



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

April 2015

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

## In this Issue

[From The Chair](#)

[Volunteer Opportunities](#)

[TEHCC Spring Dinner Meeting](#)

[Tennessee A.T. License Plate Grants](#)

[Prevent Norovirus Infection](#)

[ATC Biennial Conference, Hiking Through History](#)

[Save The Date! Nolichucky River Cleanup](#)

[TEHCC Welcomes New Members](#)

[Event Schedule – Next Two Months](#)

[Details of Upcoming Events](#)

[For the Record](#)

[A.T. Maintenance Reports](#)

## From the Chair

*Steve Ankabrandt, Steering Committee Chair*

Blossoms everywhere! Hope you are out enjoying the spring weather paddling or hiking.

This is also the time of year when most of the northbound A.T. thru-hikers (NOBOs) begin their journey in Georgia. Our section of the A.T. has been complimented by many hikers as one of the best maintained sections of the trail and this year should be no exception. Our trail crews have been at work clearing and marking the trail, repairing lean-tos, and building bridges.

As part of our trail courtesy, please allow the thru-hikers the use (“dibs”) on sleeping in the lean-tos in our section of the trail. The trail courtesy allows them to dry out and “air out” under a roof following the weeks of hiking required to get to our section.

See you on the trail!

## Volunteer Opportunities

*By Vic Hasler*

Within our 134 miles of Appalachian Trail there are numerous opportunities to volunteer. This distance has been broken into 36 sections of about four miles each. An individual, couple, or even small group of friends adopt and care for their piece of the Trail. These ‘Maintainers’ visit several times throughout the year to repaint blazes, remove tree branches and blowdowns blocking the path, haul out trash, and clean waterbars. For more information, please contact Kim Peters at [atmaint@tehcc.org](mailto:atmaint@tehcc.org).

There are also 15 shelters that need regular TLC. While the shelters are typically overseen by the maintainers responsible for that section, it is possible to be a ‘Shelter Monitor’ only – without having responsibility for an entire section. In this role, volunteers check on the shelter condition, replace tools (broom, rake, shovel) and logbook as needed, remove build-up of ashes from fire rings, and haul out trash. For more information, please contact Kim Peters at [atmaint@tehcc.org](mailto:atmaint@tehcc.org).

Weather permitting, the club has a weekly outing with a dedicated core of volunteers – usually on Thursdays. This group accomplishes tasks typically beyond the scope of individual section maintainers due to the strength in numbers. Many of these events are for those who like to get dirty in digging new trail to address a problem, rehab old trail, move a rock or two, or repair shelters. For more information, please contact Carl Fritz at [atvolunteer@tehcc.org](mailto:atvolunteer@tehcc.org).

Every third Saturday from March to November, weather permitting, a group will meet and enjoy a hike in the woods while performing minor maintenance on a section, such as repainting blazes, cutting back brush growing along the trail, or checking on a shelter. For more information about ‘Hiking with Tools’, please contact Kim Peters at [atmaint@tehcc.org](mailto:atmaint@tehcc.org).

No experience is necessary on these adventures. Good personal physical condition is beneficial as several miles of hiking might be required. Come out and join the fun!

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## TEHCC Spring Dinner Meeting

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### *William Werner reporting*

TEHCC celebrated the start of spring as more than 40 members and guests gathered at the Eastman Lodge for the Annual Spring Dinner. Attendees enjoyed “Happy Trails” hour with free amateur-brewed beers provided by Marc Schurger, Yancey Appling, and Lauren Johnson. The evening’s meal was barbecue from Phil’s Dream Pit, followed by pie and coffee for dessert. The GS Troop 263 provided table decorations and had a profitable evening of cookie sales.

Current Steering Committee chair, Steve Ankabrandt, made several announcements, including:

- The ATC’s 2015 Biennial Conference, titled “Hiking Through History” is to be held June 17-24 at Shenandoah University in Winchester, VA. Registration begins April 15.
- Upcoming A.T. maintenance opportunities include the Garlic Mustard Challenge on April 25 and a “Hard Core” event at Doll Flats on May 17 and 18.
- A few spaces are still available on the Mt. Leconte trip, July 11-12. Contact Steve Falling (239-5502).
- Impromptu selection of raffle winners, who received T-shirts or gift cards.

