



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

May 2014

tehcc.org

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From the Chair

Brien Lewis, Steering Committee Chair

Saturday, June 7th is the annual American Hiking Society's National Trails Day. NTD features a series of outdoor activities designed to promote and celebrate the importance of trails in the United States. Individuals, clubs and organizations from around the country host NTD events to share their love of trails with friends, family, and their communities. For public and private land managers alike, NTD is a great time to showcase beautiful landscapes and special or threatened locales as thousands of people will be outside looking to participate in NTD events.

Local offerings include a trail run at Roan Mountain State Park and an assortment of events throughout the Smokies. Check the American Hiking Society's webpage for more details. While TEHCC is not formally sponsoring an event, please review our weekly hikes for some ideas on how to get outside and enjoy the trails. So whether you participate in a planned event, or decide to plan your own, make an effort to get outside on June 7th and celebrate the trails.

2014 Spring Dinner Meeting

Vic Hasler reporting

Another evening of fellowship was enjoyed by the ~54 attending the spring dinner, including three thru-hikers. Marc Schurger hosted "Happy Trails" as the crowd gathered and mixed in groups of conversation in the Eastman lodge. Dinner, arranged by Fred Mullner, was BBQ and fixins from Phil's Dream Pit. Coffee and many cream pies were consumed as dessert. The GS Troop 263 provided table decorations and had a profitable evening of cookie sales.

Current Steering Committee chair, Brien Lewis, relayed several announcements, including:

- 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act
 - NPS Wilderness [videos](#)
 - Cherokee National Forest Service announced that a hike is being recommended for each of the 11 wilderness areas during 2014 ([link](#))
- SAHC Roan Ridgerunner will be Fletcher Meadema, starting May 23rd thru mid-August
- Warrior Hike on the AT, who are now passing through TEHCC section ([link](#))
- 40th Anniversary of the SAHC (video)
- Impromptu selection of raffle winners, who received a box of cookies now – and book later.

Reuben Potter from Watauga Ranger District of Cherokee National Forest presented the volunteer service hour recognitions for the 2013 calendar year:

50 Hours - Dave Dunham, Vic Hasler, Bill Murdoch, Aaron Sanford, Bill Hodge, Scott VanDam, Will Rogers, Steve Wilson, Craig Haire, Howard Guinn

100 Hours - Daryel Anderson, Scotty Bowman, Lynn DiFiore, Marsha Hupko, Greg Kramer, James Lautzenheiser, Brenna Irrer, "Baltimore Jack" Tarlin, George Thorpe

250 Hours - Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter

300, 400 Hours - Paul Benfield, Joe Morris, Ed Oliver, Kim Peters

500, 800 Hours – Joe DeLoach, “Mountain Squid” Stewart, Carl Fritz

Maintainer of the Year (2013) was Joe Morris

Hiker of the Year (2013) was Vic Hasler

David Ramsey put together a highly visual evening program on “Amazing Places in The Tennessee Blue Ridge” complete with dual sound track and voice over. The audience oohed and aahed over the panoramic photography, while learning that the Blue Ridge parkway was originally slated to cross over at Roan Mountain and travel down through Tennessee – not further in North Carolina. The question for the evening: Which was the better end result? Commercial development or unspoiled natural wilderness? (Technical note: The audio had to be delivered from David’s MacPro notebook while the video was projected from the lodge’s desktop computer. Both versions of the PowerPoint deck were simultaneously started.)

A.T. Maintainers Needed

Carl Fritz reporting

Our club is responsible for maintaining over 130 miles of Appalachian Trail between Spivey Gap near Erwin and the TN/VA state line near Damascus, VA. This is a major responsibility which requires a lot of volunteers.

We are organizing several teams of volunteers to help maintain some selected trail sections. The maintenance work will involve painting the blazes that identify the trail, lopping new growth along the trail, cleaning water bars if present, removing small trees that have fallen across the trail and cutting weeds as needed.

Each team will be led by an experienced maintainer and will make two or three trips each year. These trips will be scheduled on a Saturday or Sunday to accommodate those who work, although other days are possible depending upon the schedule of the team members. If you volunteer for a team, you will not be committing to going out each time, but just committing that you will go out whenever possible. Our goal is to have about eight people on each team and hopefully half will be available for each trip. As you know more hands make light work.

No prior maintenance experience is necessary to participate on these teams and all necessary tools will be provided by the club. In addition to upholding our club's responsibility to maintain the AT, a secondary goal is to introduce people to the personal satisfaction and social joys of trail maintenance.

Would you be interested in signing up for one of these maintenance teams? Or would you prefer to have information about other special maintenance efforts that happen on the weekend or even during the week? If so, please contact Carl Fritz at 423-477-4669, atvolunteer@tehcc.org ; or Kim Peters at 423-366-0128, atmaint@tehcc.org.

