly participate in our Damascus Hard Core program in May.

#### 50 Hours

Ourth Scott "Flying Porkchop"	Anne Cosby
David Skelly "Corpoal"	Bonnie Schneider "Bargain"
Janel Scharhag "Bearpaw"	Michael Laude
Thomas Cruson "Tank"	Lee Bockman
Jerry Mayne	Joseph Gonzalez
Anna Sherrill	Dave Clark
Chad Tate	"Chef Paul"
"Crispy"	Michael Ray
Harry Ford	Matthew Bowler "Sleepy the Arab"
Marcos Rucinski "Marco Polo"	Kent Ganshirt
Bill Fuller	Anne Maio



Ed Oliver accepts 10000 hr award from Kim Peters

#### 100 Hours

Amy Sternheim "Bookworm"  
 Julie Judkins  
 Lou Haase  
 Jake Mitchell "Cabin Fever"  
 Richard Carter

#### 1500 Hours

Mike Hupko

#### 250 Hours

Daryel Anderson

#### 5000 Hours

Bob Peoples

#### 1000 Hours

Tim Stewart "Mountain Squid"  
 Dave Dunham  
 Kim Peters  
 Ken Buchanan

#### 6000 Hours

Carl Fritz

#### 10000 Hours

Ed Oliver

Two special tool awards were given out. The first was a special Pulaski awarded to Bob Peoples and the second was a long handled shovel awarded to Tim Stewart. Bob is known for breaking hand tools, so Mike Hupko retrieved a worn Pulaski with a broken handle from Bob. Mike restored the Pulaski, painted it like a ceremonial tomahawk and presented it to Bob to be hung on wall and only to

be used in emergencies. The photo below taken on a work trip to the Osborne tract shows why Tim needed the long handled shovel this winter.



*Tim Stewart, Paul Benfield and Ted Mowery accept a special tool award from Carl Fritz*



*Ted Mowery works at digging Tim's truck out of the snow using a small folding shovel*



## Workshop Presenters Needed



Share your knowledge and skills as a workshop presenter at the upcoming Virginia Journeys 2011 which will celebrate the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. This gathering, to be held at Emory & Henry College in southwest Virginia from July 1 – 8, 2011, will be the 38<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. A main feature of the conference is a wide variety of workshops which will be held Saturday – Monday, July 2 – 4, 2011. Conference organizers are inviting speakers to present sessions in the following areas of interest:

- Hiking and Backpacking Skills
- Trail Management
- Natural Wonders
- Engaging Youth on the Trail
- Community Partners: Sustainable Tourism & the Trail
- A.T. MEGA-Transect: Environmental Monitoring of the A.T. Corridor
- Cultural History along the A.T.
- Celebrating Benton MacKaye

If you would like to present a workshop related to any of the conference tracts, or would like to suggest a topic to be considered, we want to hear from you. The deadline for speaker registration is June 30, 2010. Please contact Laura Belleville at [lbelleville@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:lbelleville@appalachiantrail.org), 540-953-3564 / 3571, Ned Kuhns at [nedkuhns@cox.net](mailto:nedkuhns@cox.net), 757-552-0292, or Mark Wenger at [markwenger@cox.net](mailto:markwenger@cox.net), 757-253-0056.



## TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Please welcome the following new members for March:

Daryl Anderson	Kevin G. Bellamy	Guy Harrison	Steven Clark	Julie Pierson	Brandon Lawson
Steve Dula	Debbi Dula	Rick Bright	Nick Harrison	Amy Hall	Wendell Dingus

## Event Schedule – Next Two Months

For the latest, up-to-date information, see [tehcc.org/schedule](http://tehcc.org/schedule)

Date	Description	Leader	Contact
Apr 1	Rental Equipment Checkout	<a href="#">Vic Hasler</a>	<a href="mailto:rentals@tehcc.org">rentals@tehcc.org</a>
Apr 10	Camera Club and Hiking Club Combo Event	<a href="#">Richard Siggins</a>	423-416-1258
Apr 14-18	TSRA Whitewater Rendezvous	<a href="#">Scott Strausbaugh</a>	<a href="http://paddletsr.org">paddletsr.org</a>
Apr 17	AT Trail Run	Tim Schaefer	423-302-0846
Apr 17	Rocky Fork Hike	<a href="#">Dave Ramsey</a>	<a href="mailto:daramsey@earthlink.net">daramsey@earthlink.net</a>
Apr 23-25	Fontana Lake Kayak/Canoe Camping Weekend	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
Apr 24	Family/Beginner Hike at Bays Mountain	Tim Schaefer	423-302-0846
Apr 30- May1	AT Backpack: Davenport Gap to Hot Springs	Jake Mitchell and Kevin Barham	<a href="mailto:jacobmmitchell@gmail.com">jacobmmitchell@gmail.com</a> , <a href="mailto:kbarham@eastman.com">kbarham@eastman.com</a>
May 14-16	Thirty-First Bluestone River Trip	Terry Dougherty	423-502-5177
May 20	Women's Backpacking Class	Nancy Wilson	<a href="mailto:nwilsonhiker@charter.net">nwilsonhiker@charter.net</a>
May 20-23	Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition Conference	<a href="#">Rick Harris</a>	<a href="http://southeastfoottrails.org">southeastfoottrails.org</a>
May 22-23	New River Kayak/Canoe Camping Trip	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-366-0128
May 27	Paddle to the Grill	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
May 29	Watauga River Class I-II	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
May 28-31	AT Backpack: Damascus to Fox Creek, VA	Kevin Barham	<a href="mailto:kbarham@eastman.com">kbarham@eastman.com</a>

