



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

December 2012

tehcc.org

In this Issue

[From the Chair](#)

[2013 Steering Committee Election Results](#)

[Author and Avid Hiker to Speak in Bristol, December 3](#)

[TEHCC Welcomes New Members](#)

[Event Schedule](#)

[Details on Upcoming Events](#)

[For the Record](#)

[AT Maintenance Reports](#)

From the Chair

Vic Hasler, Steering Committee Chair

Where has the year gone? Oh, yeah. On 34 club hikes and multiple river trips as reported in this newsletter. It helped with the Great Girl Scout Hike. Relocated and maintained 137 miles of the Appalachian Trail, particularly on Tuesdays and Saturdays. A moonlit hike was washed out by stormy weather. It swapped outdoor gear. Dinner meetings and stories were enjoyed with fellow club members – and a new executive director. It explored trails in the region, and then shared the information on the wiki. Finally, 2012 says a BIG “Thank You” to all of the folks who participated in any way (inside or out) with the Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club.

2013 Steering Committee

First, we thank Waylon Jenkins and Deb Reynolds for their contributions on the TEHCC Steering Committee during the past two years as they rotate off.

Second, to take advantage of the talents of all members willing to lead the club, the Steering Committee has agreed to suspend some of the rules related to elections while the constitution is amended. Our desire is to modify the election process to allow more flexibility in the number of Steering Committee members, while matching that of the other Eastman Recreation clubs in proposing a slate of nominees for confirmation – instead of requiring two candidates per open position. In this light, all four nominees on the ballot offer unique perspectives that can help guide the club in 2013, thus we will be seating the entire slate. Please give your support to Terry Dougherty, Brien Lewis, Garry Luttrell, and Tim McClain as they join the Steering Committee, along with returning members, Mary Fanslow, Barry Griggs, and Marc Schurger.

Third, to resolve work/life issues within the Steering Committee, Vic Hasler will continue as the chair for 2013.

Fourth, Terry Dougherty has agreed to become the coordinator for the club’s rental gear.

Overall, TEHCC strives to enable the maintenance of our assigned AT section, while offering a variety of hikes and paddling trips.

Author and Avid Hiker to Speak in Bristol, December 3

Jennifer Pharr Davis, author and avid hiker, will speak on Monday, December 3, at 10:30 a.m. in King’s Memorial Chapel and again that evening at 7 p.m. at the Bristol Public Library. Both events are part of King College’s Buechner Institute Lecture Series, are open

to the public and free to attend. Jennifer Pharr Davis, a National Geographic 2012 Adventurer of the Year, has hiked more than 11,000 miles on six continents and broke the overall speed record for hiking the Appalachian Trail in 2011. She has completed the Pacific Crest Trail, Colorado Trail, Long Trail, Foothills Trail, Bibbulmun Track, Inca Trail, a summit of Mount Kilimanjaro, and others. This is a rare opportunity to hear Davis, who wrote "Becoming Odyssea," a book that details Davis' first hike on the Appalachian Trail in 2004.

Bristol Public Library is at 701 Goode St., Bristol, VA. For more information, contact Dale Brown at 423.652.4156 or visit www.buechnerinstitute.org.



TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Gerald Scott

Sandra Case

John Stephenson

Event Schedule

For the latest, up-to-date information, see tehcc.org/schedule

| Date | Description | Leader | Contact |
|--------|--|----------------------------|--------------|
| Dec 15 | 3 rd Saturday Maintenance – Hiking with Tools | Kim Peters | 423-366-0128 |

Details on 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) 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 and to learn 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. provides 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.). If you do not have your own equipment, please post a message on the APEs yahoo group site or send [Wesley](#) an email asking other members to bring extra equipment. We will try our best to get you outfitted for the night!

3rd Saturday Maintenance – Hiking with Tools!

Contact: [Kim Peters](#) (423-366-0128)

Come out for a day hike somewhere on our beautiful section of trail on the 3rd Saturday of each month and help with some routine maintenance needs, such as cutting annual growth, cleaning out waterbars and painting blazes. All tools will be furnished and no prior experience is required! Contact [Kim](#) for details and meeting time and place.

Scheduled Events



There are no other events scheduled for this month. Happy holidays!