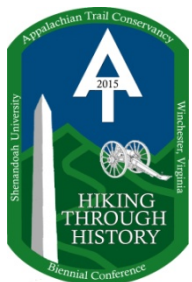
40th Meeting of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Dates: July 17 to 24, 2015

Location: Shenandoah University – Winchester, VA

Hosted by: Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and Mountain Club of Maryland

ATC Event Page: [2015 ATC Biennial Conference: Hiking Through History](#)



The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) holds a biennial conference every two years which includes 150 hikes, numerous workshops, and excursions to local areas of interest. The conference also includes the required ATC biennial membership meeting. Each evening there are exciting adventure presentations and stellar entertainment. The event draws between 900 and 1,200 people from around the world, but primarily from locations along the nearly 2,200 mile Appalachian Trail (A.T.).

Volunteer opportunities are available for leading hikes, presenting workshops, helping on-site during the event, and many more areas that may be of interest. There is a volunteer form at the ATC webpage noted above that can be completed and submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator, Tom Johnson, at volunteers2015@patc.net.

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

Date	Description	Leader	Contact
May 3	Spring Wildflower Hike - Gentry Falls	Joe DeLoach	423-753-7263
May 4	South Holston Spillway	Barry Griggs	423-239-5676 or 423-863-4590
May 11	Doe River Gorge	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388
May 16-18	Bluestone River Trip	Terry Dougherty	423-502-5177
May 18-19	Hardcore 2014	Carl Fritz	423-477-4669
May 18	Kiner Hollow Waterfalls, Laurel Run Park	Garry Luttrell	423-239-9854 or 423-956-1822
May 24	Bays Mountain Park - Lakeside Trail	Bob Miller	
May 25	Little Stony Creek Falls, Hanging Rock Rec Area	Bill Tindall	423-357-4850
June 1	Rock Creek Falls (Erwin)	Brien Lewis	chair@tehcc.org
June 8	Lake Keokee Loop Trail	Terry Dougherty	423-502-5177
June 15	Pinnacle Nature Preserve	Tim Schaefer	423-302-0846

Standard Hike Information

Hikes leaving from “Colonial Heights” meet at the parking lot below McDonalds, 4317 Fort Henry Drive, which is NW of I-81 Exit 59. “Johnson City” meeting location is behind Parkway Discount Wine & Liquor just off I-81 Exit 24 at the intersection of University Parkway and South Roan Street, which is reached 20 minutes later. All hikes will leave promptly to stay close to schedule. Carpooling is encouraged with passengers providing a few dollars each towards gas.

Bring water, snack, layered clothing appropriate for the weather, comfortable footwear, bug spray, camera, and trekking poles as desired. The family dog can come if friendly and kept on leash. Walking speed is typically 2 mph including rest breaks. For more information, check the trail wiki (click on hike title if underlined for link) or call the hike leader. It is appropriate to contact the hike leader to let them know that you are interested in coming and provide a cell phone number in case plans change by either party.

An activity release form is signed by everyone going on the hike – and it helps capture the names and spelling for the trip report. Good digital photos from the hike are also appreciated for the newsletter and trail wiki.

Details of Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

Tuesday Evenings: Johnson City Roll Practice

Come join the [J.A.W.](#), [Mahoney’s Outfitters](#), some [APEs](#), and other paddlers from around our region at the Freedom Hall Pool for tips & 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.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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 yet have your own equipment, please post a message on the [APE's yahoo group site](#) or contact me with this link:

<http://worldkayakblogs.com/wildwildwes/contact-me/>

We will try our best to get you outfitted for the night! Also feel free to contact me for any other questions or comments you may have with the above link.

Most Thursdays: Weekly A.T. Trail Maintenance

Join a group of maintainers who work somewhere on our 135-mile section each week, usually on Thursdays. Contact Carl Fritz, 423-477-4669 (atvolunteer@tehcc.org), for dates and meeting places.

Thursday Evenings: Kayak Session, Kingsport Aquatic Center, 7 – 9 pm

For event details, go to <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/2013/06/27/kingsport-aquatic-center-kayak-session/>

3rd Saturday Maintenance – Hiking with Tools!

Contact: Kim Peters, atmaint@tehcc.org, 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 out on some routine maintenance needs, such as cutting annual growth, cleaning out water bars and painting blazes. All tools will be furnished and no prior experience required! Contact [Kim](#) for details and meeting time and place. **There will not be a 3rd Saturday Trip in May due to Trail Days on May 17th and Hardcore on May 18th and 19th.**

Scheduled Events

Spring Wildflower Hike - [Gentry Falls](#), Saturday, May 3, 2014

Leader: [Joe DeLoach](#), 423-753-7263

Rating: *Dry and beautiful!*

Gentry Falls, sometimes called Gentry Creek Falls, is one of Northeast Tennessee's more unusual and lesser-known waterfalls. There are two drops, each about 35-feet high, in a rocky gorge with prolific spring wildflowers. Also beautiful in the fall with great foliage, formerly it was more challenging in the spring with about 15 creek wades in the 2.3-mile walk (each way) to the falls. Recent work by the Cherokee National Forest though has resulted in stepping stones at all the creek crossings. The crossings are all quite navigable, though hiking poles won't hurt. A scouting trip indicated that the flowers are going to be super, one of the best of any of our Spring Wildflower Hikes which date back to 1992. Also, it is not at all a steep hike; so suitable for all ages. We'll meet in Colonial Heights in the parking lot between McDonald's and State of Franklin Bank at 8:30 on Saturday May 3. We'll go through Abingdon and Damascus, so there won't be a Johnson City meeting point. Bring lunch, which we'll plan to have at the falls. Please contact Joe in advance if you're interested, or for more information.