## Description of Upcoming Events

### Recurring Events

#### **Most Tuesdays: Weekly AT Trail Maintenance**

Join a group of maintainers who work somewhere on our 135-mile section each week, usually on Tuesdays. Contact Carl Fritz ([atvolunteer@tehcc.org](mailto:atvolunteer@tehcc.org)) for dates and meeting places.

#### **Tuesdays Evenings: Johnson City Roll Practice**

Come join the Jackson Action Wagon (J.A.W.), APEs, and other paddlers from around our region at the Freedom Hall Pool in Johnson City, TN from 7:10 to 9:10 pm every Tuesday for tips and tricks about basic kayaking skills and learning how to roll. Have you already mastered the basics and have a bomb proof roll? There is still a lot of fun to be had at our pool session by practicing your flat-water freestyle moves and fellowshiping with other paddlers in a nice warm water environment. Admission to the pool is \$2, rolling advice is free! Contact the pool office (423- 461-4872) for session confirmation or questions regarding the facility. Please note: The J.A.W. does provide the current fleet of boats for demo at the pool session, but neither the pool nor the J.A.W. provides paddling equipment (paddle, spray skirt, etc...) for these sessions. If you are just starting out in the sport and do not have your own equipment, please post a message on the APEs yahoo group site or send [Wesley](#) an e-mail asking other members to bring extra equipment if possible. We will try our best to get you outfitted for the night!

#### **Thursday evenings: Paddle to the Grill, May 27- Sept 4, 2010**

This is an evening paddle on Boone Lake starting from Kinch Landing at Winged Deer Park to Sony's Marina for dinner and paddle back after dark. Contact [Debbie Briscoe](#), 423-534-3636, for more information.

#### **Fridays: Friday Hikers**

Join members of the TEHCC and other hiking enthusiasts for Friday hikes in the northeast Tennessee, western North Carolina and southwest Virginia area. Trips typically leave from the parking lot between McDonald's and State of Franklin Bank in Colonial Heights

at 8 am. Trips to places further away leave at 7:30am. Contact [Collins Chew](#) to be added to the distribution list.

#### Tentative Schedule

4/2: Pinnacles Nature Preserve, Va.  
4/9: Natural Tunnel (Olin Babb leads)  
4/16: Doe River Gorge (Olin Babb leads)  
4/23: Laurel River Trail, wildflowers  
4/30: AT Max Patch, trillium  
5/7: Boogerman Trail in Smokies

#### **Most Saturdays: Watauga River Class I-II, May 29- Sept 4, 2010**

Contact [Debbie Briscoe](#), 423-534-3636. If there is water elsewhere, we may go there instead, so call first to check and see if it's on!

#### **Scheduled Events**

##### **Rental Equipment Checkout, April 1, 2010 (11:00 am to 1:00 pm) at Eastman Employee Center (Building 310)**

*Leader:* [Vic Hasler](#)

No April Fools! This event will be held at lunchtime and a pizza lunch will be provided to those helping out. We will only check items that have been used in the past year. I would like a pair of folks to check out the packs and pads, and the rest will check out the tents. We need to make a list of needed repairs, and see what items should be considered next for purchase (in case a good sale is found). Please feel free to invite others who might be interested in seeing what rental equipment the club has – and would like to see it set up. Contact Vic Hasler ([rentals@tehcc.org](mailto:rentals@tehcc.org)) if you are interested in helping and to give your preference for pizza and beverage.