For the Record

F/B: Natural Tunnel SP - Purchase Ridge Trail, October 7, 2012

Vic Hasler reporting

By this Sunday afternoon, the leaves, temperature, and precipitation were falling. An earlier forecast was for grey skies with a slight chance of drizzle, so chose to drive up since a couple of others had expressed interest in the hike. (Actually, they also made the trip, but decided to skip as the cold rain was steady.) Purchase Ridge Trail is a nice walk through the hardwoods – although most of the color was on the ground on this day. Saw several deer and wild turkeys since no one else was around. The pretty vista of the trail tunnel from the constructed overlook also had a slight misty fog in the valley below. The hike ended up being an easy three and quarter mile loop by taking Cabin Trail and the roadway back to the trailhead. I would recommend this hike for families in the spring when wildflowers are out in the forest or during the peak of fall color. It is also open to mountain bikes, thus would be a good starting experience.

F/B: BMP Bays Ridge/Lake Road Loop, November 4, 2012

Vic Hasler reporting

In an attempt to keep the Sunday afternoon hiking program going, I picked this nearby park loop for a chance to use my binoculars from the overlooking cliffs. I was able to pick out ground features on the far side of I-81, but the distant mountains were all hazy. The 2.5 mile hike, crunching through the fallen leaves, was quickly completed in a bit over an hour. I then swung by to check out the cliffs being prepared for a climbing area as heard from the Everetts. While I hiked solo, BMP was very busy with families enjoying the barge ride and mountain bikers hitting the trails.



Looking SE from Bay Ridge cliffs

Lake Keokee Loop, November 24, 2012

Vic Hasler reporting



A crisp and clear walk enjoyed through the woods. While everyone else watched football, I relished having the entire Lake Keokee Recreation Area to myself. The hike ended up being 5.5 miles for the lake loop plus a side trip up to Olinger Gap. The steady crunching of leaves and clipping back of rhododendron was the only noise heard around the serene lake. Only when back at the parking lot, did I see a father and daughter arrive to feed the fish from the observation pier. Although an hour and half drive each way, the 3.8 mile Lake Keokee Loop Trail would be a nice family/beginner hike – especially when the spring wildflowers were in bloom.



AT Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 10/17/2012

Purpose: AT Partnership Meeting

Location: USFS Office in Unicoi

People: Morgan Sommerville, Andrew Downs, John Odell, Alice Cohen, Rueben Potter, Cheryl Summers, Terry Bowerman, Gray Buckles, Don Palmer, Matt Fusco, Dave McFee, Dave Ferguson, Carl Frits, Mike Hupko, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Ed Oliver, Ted Mowry, Kim Peters, Steve Perri

Summary: We conducted our Fall partnership meeting with our ATC and USFS partners. Alice Cohen was introduced as the new Trail Technician to replace Vern Maddux. We reviewed our 2012 work including relays on Pond Mountain and Bear Town Mountains. We expect to work again next year on Bear Town up to Cloudland. Our relay proposal for the TN 91-Turkey Pen Gap area is still pending; it should be approved by early 2013. Morgan has allocated \$35k for the Koonford Bridge in 2013. We agreed to a primitive design and to identify and order materials so work can commence. We have 8 people needing chainsaw recertification, so Rueben will help sponsor a training day. We reviewed progress made with the TN license plate program and work done to barricade Beauty Spot. We discussed the idea of adopting new leave-no-trace signs for kiosks. The USFS presented a new permitting process for AT use requests. We reviewed open-area funding and plans for continued assessments. John Odell indicated funds are possibly available for providing warbler habitat. The USFS is moving fences to keep cattle off the accessible trail on the Osbrone Tract. We have two options needing follow up for potentially funding a Naturalist for the Roan Highlands. The Appalachian Ranger district has moved to the Woodfin exit along I-26. Prescribed burns include Still House near Backbone Rock and another near Indian Grave Gap for this fall. The next meeting is March 23, 2013 in either Unicoi or Woodfin.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 10/26/2012

Purpose: Clear blowdowns and pickup trash

Location: Section 20b, Devils Creek Gap to Chestoa

People: Lynn DiFiore, Joe DeLoach

Summary: Lynn had noted more than a few trees of chainsaw diameter in an earlier walk, and with limited time we went in from Devils Creek Gap to get the worst of them. We cut 10-12 out from there to Temple Hill Gap before running out of time. We had to leave a tangle just south of Temple Hill Gap and a large tree about 0.5 miles north of it, but neither is a serious obstruction. We found bib overalls, a plush towel, three bars of soap, and lots of plastic alongside the Trail about 0.5 miles north of Devils Creek Gap, prompting lots of "what happened here?" speculation, and had the pleasure of carrying them 8 miles to Chestoa. We didn't have room to carry trash from No Business Knob Shelter, where half of the front concrete blocks had been broken off, though this is of little consequence to anything other than looks. We noted on the descent to the river that some deep trenches perpendicular to the Trail had been dug, presumably for water drainage, but these should be angled and don't need to be so deep. Some sections especially between Temple Hill Gap and the shelter could use lopping of rhododendron and laurel so the Trail doesn't start to slough as it did in the 1990's. Otherwise, Trail is in good shape.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/28/2012