F/B: [South Holston Spillway](#), Sunday, May 4

Leader: [Barry Griggs](#), 423-239-5676 or 423-863-4590

Rating: *Easy 3.5 mile in/out hike with less than 300-ft elevation change*

A nice walk in the forest along a firm gravel service road down to the TVA lake. The gradually sloping path skirts along the southwest shore before ending at the spillway. We'll leave Colonial Heights at 1:30 pm for the 45-minute drive to near the South Holston Lake dam. We should be back before 6 pm.

F/B: [Doe River Gorge](#), Sunday, May 11

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

Rating: *Easy 5-mile round trip hike along a railroad grade with just 230 ft elevation gain*

A hike for mom – and the rest of the family too. An easy afternoon walk up a beautiful hollow and back. Pass through a pair of tunnels. Enjoy the spring wildflowers in bloom. We'll leave Colonial Heights at 1:00 pm or Johnson City at 1:20 pm to arrive at the trailhead in Hampton by 2 pm. Doe River Gorge has their own permission form which must be completed by the group and put into a drop box at the parking lot. Expected return is roughly 6 pm.

Bluestone River Trip, May 16-18, 2014, 35th Year

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

The annual Bluestone River Trip (35th Anniversary) is scheduled for May 16-18, 2014. We will stay at the beautiful Pipestem State Park (Mountain Creek Lodge). Our trip leader has reserved a block of rooms, please call 800-CALL-WVA FREE (ask for Pipestem State Park / Mountain Creek Lodge) and reserve your room for Friday and Saturday. To secure one of the clubs block rooms, reservations must be made by April 16. We plan to paddle the scenic Bluestone River both days. This is a Class III trip the first day and Class I the second day. You can skip the second day, if you like. Other options include family camping at the state park campground and/or driving up on Saturday morning. This is a GREAT trip with a lot of family fun, scenic river and very nice lodging. In addition to the paddling, Ed Montgomery will once again be in charge of HAPPY HOUR and libation coordination on Saturday night and is going to take this one special. Please contact the trip leader (Terry Dougherty, 423-502-5177) if you are planning to attend the trip.

F/B: [Kiner Hollow Waterfalls in Laurel Run Park](#), Sunday, May 18

Leader: Garry Luttrell, 423-239-9854 or 956-1822

This hike is a two mile (round trip) walk up to a pair of waterfalls. The water flow in the springtime should be excellent; however, there is one bridgeless creek crossing to navigate – maybe on stepping stones. Wildflowers should be in full bloom, so don't forget your camera as we'll make frequent stops for pictures. Meet at 1:30 pm at Bldg 310 Recreation Center on Wilcox Drive or at 2:00 pm at the Laurel Run Park trailhead. A hiking stick might be useful. We should be done by late afternoon. Please call the hike leader beforehand, so that we know to expect your company.

Hard Core 2014, May 18-19

Contact: [Carl Fritz](mailto:Carl.Fritz@tehcc.org), 423-477-4669

Hard Core involves a hundred hikers and club members in an intense trail improvement effort. This year the group will be split to work on both Little Rock Knob (going it at Hughes Gap) and at Ash Gap (coming down from Cloudland parking area).

For more information, contact Carl Fritz, atvolunteer@tehcc.org

F/B: [Bays Mountain Park - Lakeside Trail](#), Saturday, May 24

Leader: Bob Miller (age 95 years)

Rating: Easy 2.4-mile hike around the lake some limited ups and downs

This Saturday afternoon hike is a classic stroll (90 min) around the reservoir on the Lakeside and Holly trails. The loop follows the shoreline crossing the park dam and a floating bridge, ending at the animal habitats. Spring wildflowers should be in full bloom. We will meet in the park at the dam for a 2 pm departure. Bays Mtn Park has a \$4 entrance fee – unless you carpool with someone who is an annual member. Local boy scouts are also selling \$1 coupon sheets which have a free admission to Bays Mtn Park.

F/B: [Little Stony Creek Falls](#), Hanging Rock Recreation Area, Sunday, May 25

Leader: Bill Tindall, 423-357-4850

Rating: Moderate 5 mile round trip hike up and back along a cascading stream

Experience two picturesque waterfalls hidden in a forested gorge. The narrow trail follows the cascading stream with bridges provided for all crossings. Frequent stops expected to enjoy the beauty. Leave 1PM for hour drive. Bring a towel to dry your feet, if you plan on briefly wading at the upper falls.