##### **Camera Club and Hiking Club Combo Event, Laurel Run Park, April 10, 2010**

*Leader:* [Richard Siggins](#), 423-416-1258

This spring two of Eastman Recreation's clubs are joining together to sponsor an outing for outdoor photography, hiking and enjoying our local natural beauty. If you enjoy bringing your camera along on hikes then this is for you! Members of the Camera Club will be there to help beginning photographers learn how to take better photos of flowers, streams and waterfalls. Everyone will enjoy what this park has to offer. Around the same date in 2009 we were treated to a wide variety of wild flowers, including Poppies, Trillium, Lilies, Phlox, Dutchman's Britches, and ferns. The park is loaded with flowers in the spring. There is also a creek, two small waterfalls and an old barn used in the filming of The River.

Don't let spring rains keep you away from this trip. Seasoned photographers know cloudy and even rainy days are best for shooting flowers, streams and waterfalls. Just bring something to keep you and your camera dry. Rainy days leading up to the hike will result in more water and better photos of the falls.

We will meet at Laurel Run Park near Church Hill, TN at 8:30am. After spending some time with the wildflowers, we will take a short hike (about 2 miles out and back) up the trail along Laurel Run Creek to Laurel Run Falls and Kiner Creek Falls. Depending on the water level you may have to ford the creek a couple times. Rumor has it a bridge has been added since last year. This is a very easy hike with rewards for the photographer or anyone who appreciates nature. Anyone who is up for a longer hike can continue up the trail, which eventually ends at Bays Mountain Park. More information on the park and trail can be found on these websites: [appalachiantreks.blogspot.com](http://appalachiantreks.blogspot.com), [waterfall-picture-guide.com](http://waterfall-picture-guide.com)

##### **Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association (TSRA) Whitewater Rendezvous, April 14-18 2010**

It is time once again for the Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association (TSRA) Whitewater Rendezvous! Whitewater Rendezvous is an eclectic gathering of area boaters that want to run rivers on the Cumberland Plateau, gather with old and new friends, listen to live music, and participate in the live & silent auctions. This event takes place at Camp Nakanawa near Crossville, TN and is aimed at all Adults and kids that love the outdoors and the Cumberland Plateau. More information and can be found at [paddletsra.org](http://paddletsra.org).

Please register early. Meals and Lodging may not be available to those that register on-site.

##### **AT Trail Run, April 17, 2010**

*Leader:* [Tim Schaefer](#), 423-302-0846

I'm looking to start doing some trail runs starting in April. I'm willing to work on distances, locations, dates and times, so if you're interested contact me. Ideally we would have two drivers and do a key swap run (park at opposite ends and swap keys when we pass each other). Another option is to do a car shuffle and run together. For this first run I'm eyeing closer to Damascus since it is a little flatter and lower in elevation, something in the 10-20 mile range. We could even change it up and do the Creeper Trail instead. Departure time would be early, 6am to 7am, to try to get back by early afternoon at the latest. If you are interested, contact me and we can start working out the details.



## **Rocky Fork, April 17, 2010**

*Leader: [Dave Ramsey](#)*

A late April trek into the beautiful and unspoiled Rocky Fork Watershed will reward hikers with a fine wildflower show and the possible sighting of a certain big, black, furry creature known to roam the area's densely forested ridges and valleys. The hike will venture into the Rocky Fork backcountry on a moderate to strenuous route, covering approximately 10 to 12 miles, and chosen according to stream levels at the time of the hike. Hikers should be prepared for stream crossings. Contact Dave Ramsey if you are interested. Carpooling will be coordinated from Colonial Heights and Johnson City if necessary.

## **Fontana Lake Kayak/Canoe Camping Weekend, April 23-25, 2010**

*Leader: [Debbie Briscoe](#), 423-534-3636*

We will be launching at Cable Cove Campground and paddle up Eagle Creek to Lost Cove Camp Area. This is a secluded area and is a self contained trip. Please be prepared for rain and temperature changes.

## **Family/Beginner Hike at Bays Mountain, April 24th, 2010**

*Leader: [Tim Schaefer](#), 423-302-0846*

We'll hike somewhere around Bays Mountain. Depending on desires and abilities we can do the Lakeshore Loop and possibly a trip up to the fire tower or some other trail(s) in the park. Dogs are welcome on the trails of Bays Mountain and I will likely bring a friendly one. Contact hike leader for details.

## **AT Backpack: Davenport Gap to Hot Springs, April 30 – May 1, 2010**

*Leaders: [Jake Mitchell](#) and [Kevin Barham](#).*

Distance is 35.8 miles. Contact Jake Mitchell or Kevin Barham if interested.

## **Thirty-First Bluestone River Trip, May 14-16, 2010**

*Leader: [Terry Dougherty](#), 423-502-5177*

This year's trip will start on Friday night with check-in at Mt. Creek Lodge. We will be on the river Saturday and Sunday provided weather conditions permit. Saturday's trip will be on class III water and Sunday's trip will be pastoral. Be prepared for bad weather. The range of conditions over the years we have included flood, drought, rain, snow, lightning, hail, hot, cold, high wind and sunshine.