Reuben Potter from Watauga Ranger District of Cherokee National Forest presented the volunteer service-hour recognitions for the 2014 calendar year, as follows.

50 Hours: Bruce Darby, Alice Feinald, Faye Guinn, Howard Guinn, Jeff Sirola, Steve Wilson

100 Hours: Scotty Bowman, Lynn DiFiore, Marsha Hupko, , James Lautzenheiser, Phyllis Cairnes, Robin Dean, Joe DeLoach, Eliza Duvall, Craig Haire, Eric Middlemas, Emily Patton, Woohee Rim, Lida Wise

150 Hours: Becky Kinder, Brian Paley, Steve Perri, Gayle Riddervold, John Robbins

200 Hours: Daryl Anderson, Richard Carter, Greg Kramer, Bill Murdoch, Kevin Sedgwick

250 Hours: John Beaudet, Vic Hasler, Mike Hupko, Pat Loven

300-400 Hours: Ken Buchanan, Jim Foster, Ed Oliver, Mike Price, Joe Morris, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

500-600 Hours: Jim Chambers, Ted Mowery, Paul Benfield, Kim Peters, Bob Peoples

1200 Hours: Carl Fritz

Maintainer of the Year (2014) was George Thorpe

Hiker of the Year (2014) was Vic Hasler

Afterward, Mike Watts shared a presentation and photos of his 8-day trek to the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa and tallest freestanding mountain in the world. Mike described his training regimen in the Appalachians and Rockies and provided many helpful details on the logistics of a successful trip to Kilimanjaro. His experiences with the guides, porters, hikers, wildlife, and wide variety of climate and terrain provided a memorable story for all in attendance.



*Reuben Potter presents service-hour recognitions*



*Recognition for Bob Peoples*

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## Tennessee A.T. License Plate Grants

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*Vic Hasler reporting*

Four years into the program, the Tennessee Appalachian Trail license plate has raised a cumulative \$185K. There are over 3,000 Tennessee A.T. tags on the road based on the revenue during the past four quarters. For 2015, up to \$15K in grants were distributed by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy to support projects in Tennessee. TEHCC applied for and received funding for shirts and dinner for the Hard Core hiker volunteers who will work to repair the Trail near Doll Flats. (Note: This effort also obtained support from NC's license plate program.) Some final bills remaining from the 2014 Koonford Bridge construction were paid. A grant was also provided to the club to reimburse certified sawyers and active maintainers for Wilderness First Aid and CPR training. If you have a TN license plate on your vehicle, then thank you. And thank others when you see one around the community.



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## Prevent Norovirus (Stomach Bug) Infection!

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Several outbreaks have occurred on the Appalachian Trail in recent years; so help prevent one in 2015. Proper hygiene - especially hand washing with soap and water - is key to preventing the spread of the disease. (Hand sanitizers may not be effective against norovirus.) The infection is spread by touching contaminated surfaces and then your mouth, nose, or eyes. Norovirus can stay on surfaces and still infect people after days or weeks. Shelters are the mostly likely locations within the TEHCC section.

Also, be aware that most water filters do not filter viruses, so boil water (rolling for at least 1 minute) or use chemical disinfectant (iodine, chlorine, or chlorine dioxide). Most filters do not remove viruses, but can be used effectively in combination with chemical disinfection against a broad range of pathogens.

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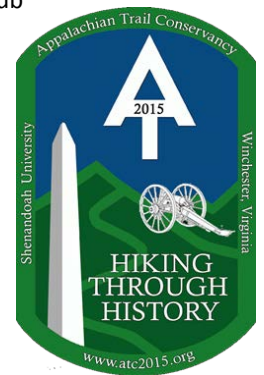
## ATC Biennial Conference, Hiking Through History, July 17 - 24

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Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Biennial Conference ([link](#)) is being co-hosted by Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and Mountain Club of Maryland at Shenandoah University located in Winchester, Virginia. The site is near hundreds of miles of outstanding hiking trails, including a short 18-minute drive to the Appalachian Trail. The University is also close to important civil war battlefields such as Manassas, Gettysburg and Antietam, and 90 minutes from Washington D.C.