F/B: [Rock Creek Falls \(Erwin\)](#) – Sunday, June 1, 2014

Leader: Brien Lewis, 615-828-8206, chair@tehcc.org

Rating: Medium 3-mile hike up and back along a cascading stream to a pair of waterfalls

Forest Service Trail #148 follows the Rock Creek as it winds up the hollow. Being June, white rhododendron blooms should fill some areas. We will leave at 1 pm for a 45-minute drive. There is a \$2 cash per car day use fee at the USFS Rock Creek Recreation Area. There are four creek crossings which can be "rock hopped" on stepping stones; or bring water shoes and a towel to dry your feet, if you plan on just wading across.

F/B: [Lake Keokee Loop Trail](#) – Sunday, June 8, 2014

Leader: Terry Dougherty, 423-502-5177

Rating: Easy <4 mile walk around a lake with little elevation change

Lake Keokee is a 92-acre secluded lake surrounded by marsh grasses and hardwood forests. The trail winds along the shoreline with plenty of opportunities for bird watching and wildflowers. The boat launch has picnic shelters – and bathrooms. We will leave at 1 pm for the 90-minute drive to west of Appalachia, VA. Dogs are allowed on leash.

For the Record

F/B: Laurel Fork Falls, Sunday, April 6

Tim McClain Reporting

Our first of a series of weekend day hikes for 2014 was held on April 6. Weather was superb for this 5.5- mile hike from the parking area in Hampton, TN up through Laurel Fork Gorge to the falls. Our group managed to get the last two parking spots as there were many people out enjoying the sunny day. We made our way up to the falls, passing a couple of fisherman, numerous other hikers including several families with their children and/or dogs. The falls were flowing heavily, providing a great backdrop for our group picture. We lingered at the falls for a snack, a few photos, a rest, and long enough for the cool mist from the falls to get us back on our feet for the return trip to the cars. Joining in the hike were Sharon Burnette, Ashlea Hall, Dave Kossor, Erika McClain, Peggy McClain, Tim McClain, and Marc Schurger.



Photo Left to Right: Marc Schurger, Erika McClain, Dave Kossor, Peggy McClain, Sharon Burnette, Ashlea Hall

F/B: Buffalo Mountain Park - White Rock Overlook, Sunday, April 13

Vic Hasler reporting

A gorgeous spring day provided an opportunity for the group to climb Buffalo Mountain seeking the expansive view and hidden treasure. The decision was made to take Tower Ridge Trail up just past the towers and White Rock Trail back down, which ended up being slightly more than three miles total over three hours with frequent stops. Geocaching was introduced to young explorers, who found four containers and traded for a stuffed puppy, navy base coin, slinky, and Komen pin. The view from White Rock was slightly hazy. Mountains seen in the distance were Bays at Kingsport, Clinch in Virginia, Holston and Unaka nearby, and Blue Ridge in North Carolina. On this trek were Sharon Burnette and her granddaughter Kayden, Karen Conkin and her children Dylan and Jade, and Vic Hasler.



Photos by Sharon Burnette



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 3/22/2014

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Big Hump

People: Lynn DiFiore, Brian Schloff

Summary: We cleaned waterbars (again!), cleared several small blowdowns, and reset most of the t-bar steel posts (with blazes) on the balds as they were leaning or down. We saw many day and section hikers and one thru-hiker at the barn. There was lots of trash in the barn and at the Bradley Gap campsites. We saw signs of recent ATV activity at Bradley Gap which was reported to Pisgah RD.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 3/27/2014

Purpose: Chainsaw Trail Maintenance

Location: Sections 1, 2a and 2b, McQueens Gap to Damascus, VA

People: Jim Chambers, John Beaudet

Summary: John and I removed all blow downs, step-overs and obstructions from McQueen's Gap to Damascus, VA. We also checked all information signs and put two bottles of hand sanitizer in the Abingdon Gap Shelter.

Reporting: Pat Loven

Date: 3/28/2014

Purpose: Trail maintenance

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

People: Ken Buchanan, Pat Loven

Summary: We drove up White Rock Mountain on the 4wd road and worked north. Our goal was to check the trail as far as the 2013 Hard Core relocations. We removed a couple of blowdowns, lopped rhodies, and removed other minor obstructions. Considering the winter we just experienced, the trail was in very good condition.