I have reserved a block of rooms in the Mt. Creek Lodge for Eastman Canoe Club Members for \$72/night with a two night minimum. If you want to use one of these rooms you can call Pipe Stem State Park at 304-466-1800 and make your reservation directly from this block. Camping is also available.

This is truly a unique canoe trip and I hope to see you there. Please feel free to call the leader for additional information.

We will meet at 9 am in the Mt. Creek Lodge parking lot to start Saturday's trip.

## **Women's Backpacking Class, May 20th, Eastman Employee Center Room 221, 6:30-8pm**

*Leader: [Nancy Wilson](#)*

Nancy Wilson will lead a beginner's backpacking class for women. Sorry guys. Basic gear and trip planning will be covered. A subsequent overnight trip will be planned for the weekend of June 5-6. For more information, contact Nancy Wilson ([nwilsonhiker@charter.net](mailto:nwilsonhiker@charter.net)).

## **Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition Conference, May 20-23, 2010**

*[southeastfoottrails.org](http://southeastfoottrails.org)*

The Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition will hold its biennial conference in Tennessee the weekend of May 20 - 23, 2010. The conference will be based at DuBose Conference Center in Monteagle, TN.

Members of hiking and trail building organizations from across the southeastern United States, partners of the coalition and any other interested parties will gather in Tennessee for a weekend of hiking, education, fun and celebration of the foot trails experience. Several guided hikes of varying length and difficulty will be offered in nearby locations. Simultaneously, at DuBose Center, there will be a series of educational sessions of varying length on tracks which address needs and interests of the hiking and trails community. Social activities will provide opportunities to share in fun with other participants and make new friends in the "trails community".

## **Mount LeConte Lodge (Smoky Mountains), Saturday-Sunday, July 10-11, 2010**

*Leader: [Steve Falling](#), 423-239-5502*

For the past 30+ years the Hiking Club has organized a summer weekend trip to Mount LeConte Lodge in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This lodge (elevation 6593 ft) can only be reached by hiking trail. Supplies are brought in by llama train once a week. The hiking distance to the lodge is 5.5 to 7.8 miles one-way depending on the route. The package price this year is \$128 per person which includes supper on Saturday, lodging for the night, and breakfast on Sunday. We have eight reservations in two five-person cabins (double bunk beds and a single). Please contact Steve Falling, 423-239-5502, if you are interested. You must be a TEHCC member to participate in this outing. You can find out more about Mount LeConte Lodge at [www.leconte-lodge.com/about.html](http://www.leconte-lodge.com/about.html).

## For the Record



### **Friday Hikers: Bays Mountain Park, February 26, 2010**

*Dave Dunham reporting*

On February 26, we hiked Bays Mountain Park trails including Lakeside, Firetower, Indian Pipes, Pretty Ridges, Back Hollow, Lake Road, Sweet Gum, to Lakeside and back to the Welcome Center. It was a very cold start with a brisk wind coming across the lake. We took a short break at the firetower and saw the beginnings of spring plant growth. We had lunch in a sunny spot on Pretty Ridges Trail before heading down the mountain. Back Hollow had many, many blowdowns which were difficult to go through and around. We saw several other hikers. The distance was about 8 miles and hikers were Anne Cosby, Susan Erdeky, Judith Foster, Allison Hewson, Heather Jacob, Larry Miller, Susie Seiler, Dave and Carol Dunham.

### **Friday Hikers: Virginia Creeper Trail, March 5, 2010**

*Collins Chew reporting*

We had a delightful stroll from Taylors Valley on the Virginia Creeper Trail with blue skies and cool weather. There were a few inches of snow on much of the route but none on roads. After walking at almost 3 miles per hour, we arrived at the Ice Cream Store in Damascus for lunch. Hikers were Jack Aaron, Olin Babb, Anne Cosby, Judith Foster, Heather Jacob, Larry Miller, first timer Claire Salvail and Collins Chew.

### **Friday Hikers: Virginia Creeper Trail, March 12, 2010**

*Collins Chew reporting*

We had a fine hike on a dreary day starting with fog, but mostly cloudy with patchy blue sky and a little sun at lunch. We hiked 10.5 miles on the Virginia Creeper Trail between White Top Station and Taylors Valley. Much, perhaps most, of the trail was covered with several inches of crusty snow which made walking a bit more difficult. The snow scenes were quite pretty. Hikers were: Jack Aaron, Olin Babb, Judith Foster, Larry Miller, Dick Orr, and Collins Chew.