Workshops will be held during the day on Saturday, July 18th through Monday, July 20th. Coordinated hikes will be offered Saturday, July 18th through Thursday, July 23rd. In addition to amazing scenic areas, there will be nature, history, and photography theme hikes, plus sunset outings. Many of the hikes include a swim, and/or a stop at an ice cream shop, restaurant, winery, or brewery. Family hiking specialists have designed hikes suitable for most families that are five miles or less; plus hikes, suitable for most children eight years and older, that are nine miles or less.

Registration for the 2015 Biennial Conference begins on April 15, 2015. Discounted registration fees apply to all registrations made by May 31, 2015.



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## Save the date! Nolichucky River Cleanup

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APEs are hosting their 14th annual Nolichucky River Cleanup event on Saturday, June 20, 2015. We will meet at U.S.A. Raft, 2 Jones Branch Rd, Erwin, TN starting at 11 am.

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## TEHCC Welcomes New Members

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David Eller  
Carson Fabian

Lawrence Pendley  
JayaKumar Pedapudi

Patricia Hill-Wilder  
Kayla Carter

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## Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

Date	Description	Leader	Contact
April 11	APEs Creeking Clinic with Clay Wright	<a href="#">Scott Fisher</a>	276-698-4644
April 12	F/B: <a href="#">Phipps Bend Trail</a>	Yancey Appling	864-508-2754
April 18	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday Hiking With Tools	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-366-0128
April 21	TEHCC Steering Committee	<a href="#">Steve Ankabrandt</a>	
April 25	Garlic Mustard Challenge, Devils Creek Gap	Dan Firth or <a href="#">John Odell</a>	423-349-4135
April 26	F/B: <a href="#">A.T.: Hughes Gap to Little Rock Knob</a>	William Werner	423-408-4469
May 17	Sinking Waters Trail – Warriors Path State Park	R. Blankenbecler	423-765-0609
May 22-24	Bluestone River Trip	Terry Dougherty	423-502-5177

### Standard Hike Information

Hikes leaving from “Colonial Heights” gather 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. “Gate City” spot is up on the hill above US23 at Kane Street intersection (traffic light) by Food Lion. All hikes will leave promptly to stay close to schedule. Carpooling is encouraged with passengers providing a few dollars each towards gas.

Bring adequate water, snack/lunch, clothing appropriate for the weather, comfortable footwear, headgear/sun protection, bug spray, camera, and trekking poles as desired. At the discretion of the hike leader, 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 the 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 for 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.

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## Details of Upcoming Events

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### Recurring Events

#### Tuesday Evenings: Johnson City Roll Practice, 7:30 – 9:00 pm

Contact: [Wesley R. Bradley](#), 423-647-1321

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

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 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 contact [Wesley R. Bradley](#). 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.

#### Most Thursdays: Weekly A.T. Trail Maintenance

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

Join a group of maintainers who work somewhere on our 133.6-mile section each week, usually on Thursdays.

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

Contact: [George Mauger](#), 864-414-0296

Interested in kayaking but don’t know where to start? Basic kayaking training and practice is now available in Kingsport on Thursdays

at the [Kingsport Aquatic Center](#)! During the winter months (October-April), the indoor pool is sectioned off specifically for kayakers to practice basic paddling techniques. Admission is only \$3 for 2 full hours of fun and Aquatic Center members may attend free! If you have equipment, you may drop it off outside the door closest to the pool then enter the main door to pay at the front desk. The pool does not provide paddling equipment, but if you are just starting out and do not have your own gear please contact [George Mauger](#) (864-414-0296). For additional event details, click [here](#).