Reporting: Michael Watts

Date: 3/29/2014

Purpose: Annual maintenance

Location: Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US19E

People: Rick Lott, Ryan Russum, Michael Watts

Summary: We painted blazes, trimmed, weeded, cleared blowdowns, and picked up trash. The Trail is generally in good shape. We met a number of northbound through hikers.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/1/2014

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 10, Above Laurel Fork Falls, high-water trail, and north of Laurel Fork Shelter

People: Daryl Anderson, John Beaudet, Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, "Lumpy" Mike Price, "Long Haul" Justin Scott

Summary: We cleared some blowdowns on the high-water trail. We also did a lot of rehab on the high-water trail and on the A.T. before the steps to the falls and north of the shelter. In most cases the trail was badly sloughing or very rooty. In some areas we tried to bury roots by using locust sidelogs. We did about 380 feet in total.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 4/2/2014

Purpose: Trail maintenance

Location: Section 10, Laurel Fork Shelter intersection heading north

People: Jim Chambers

Summary: Per my conversation with Carl Fritz, I repainted all blazes from the Laurel Fork Shelter intersection north to where the new relocation ends. This action ties together the relocation and all work performed yesterday.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 4/9/2014

Purpose: ATC Spring Partnership Meeting

Location: Pisgah National Forest Service Office, Mars Hill, NC

People: Morgan Sommerville, John O'Dell, Leanna Joyner; USFS – Cheryl Summers, Matt Fusco, Keith Kelly, Gray Buckles, Reuben Potter, Matt McCombs, Dave McFee; TEHCC – Ed Oliver, Jim Foster, Tim Stewart, Paul Benfield, Kim Peters, Ted Mowery, Carl Fritz, Steve Perri

Summary: TEHCC Reports - Winter has extended the project durations for a number of rels underway. About 0.5 mile of rehab work was completed since EOY including short sections around Watauga Lake, Indian Grave Gap, and in Laurel Fork Gorge. Additional work on rels include Backbone Rock (~0.2 mi) and Hughes Gap to Cloudland. Several trips to assess work for the two long bridges were carried out to identify the material and design changes needed to bring the bridges up to new standards and to secure the rails. We identified improvements in anchoring the bridges and enhancing the support structure for the railings. Koonford Bridge is still being

planned for fall when water levels are lower and thru-hikers are mostly north. Dates to remember are Hard Core, May 18-19, at Little Rock Knob and Cloudland/Ash Gap; Ridgerunner for Roan starts week of May 19; and Konnarock, July 5-9 and July 24-28, at Little Rock Knob.

Agency Discussions - Terry Bowerman's replacement has yet to be named. Keith Kelley will cover temporarily for a short period. NEPA coordinator Jeff Chynoweth will be resigning; his replacement is unknown at this time. There is an Acting Deputy Supervisor on the Cherokee that is still open, likely through May. The prescribed burn at Martin's Creek near Indian Grave Gap was executed several weeks ago. Hikers were escorted during the burn. An additional burn is planned closer to Indian Grave Gap, called the Joe Berry burn. So far, no indications of bear issues near Watauga Lake, but it is early. TVA is switching to secure containers for campers to use to store food. However, the most concern is from day use around the lake and trash being left behind. We may need to modify the bear pole at Watauga Lake Shelter. The Pisgah NF revision plan is in Phase II. The public has been invited to send comments in writing by the end of the month for new areas of inclusion in management. A special all-day meeting is scheduled at the Crown Plaza in Asheville on April 17th.

ATC Discussions - An offer has been extended to Fletcher Medina for the Roan Ridgerunner season in 2014. Training for Fletcher will be late in the week of May 19th. Plans are for Fletcher to camp out Thur-Sun on the trail and focus on Cloudland to Grassy Ridge with options to stay at Roan High Knob and Yellow Mtn Shelters. Open area funding got held up this year, however ATC is looking for partial funding by other means. John Odell has funds to hire an intern to assist in doing summer work which might involve spraying. Osborne tract work is underway to move fencing along accessible trail. Morgan may have funds for additional gravel. The lower fence near the road has been moved and improved. We discussed the new ATC form to request project approval from trail partners. We submitted two on the Watauga District and reviewed them: 1) Wildermine Hollow campsites and 2) Old Ridge Rd relo for 2019. An additional form was emailed on April 10th to the Watauga to request moving the Koonford center span bridge which will be removed this fall to Shook Branch to replace an older foot bridge. Morgan sees this form being used for Konnarock and other project requests. Leanna is working on getting additional training for chainsaw recertifications next year.

Other Items - We discussed the kiosk proposal for Unicoi County and the ideal locations, design and info to be included. Locating it at Chestoa would involve approvals from the USFS Unaka district. Cheryl Summers has offered to assist in coordinating this with our ambassador. We discussed the Noro Virus communication plan for 2014. Several key agencies have been involved to educate the public on how to reduce transfer of the virus. Posters were placed on bulletin boards and given to hostels. There haven't been any official reports to date, but a hiker may have recently been ill along the trail – we will follow up to get more info and to verify if it is an actual Noro Virus incident.