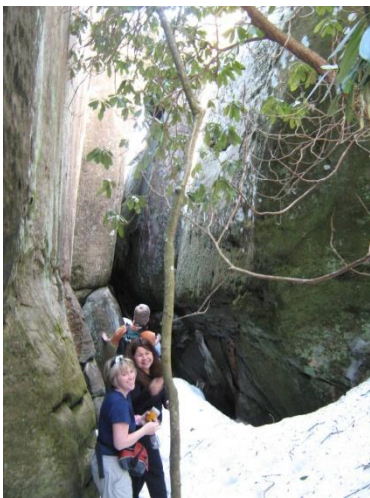
### **Friday Hikers: AT – Cross Mountain to Iron Mountain Shelter, March 19, 2010**

*Collins Chew reporting*

We had wonderful blue sky and pleasant temperatures for our 9-mile hike on the AT on Iron Mountain from Cross Mountain to the Iron Mountain Shelter and return. There were fine winter views through the trees all the way. We met several other hikers including one backpacker. We cleared a good bit of storm debris. The backpacker said our trail was in good shape except for Roan which was still deep in snow. Hikers were: Jack Aaron, Phyllis Cairnes, Anne Cosby, Debi Dula, Phil Hiat, first timer Eric Vrshansky for Wytheville, and Collins Chew.

### **Channels Natural Area Preserve, March 20, 2010**

*Vic Hasler reporting*



On the first official day of spring, a very large group of hikers enjoyed both deep snow within the Channels and sunning on the sand(stone) of ancient beaches. The recent club promotional initiative resulted in 26 folks and one dog taking the trek into the Channels Natural Area Preserve. The distance was just over three miles on a dirt road from where the vehicles had to be parked on VA80 at Hayter's Gap. The front edge of the group cleared a path through the many blowdowns observed on the east forest service road. Out on this very sunny day were Collins Chew, George, Chris, and Keron Privon, Linda Jones, Nathan Elliott, Wendell, Jeanette, and Raymond Dingus, Greg Kramer, Nancy and Kent Wilson, Griff Johnson, Laura Bustamante, Trish and Eric Osborne, Sharon Burnette, Solange Adams, Terri and Jason Kimbler, Anne Cowan, Bob Mueller, Jerry Robinson, David Smith, Nia Zalamea, and hike leader Vic Hasler.

*The Channels*



*Sunning on Sandstone*



## **AT Maintenance Reports**

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** February 26, 2010

**Purpose:** Maintenance dinner and meeting

**Location:** Eastman Lodge

**People:** Daryel Anderson, Juana Anderson, Paul Benfield, Tom Boyd, Ken Buchanan, Pat Buchanan, Bruce Cunningham, Mary Cunningham, Craig DeLoach, Joe DeLoach, Dale Douthat, Carol Dunham, Dave Dunham, Steve Falling, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Bill Fuller, Howard Guinn, Mike Hupko, Kat Johnson, Larry Miller, Jake Mitchell, Ted Mowery, C Mowery, Ed Oliver, Steve Perri, Kim Peters, Michael Rehart, Jeff Sirola, Tim Stewart, Michael Watts, Steve Wilson

**Summary:** The kickoff meeting for 2010 AT maintenance was well attended. We enjoyed the baked spaghetti, tossed salad, garlic



bread and desserts prepared by Mary Cunningham and Ed Oliver. We reviewed our 2009 achievements, handed out awards, discussed major projects for 2010, and discussed 2010 maintenance. The group decided to keep our current double blazing standard of vertical position rather than the offset position.

**Reporting:** Collins Chew

**Date:** February 27, 2010

**Purpose:** Cut blowdowns

**Location:** Section 4a, Low Gap to south one-half mile

**People:** Larry Miller, Collins Chew

**Summary:** We cut one large leaning blowdown, several small blowdowns and cleared some storm debris. Snow was a problem.

**Reporting:** Tim Stewart

**Date:** February 27, 2010

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 7, Wilbur Dam Road, north to spring on Trail

**People:** Tim Stewart

**Summary:** I went out for a day-hike to the spring north of Wilbur Dam Road and cleared several blowdowns that were obstructing the trail.

**Reporting:** Mary Cunningham

**Date:** February 27, 2010

**Purpose:** Eradicate invasive plants

**Location:** Section 19, Nolichucky River, to half mile north of Chestoa bridge

**People:** Debbie Stern, Mary Cunningham, and 13 others

**Summary:** We learned to identify three types of invasive plants; then cleared about 30 feet on both sides of Trail for about one-half mile from the river.