### **3rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!**

Contact: [Kim Peters](#), [atmaint@tehcc.org](mailto: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 waterbars and painting blazes. All tools will be furnished and no prior experience required! Contact [Kim](#) for details and meeting time and place.

## **Scheduled Events**

### **F/B: [Phipps Bend Trail](#), Sunday, April 12**

Leader: [Yancey Appling](#) (864-508-2754)

The Phipps Bend Industrial Park has a gravel “jeep” path which runs three miles along the Holston River – and is open to folks to hike, bike, or ride horses. The surrounding area has been designated a nature preserve with wetlands full of waterfowl – and deer. If desired, bring binoculars or camera. For kids, bicycles are an option – although there are some potholes which could be filled with water if we’ve had a recent rain. Hikers can either meet at 1:30 pm in Colonial Heights or in the parking area in Phipps Bend by 2 pm. We’ll be back in Kingsport by late afternoon.

### **TEHCC Steering Committee meeting, Tuesday, April 21, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm**

Contact: [Steve Ankabrandt](#), [chair@tehcc.org](mailto:chair@tehcc.org)

Location: [Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, TN; Bldg 75 - Room 407](#)

The Steering Committee guides the general program for the club. Meetings are held monthly at lunchtime and are open to all TEHCC members. Members who are not current Eastman employees need to contact a member of the Steering Committee at least the day prior to arrange for a temporary pass.

### **Garlic Mustard Challenge, Devils Creek Gap, Saturday, April 25**

Contact: [Dan Firth](#) ([423-349-4135](tel:423-349-4135)) or [John Odell](#) (ATC)

In 2015, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy is challenging itself and volunteers to pull 2,189 pounds of the invasive plant, garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), from the Trail corridor (one pound for every A.T. mile). In the south, we’ll need to pull garlic mustard in April, before it goes to seed. This event is to tackle a known infestation around Devils Creek Gap, north of Spivey Gap. The control work will be completed by hand-pulling as the plants are small and removed easily. The weeds will be bagged and weighed before proper disposal. Appropriate equipment for the day includes work gloves, boots or sturdy shoes, and suitable attire for variable spring weather plus lunch and water.

Let the event leaders know of your interest as car pools will be leaving at 8:30 am from both Kingsport, TN (below McDonalds in Colonial Heights) and Asheville, NC (SORO office at 160A Zillicoa Street). Everyone will assemble at Spivey Gap by 9:30 am, and then travel together to the work site. In case of rain, the back-up date is the following Saturday, May 2.

### **F/B: [A.T.: Hughes Gap to Little Rock Knob](#), Sunday, April 26**

Leader: [William Werner](#), Cell 423-408-4469

Rating: *Easy 4.4 mile round trip hike with moderate elevation change*

Hike along the Appalachian Trail through hardwood forest and switchbacks to great views at Little Rock Knob (elevation 4918'). We’ll leave Colonial Heights at 1:00 pm to arrive at the Hughes Gap trailhead by 2:15 pm. Expected return is at 6:30 pm.

### **Sinking Waters Trail, Warriors Path State Park, Sunday, May 17**

Leader: [R. Blankenbecler](#), 423-765-0609

Rating: *Easy to Moderate; approximately 3 miles*

This will be a joint hike with the Mid-Appalachian Highlands Club based in Johnson City. Come out and make some new hiking friends and experience three trail loops that give us the opportunity to discover wildlife in varied habitat. We will walk through forests, fields, and a boardwalk which carries us through a marsh. We will meet in Colonial Heights at the parking lot between McDonald’s and State of Franklin Bank at 1:45, giving our Johnson City friends time to arrive. Bring ample water and clothing suitable for changeable spring weather. Please contact the hike leader in advance for questions or to sign up for the hike.

## Bluestone River Trip, Pipestem Resort State Park, WV, May 22-24

Leader: Terry Dougherty, 423-502-5177

We will stay at the beautiful Pipestem State Park (Mountain Creek Lodge). The trip leader has reserved a block of rooms, please call 800-CALL-WVA (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 May 8. 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 make this one special. Please contact the trip leader if you are planning to attend the trip.