Next Meeting - October 8, 2014 in Unicoi.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 4/10/2014

Purpose: Presentation on behalf of TEHCC

Location: Laughlin Hospital, Greeneville, TN

People: Joe Morris

Summary: I made a presentation on behalf of TEHCC at the Laughlin Healthcare Foundation. My presentation focused on "trail highlights" from the Smokies to Damascus. I also made a pitch for TEHCC and its maintenance opportunities. The meeting was very well attended and well received. The foundation director intends to put me in contact with potential interested parties at Tusculum College.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/10/2014

Purpose: Repair middle bridge in gorge

Location: Section 10, Middle bridge in Laurel Fork Gorge

People: Daryl Anderson, Paul Benfield, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples

Summary: We did some preliminary repairs on middle bridge. We also practiced getting underneath the bridge for some of the repairs. We learned of additional materials needed to accomplish tasks.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/10/2014

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 9b, South side of Pond Mountain

People: John Beaudet, Jim Chambers, Pat Loven, Joe Morris, Kim Peters, Mike Price, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart

Summary: Some finished trail rehab at northern bridge in the gorge and then worked with the rest on rehabbing sloughing trail on the south side of Pond Mtn.

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 4/10/2014

Purpose: Spring maintenance

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

People: Faye Guinn, Howard Guinn, Ernie Hartford, Wayne Jones, Mike Hupko

Summary: We cut 15 small trees and removed many broken limbs from the trail, cleaned out water bars, replaced the water sign post in the orchard, cleaned out the spring at the orchard, and picked up trash.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 4/10/2014

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 2b, Abingdon Gap Shelter

People: Rolla Wade, Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: We picked up trash (including a full set of long underwear), left a fresh journal, shoveled out the fire ring, and checked the downhill water source (adequate, but low flow). Two bottles of hand sanitizer were on the picnic table. Two thru-hikers said hand sanitizer was also at Vandeventer. Rolla picked up trash on the way back to Low Gap while I walked on to Damascus where he picked me up.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 4/11-13/2014

Purpose: ATC combined SORO and VARO RPC meeting

Location: Mountain Lake, VA

People: Steve Perri, Steve Wilson

Summary: ATC Report – “A Hike in The Woods” will be filmed on parts of the A.T. in 2014. It is being produced by Robert Redford Productions starring Robert Redford and Nick Nolte. It is expected to highlight the partnership in a positive light and will be released in 2015. ATC is promoting the Wounded Warrior Project in 2014 which will involve vets hiking the A.T., PCT, and Rocky Mtns Hiking Trail. ATC is working to roll out a new strategic plan in the fall of 2014. The last one was developed in 2003. The five goals are: 1) Effective stewardship, 2) Proactive protection, 3) Engaged partners, 4) Broader relevancy, and 5) Sustainable funding. Clubs are being asked to review and provide feedback through a collaborative website. Clubs need to submit comments by April 25th.

APPO Report -The APPO (Appalachian Trail Park Office) is developing a new communication plan called the Foundation Document to be rolled out in 2015. All park units are developing these to effectively communicate the Appalachian National Scenic Trail’s purpose and governing objectives which will help in future land protection and promotion of the Appalachian Trail. Additionally, the APPO is working to seek the National Historic Trail designation for the A.T. This designation will potentially provide greater protection of the trail from future threats.

USFS Region 8 Report - The USFS is working to roll out a new program to replace the YCC called 21CSC (21st Century Service Corp), which will be promoted to engage youth 15-35 yrs of age. Multiple programs are bundled together to introduce people to the trail. A marketing company has been hired to help communicate this to the public. Additional news from the forest service is agreement on the Celanese acquisition. After many years of discussions, Dave Ferguson from the southern region helped bring closure with Celanese agreeing to donate the land along the New River as a scenic easement.

Awards - Nominations of awards among the ATC partnership were selected and announced during the meeting. The awardees are: Pete Berntsen - 2013 Volunteer of the Year, Richard Judy - 2013 Partner of the Year, David Whitmore - 2013 Partnership Award.

MYLES of Science - MYLES (Millennial Youth Led Expeditions in Science), initiated thru GSMNP and Montreat College in NC, is funded by the Burroughs Welcome Foundation. It is a piloting program to introduce high school students to the field of science in the outdoors. The five-week program, June 15 - August 1, will cost \$75 for participants.

Funded Programs -TTEC (Trail to Every Classroom) funds were reduced from the ATC budget. For future funding, a longer-term model and tag grants were considered. Open-areas funds were eliminated in the budget in 2014. Differences in funding for “landscapes” at the federal level are being discussed. (“Landscapes” is the term used for open areas at the federal level.) So funding at a partial level may still occur this year and requests for “landscapes” will be included in our future budgets. A comprehensive review is being conducted among the region for a more historical perspective and for developing a long-term strategy. TrailKarma is being launched during Hard Core through a grant program to bring a social media project to the trail. Andy Downs set it up and reviewed the plan. Hopefully, we’ll see it go viral.

SORO Discussions

- Comments from clubs to the Pisgah NF revision plan are being accepted until April 28th.
- Partners are anticipating an uptick in overnight trail use due to the “Walk in the Woods” movie and social media. Clubs are being asked to determine whether there are group-use campsites along their trail sections and to identify potential sites with a quad map by the fall RPC meeting. The uptick is expected in 2015 and later, so starting the process now will allow adequate planning in case NEPA work is required. TEHCC abstained from voting in favor of the request.