**Reporting:** Old Timers Hiking Club

**Date:** March 1, 2010

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 18, Indian Grave Gap north toward Beauty Spot

**People:** Howard Guinn, Ernie Hartford, John Willis, Dave McMillin, Mike Hupko

**Summary:** We cleared the blowdowns that we could with hand saws and planned to go back on a better day and finish the larger downed trees. About eight large trees, 8-15" in diameter, remain between Indian Grave Gap and Forest Service Road 230 that we will get later. The trail was passable when we left it. The snow was two to eight inches deep depending on location and drifts.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** March 5, 2010

**Purpose:** Cut blowdowns

**Location:** Section 20a, Nolichucky River to Temple Hill Gap

**People:** Daryel Anderson, Carl Fritz

**Summary:** We explored from the Nolichucky to the top of Temple Hill. There was only one six-inch blowdown. We removed several dead-pine leaners from across Trail and one down-hill leaner that was starting to take out Trail.

**Reporting:** Kim Peters

**Date:** March 5, 2010

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 19, Nolichucky River to about 1 mile south of Curley Maple Gap Shelter

**People:** Chuck Mather, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Paul Benfield, Tim Stewart, Kim Peters

**Summary:** Ted and Chuck cleared the trail from Chestoa to Nolichucky Expeditions, and rehabbed where a root ball took out part of the trail. Paul, Bob, Tim and Kim cleared multiple blowdowns, some over 2 feet in diameter, up to about a mile south of the shelter (see before and after photos below). This winter certainly has been hard on this section. This is the fourth work trip to clear the blowdowns.



*Kim Peters making her way through the blowdowns*



*At work clearing the blowdowns: Bob Peoples (edge of photo), Tim Stewart, and Paul Benfield (chainsaw master)*

**Reporting:** Tom Boyd

**Date:** March 7, 2010

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 2, Backbone Rock Trail to Abingdon Gap Shelter

**People:** Tom Boyd, Mike Rehart

**Summary:** After discovering that McQueens Gap road had been temporarily closed, we changed our plans and started from the Backbone Rock parking area. We followed the 2-mile access trail to its intersection with the AT, clearing minor limbs and brush along the way. Reaching the AT and heading south, we continued to clear minor limbs and brush and cut back briars and scrub growth from the uphill side of trail for about a mile. We cleared one large blowdown with hand saws and noted the location of one leaner and one significant tree across the trail that will require chainsaws to clear. There is still a lot of snow on the AT in the high elevations.

**Reporting:** Joe DeLoach

**Date:** March 7, 2010

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 13a, Near U.S. Hwy 19E

**People:** Craig DeLoach and Joe DeLoach

**Summary:** We removed a tricky blowdown hanging from an old cable just as the Trail turns up into Wilder Mine Hollow, about 200 yards from 19E. Chad Tate reported this to be the only large blowdown between 19E and Doll Flats after a December hike; though there may be more now. There is about six inches of snow in the hollow.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** March 8, 2010

**Purpose:** Make measurements at Double Springs Shelter

**Location:** Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter

**People:** Paul Benfield, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** I made measurements at the Shelter. The front of the sleeping platform needs to be repaired.

**Reporting:** Brian Paley

**Date:** March 9, 2010

**Purpose:** Repair Trail and flag new relocation

**Location:** Section 8, near Shook Branch picnic area

**People:** Brian Paley, Ed Oliver, Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** Our team removed a large root mass on the AT as it comes up from the picnic area at Shook Branch. We also installed a new side bar and leveled about 30 feet of Trail. In the afternoon, we flagged a few hundred yards of a new relocation around the edge of Watauga Lake.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** March 9, 2010

**Purpose:** Rehab trail and cut blowdowns



**Location:** Section 9b and 10, Laurel Fork area

**People:** Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** We started rehabbing on blue blaze trail to Hampton at the narrow, rock cliff along Laurel Fork. We made some significant improvements in footing by knocking out some rocks and cribbing some. It was such a beautiful day that Tim took a swim! Another work day here with some larger rock tools will make a significant impact. In the afternoon we cut three blowdowns on AT headed towards Dennis Cove. We also checked out some future rehab of the high-water trail where the trail is narrow and rocky.



*Carl Fritz working on the Hampton blue-blaze trail*



*Tim Stewart and Bob Peoples cutting blowdown near Dennis Cove*

**Reporting:** Scott VanDam

**Date:** March 10, 2010

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 12a, Bitter End to Walnut Mountain Road

**People:** Scott VanDam

**Summary:** The snow has melted enough to get out to check Trail conditions and damage from the major winter snows. I hiked the entire section with a handsaw, removed two medium-sized blowdowns, and cleaned up at meadow view spot. This section is now clear of blowdowns, except for one remaining dead snag hanging on a tree beside Trail about a half-mile from Bitter End.