Purpose: Inspect bridges

Location: Section 10, Laurel Fork Gorge

People: Bob Peoples

Summary: Bob inspected a couple of bridges in Laurel Fork Gorge that had been reported by hikers as having problems. Part of Koonford bridge hand rail has deteriorated and some critical pieces are missing. Repairs are being planned soon.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 11/3/2012

Purpose: Blazing and routine maintenance

Location: Section 14a, Overmountain Shelter

People: Lynn DiFiore, Lyndsey Smith, Sean Darling

Summary: The purpose of the trip was to replace the missing water sign at the barn and to touch up blazes. Unfortunately, recent snows created a 4-foot drift blocking Roaring Creek Rd approximately 3/4 mile below the gate; so the majority of time was spent just getting to the shelter! We replaced the water sign and re-blazed the blue blazes to the spring and up to the AT. We picked up a small amount of trash at the barn.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/3/2012

Purpose: Repair Koonford Bridge

Location: Section 10, Koonford Bridge, Laurel Fork Gorge

People: Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Jack Tarlin, Charles Gardner

Summary: Baltimore Jack reported that some of hand rail on Koonford bridge was missing. Some posts as well as rails were missing and others were weak from natural decay. Using 2x4's and 4x4's we replaced the missing and decaying locusts. We added more hardware to those remaining. The hand rail is very sturdy now. It was greatly used today by many families with small children. Charles Gardener is a south bounder who is a carpenter and his skills came in handy.

Reporting: Scott Vandam

Date: 11/4/2012

Purpose: Cut out storm-damaged laurels

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

People: Scott Vandam

Summary: Unfortunately the early winter storm that came through last week (associated with hurricane Sandy) resulted in a heavy accumulation of snow on many laurels, breaking older mature ones that were sagging above the trail before the storm. I hiked the section with small hand saw and cut out quite a few to reopen trail.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/6/2012

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 19a, About 1.5 miles south of Indian Grave Gap

People: John Beaudet, Ken Buchanan, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Jack Tarlin, George Thorpe

Summary: The ground was clear of snow when we arrived. However, unexpected precipitation arrived with us and continued all day. We left with one inch on the ground and very cold hands. We did rehab over 400 feet of trail.

Reporting: Scott Vandam

Date: 11/7/2012

Purpose: Cut blowdowns

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

People: Scott Vandam

Summary: I finished the maintenance this section required after the Sandy-related heavy snowfall. I took a chainsaw and removed several blowdowns too large to take out with a handsaw. Other maintainers shouldn't underestimate the trees/laurels that might be down in their sections. This section is now clear.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/8/2012

Purpose: Cut blowdown

Location: Section 10, Laurel Fork Gorge

People: Bob Peoples, Jim Chambers, Jack Tarlin

Summary: Bob, Jim and Jack cleared the remaining blowdowns in Laurel Fork Gorge.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 11/10/2012

Purpose: Reblazing and routine maintenance

Location: Section 14a, Overmountain Shelter to Bradley Gap

People: Lynn DiFiore

Summary: Purpose of trip was to touch up blazes along the section. Most of the snow had melted, but there were still significant drifts and a lot of slush and mud! Heavy snow brought down many limbs and small trees, but all were able to be cleared with the handsaw with the exception of one that was easily stepped over. A significant amount of trash was removed from the barn (hunting season?).

Reporting: Gerald Scott

Date: 11/10/2012

Purpose: Section Maintenance

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

People: Gerald Scott, Harold Wexler

Summary: We removed numerous branches and several blowdowns (largest 12 inches), and cut and trimmed rhododendrons damaged during the recent snow storm. We cleared leaves and branches from the water sources. We checked on Mountaineer Falls Shelter and found it to be in good shape. Trail is now clear all the way through.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 11/12/2012

Purpose: Clearing debris from recent storms

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel to Hughes Gap

People: Joe Morris

Summary: I removed blowdowns and debris from the trail from Hughes Gap to Ash Gap.