- SORO is working to accelerate the timeline for RPC awards so that paperwork can be filed and recipients invited in advance of the meetings. To this end, clubs and partners will be asked to file paperwork in the fall instead of February.
- The Wildermine Hollow and Old Road Ridge Relo were reviewed by the SORO RPC and approved. The committee discussed and recommended having agencies see the proposals prior to the RPC (similar to Konnarock proposals). We also agreed to merge forms so there is one form for regular projects and Konnarck projects. In an ideal world, crew leaders would have the ATC list of deficiencies in advance each year so they can ID task items and cross them off if they get them done. Rehab projects will not need RPC approval.
- The SORO committee endorsed the no-fee policy proposal to send to the board for a vote.
- ATC is considering revising the trail assessment process. Leanna will be contacting clubs to do field inspections in 2014.
- Clubs discussed the Leave-No-Trace placards. Not all clubs received them. In general, clubs and agency partners are to discuss and agree where LNT info should be posted.
- The A.T. Trail Atlas is now available, providing maps with the trail assessment database items. Software with this info has been provided to the Clubs. John O'Dell discussed using the Trail Atlas to print maps to use in the field. Training might be needed for clubs or agency partners who want to use the software.
- Leanna has all the Konnarock logistic forms for 2014. We acknowledged using the same location in 2014 since it was a continuation of an existing project.
- The database of land acquisitions is being made available. Morgan reviewed the status of the projects on the list.
- Clubs need to review the A.T. Communities Supporter program. Businesses that support the A.T. community in some way can apply for recognition by submitting a one-page application form. The A.T. Community committee then determines whether the support merits formal recognition. Recognition is in the form of a window decal, website announcement, or other form of acknowledgement.
- Clubs are encouraged to bring the 50th Wilderness Anniversary into their 2014 programs. There is a UTube website video to use.

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 4/11/2014

Purpose: Spring maintenance

Location: Section 17, Cherry Gap to FS230 Switchback

People: Bruce Darby, Ernie Hartford, Faye Guinn, Howard Guinn, John Parks, Daryl Loyd, Lana Scott, Eric Middlemas, Judy Middlemas, Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko

Summary: We cut 11 small trees, one large tree, and removed many small limbs on the trail, lopped briars and overhanging limbs, cleaned water bars, picked up trash, replaced the Cherry Gap Shelter log, and cleaned up around the shelter. The piped spring at the shelter was flowing very well.

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 4/11/2014

Purpose: Spring maintenance

Location: Section 18, FS 230 Switchback to Beauty Spot

People: Andrew Cleland, Lamar Adcox, Jeannine Edwards, Dave McMillin

Summary: This industrious crew removed limbs from the trail, lopped overhanging branches, cleaned out water bars, and picked up trash.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 4/11/2014

Purpose: Lay out relocations

Location: Section 18, Beauty Spot Gap to Unaka Mountain

People: Ed Oliver, Jim Foster

Summary: Ed and I scouted for possible relocations between Beauty Spot Gap and Unaka Mtn. We laid out one relo and will submit a report on the possibility of others to be considered.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 4/11/2014

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: We picked up trash at the trail head, then proceeded to clear small branches from the trail. Becky cleaned out the water bars. We hiked about one and a half miles up the trail to clear a reported blowdown. We cut the rhododendrons and branches from the blowdown before rolling the tree to the side of the bank. We saw a good number of thru-hikers on this day.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 4/12/2014

Purpose: Maintain section

Location: Section 15a, Carvers Gap to Cloudland

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: I cut blowdowns, lopped, made minor improvements to drainage, and placed the shelter register. Thanks to Jim Chambers for reporting a fairly large and obstructing blowdown near Cloudland. There were only two others besides that; all were removed. The longest task was cleaning up around the shelter; it's a far cry from how nice it looked with the ridgerunner's care last summer. I particularly enjoyed carrying out a bow saw (without a blade) which looked like it had been used a lot in the surrounding area. I left a little Leave-No-Trace message in the register. I'll plan to reset some of the steps later this year. Some sections, especially near Cloudland, could use more intensive rehab, but overall it looks much better than last spring.