**Reporting:** Mike Hupko

**Date:** March 12, 2010

**Purpose:** Spring cleanup

**Location:** Section 18, Indian Grave Gap to USFS 230

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

**Summary:** We removed 14 trees from across the Trail, cut 7 dead standing trees near the Trail, and lopped and removed smaller brush from the Trail. The snow is almost all melted. The treadway looked good on this section. USFS 230 was littered with brush and smaller trees.

**Reporting:** Steve Wilson

**Date:** March 13, 2010

**Purpose:** Clear and maintain Trail

**Location:** Section 13a, U.S. Hwy 19E to Doll Flats

**People:** Steve and Jill Wilson

**Summary:** We hiked in from 19E towards Doll Flats and found the trail in good shape with the usual amount of minor blowdowns. We carried handsaws, loppers, and a garden hoe, which allowed us to clear out 15 minor blowdowns, cut the rhododendron, and clean the water bars. The shelter is in good shape and has a broom, a rake and two plastic lawn chairs, plus the new shelter log. The most rewarding event was clearing out the plastic culvert under the foot bridge just below the shelter. It had become clogged with leaves and the recent rains made the bridge into a slippery water fall. The garden hoe's handle was very useful for unclogging the mess, and then we used the stream's high water flow to flush out the water way. The only tree (14") needing chainsaw work was roughly one-half mile down from Doll Flats. It is an easy step over, so not a big concern and we plan to remove it soon. We turned around just after the tree, but based on the previous miles, we didn't expect major obstructions up to the Flats. Another noteworthy find was a mud slide below the stone cliffs that is half covering the treadway. It can be walked around, but we plan to bring a shovel to clear out the loose dirt that is forcing hikers to walk on the outside of the trail. It could lead to significant trail damage if not corrected.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** March 16, 2010

**Purpose:** Clear debris from Trail

**Location:** Section 4a, U.S. Hwy 421 to Double Springs Shelter

**People:** Paul Benfield, Collins Chew, Charles Mather, Ted Mowery, Ken Buchanan, Bill Elderbrock

**Summary:** We cut up and removed blowdowns, limbs and small trees that the snow had bent over onto the trail. We also cleaned out the water bars.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** March 16, 2010

**Purpose:** Cut blowdowns

**Location:** Section 13b, South of Doll Flats

**People:** Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** Before getting to Doll Flats, we encountered a half inch of fresh snow and rhyme ice. As we entered the woods above Doll Flats, we were in old snow and it only got deeper. A primary maple blowdown had about 40 feet of trail blocked and it required about 80 minutes of cutting. Many of the small trees in this area were broken down over the trail. We had to search for the trail because we were in two feet of snow. We turned back after going only about a mile and a half. One more cutting day here is required in about two weeks when there is less snow.

**Reporting:** Joe DeLoach

**Date:** March 16, 2010

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 20b, Spivey Gap to Flattop Mountain Road

**People:** Joe DeLoach and Kim Peters

**Summary:** We cleared blowdowns, including two large ones reported by Bill Berry, between Spivey Gap and Flattop Mountain Road. Bill did a tremendous amount of work on one tangle near Oglesby Branch and elsewhere along this section. All clear.

**Reporting:** Kim Peters

**Date:** March 18, 2010

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 7, Wilbur Dam Road, north about 4 miles

**People:** Ken Buchanan, Kim Peters

**Summary:** The snow is finally gone! We cleared numerous small branches and blowdowns on this warm and sunny day. We found about 9 large trees that will require a crosscut to remove. Only one is a serious impediment as it is forked and has to be climbed through. The rest are easy to moderately difficult step-overs. We got about a mile from the shelter before we had to turn back. We met one hiker, Trek, who is on this eighth thru-hike. He was glad to be out of the snow and said we didn't have any blowdowns on this section. (His reference was Doll Flats where he claims the trail is impossible to find.) He was heading to Iron Mt Gap Shelter; so I gave him the shelter log to place in Vandeventer as he passed by.

**Reporting:** Mike Hupko

**Date:** March 19, 2010

**Purpose:** Spring cleanup

**Location:** Section 16b, Iron Mountain Gap, north about 2 miles

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

**Summary:** We cleared 15 trees from the trail of various sizes; the largest was about 15 inches in diameter and four had blocked the trail. We also lopped and cleared debris from the trail. The spring at the Apple Orchard had a water flow of about 4 to 5 gallons per minute. There was very little snow left in the area. We covered about 2 trail miles north from Iron Mountain Gap.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** March 20, 2010

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 18, Half mile north of Indian Grave Gap

**People:** Paul Benfield, Mary Cunningham, Elizabeth Dukes, Mike Hupko, Ted Mowery, Kevin O'Donnell, Isaac Wilson,

**Summary:** With some help from ETSU, 300 feet of trail was rehabbed by removing roots and installing eight water bars.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** March 20, 2010

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 19, 1.5 mile south of Indian Grave Gap

**People:** Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Gerald Scott, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** We rehabbed three major areas equal to about 220 feet by redigging the sloughing trail. We also removed a couple of minor blowdowns.