Reporting: John Beaudet

Date: 11/13/2012

Purpose: Trim woody growth

Location: Section 19a, Indian Grave Gap to Curley Maple Gap Shelter

People: John Beaudet

Summary: I cut back rhododendron and other woody growth along the trail.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/14/2012

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 19a, About 1 mile south of Indian Grave Gap

People: John Beaudet, Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Bill Murdoch, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart, Jack Tarlin

Summary: Although it was 30° and high winds when we arrived, it settled into a very tolerable day with sunshine. We dug over 400 feet of trail to remove roots or to improve some rock fields. Rock cribbing plus crush and fill were necessary in many areas. At least two more crew days are required to improve the worst of this section.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 11/15/2012

Purpose: Clear blowdowns and debris

Location: Section 12c, Buck Mountain Baptist Church to Elk River

People: Joe Morris

Summary: I cleared several small blowdowns from Buck Mountain Road to Elk River including the Jones Falls Access Trail. The post storm condition of this section was much better than the area north of Hughes Gap where I worked on Monday, November 12.

Reporting: Bob Peoples

Date: 11/16/2012

Purpose: Clear trail from Hurricane Sandy

Location: Section 11a, Dennis Cove Road to the second vista

People: Bob Peoples, Jack Tarlin

Summary: Bob and Jack cleared the many rhododendron and limbs due to the heavy snow from Sandy. This section was the worst it has been since 1998.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 11/16 and 11/17/2012

Purpose: Post Hurricane Sandy Clean-Up

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

People: Jim Chambers

Summary: I conducted a two-day clean up of my section as a result of the recent storm and snow. I removed many blowdowns, large tree limbs, and many clusters of smaller limbs over the course of 2 days. I was fortunate in that I was able to use my handsaw and loppers for most of the obstructions, and I was able to move some trees by hand. There are larger blown down trees that will require a chainsaw, and that information, along with photographs, have already been forwarded to Carl Fritz along with information regarding the trail sections north and south of my section. Further, Abingdon Gap Shelter, and campsites on my section were in good shape except for the broken broom in the shelter.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 11/17/2012

Purpose: Third Saturday Maintenance - Hiking with Tools!

Location: Section 1, Damascus to state line

People: Ed Oliver, Daryel Anderson, Kim Peters

Summary: The original plan for this 3rd Saturday trip was to cover the entire section to the Backbone Rock Trail junction. But with a small crew on this trip, we decided to just go to the state line. We had received a report that there were 13 blowdowns in this section blocking the trail. We found 15, only 4 of which were perceived as an impediment, the worst ones being closer to state line at higher elevation. We cut out everything we found using a combination of three saws, Daryel's Japanese pruning saw, a Corona saw and Ed's new Silky saw. This Silky saw worked really well. We also cleaned out water diversions, cut back woody growth, and removed branches and limbs from the trail. This section of trail is now completely clear. We met several southbounders and a few locals out trail running or walking their dog. It was a beautiful sunny day, a great day to be out in the woods and a fine 3rd-Saturday trip.

Reporting: Bob Peoples

Date: 11/18/2012

Purpose: Clear trail from Hurricane Sandy

Location: Section 11a, 2nd vista from Dennis Cove Road to Canute Place

People: John Beaudet, Bob Peoples, Razor Ray, Jack Tarlin

Summary: Jack painted blazes starting at Dennis Cove until he ran out of paint. Bob, John and Razor continued clearing all the rhododendron and 14 blowdowns. This section is now clear.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/19/2012

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 19a, South of Indian Grave Gap

People: John Beaudet, Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Jim Chambers, Ray Douglas, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Becky Kinder, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Gayle Riddervold, Jack Tarlin

Summary: With great weather we were able to dig a lot of roots and do some major cribbing. Today we redug 660 feet of trail. And this year on this section we have redug almost a half-mile equivalent. There are still some scattered sections to Curley Maple Gap Shelter that need redug. But they tend to be much smaller and only small groups of maintainers should be needed.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 11/22/2012

Purpose: Clear section

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

People: Craig Haire, Helga Mitchell

Summary: We trimmed back overgrowth and did minor chainsaw clearing.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 11/23/2012

Purpose: Clear debris and blowdowns

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap to Little Rock Knob

People: Joe Morris

Summary: I cleared woody growth, limbs and a few minor blowdowns from Hughes to below the crest of Little Rock Knob Summit. I met five SOBO Hikers who indicated the Trail was in great shape south of Hwy 19E.