Reporting: Garry Luttrell

Date: 4/12/2014

Purpose: Trim limbs, clear path, and determine needs

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel to Hughes Gap

People: Kent Wilson, Garry Luttrell

Summary: It was a beautiful day on the Roan! We cleared the pathway with clippers and hand saws, and left with 'to do' items: paint blue blazes to the spring at Ash Gap and paint white blazes from Ash Gap down to next new relocation (unless some new relo's are opening in this area soon). We met at least 12 hikers today, and almost all thanked us for the work we do maintaining the trail.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/12/2014

Purpose: Repair middle and northern bridges in gorge

Location: Section 10, Middle and lower bridges in Laurel Fork Gorge

People: Daryl Anderson, Yancey Appling, Jax Barrett, Paul Benfield, Caleb Everett, Stuart Everett, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Bryson McKinney, Ted Mowery, Kenny Parker, Bob Peoples, Mike Price, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe, "Santa"

Summary: We reduced the movement of the hand rails, replaced some timbers, replaced missing bolts and added missing bolt nuts. A special thanks goes to Greg Kramer, Yancey Appling, Stuart Everett and Kenny Parker for hanging under bridges to make some of the modifications. This was a successful outing.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 4/13/2014

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 20a, North end of section near Nolichucky River

People: Craig Haire

Summary: I removed a big nasty tree; 90% of cut with 12" Greenworks electric chainsaw and 10% with 49" crosscut saw.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 4/15/2014

Purpose: Spring Trail maintenance

Location: Section 12c, Sugar Hollow Creek to Campbell Hollow Road

People: Phil Heidt, Jon Penney, Steve Perri

Summary: We hiked in near Elk River from the gated road access. We hiked up to Campbell Hollow Rd removing 22 blowdowns. We removed smaller tree branches and painted blazes in both directions. We cut out some larger trees with the bow saw, so there are no trees remaining that need to be removed. The water flow at Jones Falls was excellent. We saw many section and thru-hikers going trail north. We hiked down to Elk River and went about half way to Sugar Hollow Creek then turned around. The section should be fine until June to deal with weeds.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/17/2014

Purpose: Rehab on Osborne Farm

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Daryl Anderson, John Beaudet, Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Mike Price, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe, "High Loon"

Summary: We had a great day on the Osborne farm today. The crew replaced many of the blaze posts in the pasture. Cattle keep pushing them over. Now there are mostly rock cairns. Some are single rocks that are partially buried and still over two feet high. All were blazed. Steps were realigned to match stile after leaving accessible trail. About 100 buckets of gravel were added to accessible trail in various spots that were becoming problematic. We reworked stile at TN 91 by replacing three posts and making the only obstacle one gate. We also dug a significant ditch to remove water before the stile so the slope down to driveway quits washing. The farm is looking very clean.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 4/18/2014

Purpose: Clean water bars and remove blowdowns

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap to Greasy Creek Gap

People: John Tomko, Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

Summary: We walked the entire section, cleaning water bars and removing a few blowdowns by hand. We also cleaned up around the shelter. The trail is in good shape.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 4/19/2014

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 20b, Devils Creek Gap to No Business Knob Shelter

People: John Robbins, Monika Wiedmann, Joe DeLoach, Kim Peters

Summary: The purpose of April's 3rd-Saturday Hiking-with-Tools trip was to do shelter maintenance at No Business Knob Shelter. We accessed the A.T. at Devil's Creek Gap and hiked 2.6 miles north to the shelter, lopping some rhodies and other woody growth along the way. There wasn't very much lopping to do as Bill Berry, the maintainer for this section does an excellent job. At the shelter we picked up two bags of trash and left a new log book. The shovel is missing a handle and there is no broom. Joe spotted a dead tree that is leaning on another tree and may either fall on the shelter or on the camping area nearby. We will notify the Forest Service. We met about 20 thru-hikers and several section hikers on this mostly cloudy and sometimes rainy day. All in all, another successful Hiking-with-Tools trip!

Reporting: Bob Peoples

Date: 4/20/2014

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 11a, White Rocks Mountain

People: Bob Peoples, Mike Price

Summary: A week earlier, Mike Price "Lumpy" helped stabilize a seriously ill hiker until High Mountain Rescue could evacuate the hiker. The hiker was located on White Rocks Mtn at the lower end of the last year's major Hard Core relocations. They used ATVs on the old trail, crossing the new trail five times. Lumpy and I rehabbed the damage by rebuilding the log and rock cribs. There were several large rocks that could not be moved back, but they are not critical and the trail is in good shape again.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 4/23/2014

Purpose: Replace rotted bridge timbers

Location: Section 10, First bridge from Hampton trailhead

People: Ed Oliver, Darrell Anderson, Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

Summary: We replaced five of the rotted bridge boards on the bridge. We also discovered that we have four more of the longer boards to replace. We will need three additional long boards and some more hardware to finish the job.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 4/24/2014

Purpose: Maintenance

Location: Section 11b, Moreland Gap Shelter to Canute Place

People: Tim Stewart

Summary: While everyone else was enjoying the Roan Highlands, I took the opportunity to visit my section via the Moreland Gap Shelter access. While at the shelter I placed some hand sanitizer and observed that the broom, shovel and rake are still in place. The shelter looked good with the exception of some new, overwhelming, spray-painted graffiti. I also emptied the fire pit of ash. On the long switchback down to Canute Place, I removed a few small blowdowns and cleared some steps of leaf debris. Canute Place spring and the spring at the shelter were flowing well. On the hike out, I encountered about 10 hikers. It was a good day and I had no problems on the forest service road.