**Reporting:** Jake Mitchell

**Date:** March 20, 2010

**Purpose:** Spring cleaning

**Location:** Section 9b, Hampton trailhead to Shook Branch

**People:** Jake Mitchell, Ryen Minton, Bill Fuller, Kevin Barham

**Summary:** We set out from the Hampton trailhead to do our spring cleaning all the way to Shook Branch. The blue blaze was relatively litter free. We cleared 2 blowdowns and blazed to the AT junction on the blue blaze. The recent work by the Tuesday crew on the rocks was very nice. There were lots of overnight campers along the creek. Our northbound ascent of Pond started off with a bang. We spent nearly an hour clearing two large blowdowns less than 50 feet from each other with the one-man crosscut. We cleared a few more blowdowns throughout the day, but none were as large as these. We blazed northbound to Pond Flats before we ran out of paint; but the blazes on the northside of the mountain looked good. We left two blowdowns for another day that will require the two-man crosscut. They are a few feet from each other just below the lookout on the northside. They are both passable. The AT across Pond is clear and in very good shape. We cleared eleven blowdowns and saw one thru hiker.

**Reporting:** Michael Watts

**Date:** March 20, 2010

**Purpose:** Annual Trail maintenance

**Location:** Section 5, TN Hwy 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter

**People:** Rick Lott, Scotty Myers, Susan Rook, Gene Wagstaff, Michael Watts

**Summary:** It was a beautiful sunny day for trail maintenance. We cut 14 blowdowns, trimmed, weeded, and removed trash.

**Reporting:** Mike Hupko

**Date:** March 22, 2010

**Purpose:** Spring Maintenance

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

**People:** Andrew Cleland, Deanna Richardson, Jerry Mayne, Dave McMillin, Mike Hupko

**Summary:** We removed 14 large tree branches from Trail along with many various sized smaller limbs. There are five locations where a chainsaw is needed to remove nine large tree boles from across the trail, and one location where a root ball left a hole in the treadway. We plan to cut the trees and fill in the treadway on March 25. Both springs at the Cherry Gap Shelter are running very good.

**Reporting:** Brian Paley

**Date:** March 22, 2010

**Purpose:** Spring trail maintenance

**Location:** Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road to U.S. Hwy 321

**People:** Brian Paley

**Summary:** I cleaned stairs and water bars; also delivered a log book and rake to the Watauga Shelter. I clipped overhanging branches and took pictures of signs.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** March 22, 2010

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 10, High Water Trail, Laurel Fork Gorge

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Ethan Heppner, Ron Chandl, Allegra Kwang, Michael Hughes, Jordan Shkelnick

**Summary:** Five Grinnel College students from Iowa have made TN their spring break. Today, they and some of the Tuesday crew rehabbed about 80 feet of trail on High Water Trail in Laurel Fork Gorge. The trail had become very narrow with numerous awkward steps and has been receiving numerous local hiker complaints. They installed a locust side log, backfilled it, removed an old stump, and installed several steps. Some more minor rehab on this trail is desired, but the critical area has been resolved. They exited to Kincora Hostel with snow coming down heavily.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** March 23, 2010

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 9b, Blueline trail from Hampton

**People:** Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Ethan Heppner, Ron Chandl, Allegra Kwang, Michael Hughes, Jordan Shkelnick

**Summary:** Because of two inches of fresh snow at 2500-foot level, we changed plans and continued work on blueline trail at Hampton beside the stream where trail is steep side-to-side against rock face. We completed the rehab in this area for now. We

were able to remove stumps, eliminate scrambles over rocks, and improve footing. The students learned how to chip rock with wedges and sledges and to build some rock steps. This was the second muddy day of hard work for these students.

**Reporting:** Mike Hupko

**Date:** March 24, 2010

**Purpose:** Spring Maintenance

**Location:** Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to Low Gap

**People:** Faye Guinn, Howard Guinn, Dave McMillin, Gil Derouen,

Harry Ford, Bob Savery, Ernie Hartford, Jerry Jones, Deanna Richardson, Andrew Cleland, Jerry Mayne, Lou Haase, John Parks,

Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko

**Summary:** We cleared 28 trees from across the trail, the largest being 20 inches in diameter. We lopped branches, cleared debris from the trail, cleaned water bars, filled in a hole in the trail left by a fallen tree root ball, and picked up trash.