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## For the Record

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### Annual Maintainer's Dinner, March 4, 2015

*Kim Peters reporting*

The kickoff meeting for the 2015 A.T. maintenance season was finally held on Wednesday, March 4 after being postponed from February 20 due to inclement weather and poor road conditions. It was well attended by more than 40 maintainers and individuals interested in helping to maintain the Appalachian Trail.

The dinner was once again graciously prepared by Ed Oliver with help from Daryel Anderson. We enjoyed barbecue from Phil's Dream Pit, coleslaw, pasta salad, baked beans and brownies for dessert, along with tea, lemonade and coffee. What a bargain for \$5!

After the meal, we reviewed our 2014 accomplishments, our 2015 major project plans, handed out awards, and discussed various issues related to our club's trail maintaining responsibilities.

#### Summary of 2014 Major TEHCC Maintenance Accomplishments

- Maintained 133 miles of A.T. and 2 miles of Blue-Blaze Trail
- Cut annual and perennial growth
- Cut blowdowns
- Blazed
- Cleaned waterbars
- Removed trash and unauthorized campsites
- Built 2.1 miles of new trail
- Rehabbed 1.2 miles of trail
- Repaired two lower Laurel Fork Bridges
- Improved No Business Knob Shelter
- Completed all the relays between Cloudland and Hughes Gap (a 5 yr project)
- Replaced Koonford Bridge
- Cumulative Hour Award Recipients 2014

#### 50 Career Hours

Bobby Berry	Mary Fanslow	Ken Murray	Harold Wexler
Jeremiah Bolick	Alice ("Kozi") Feinald	John Parks	Jamie Wheeler
John Botts	Anna Hackler	Emily Patton	Jay De ("Easy") Wilbur
Burts Compton	Chris Hood	Laura ("One Pint") Reed	Kay Ce ("Shortbread")
Sam Compton	Bob Horan	Woohee Rim	Darrel Wilder
Robin Dean	Mike Hupko Jr	John Tomko	Lida Wise
Eliza Duvall	Kate Miller	Rolla Wade	Addy Wygeman

#### 100 Career Hours

"Chef Paul"	Brenna Irrer	Reuben Potter	Kevin Sedgwick
Donna Dean	Wayne Jones	Diana ("Happy Feet") Ristom	Lyndsey Smith
Seth Douthat	Judy Middlemas	John Robbins	
Mary Jane Fritz	Lana Scott	Scott ("Flying Porkchop") Ourth	

#### 250 Career Hours

Scotty Bowman	Vic Hasler	Lewis ("Camo") Moyers
Dave Clark	Bill Hodge	Mike ("Lumpy") Price
Ernie Hartford	James Lautzenheiser	Gerald Scott

500 Career Hours

Pat Loven                      Joe Morris

1000 Career Hours

Daryel Anderson              John ("Bodacious") Beaudet              Jim ("Just Jim") Chambers              George Thorpe

3000 Career Hours

Jim Foster                      Ted Mowery                                      Steve Perri                                      Tim ("Mountain Squid") Stewart  
Kim Peters

5000 Career Hours:              Paul Benfield

8000 Career Hours:              Bob Peoples

11,000 Career Hours:              Carl Fritz



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## A.T. Maintenance Reports

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**Reporting:** Eric Middlemas

**Date:** 2/28/2015

**Purpose:** USFS Sawyer Training

**People:** Eric Middlemas, Greg Kramer, Pat Loven

**Summary:** We attended sawyer training provided by the USFS for Class B certificate. Training included approximately 4 hours of classroom training and 5 hours of field training. The field training included hands-on training on chainsaw operation and minor maintenance, as well as use of the chainsaw for limbing, bucking, and clearing brush. There was a strong emphasis on safety throughout the training.

**Reporting:** Craig Haire

**Date:** 2/28/2015

**Purpose:** Inspect trail

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

**People:** Craig Haire, Roy Holcomb

**Summary:** We walked through deep snow in places; melted through to the ground in other places. The trail is in pretty good shape. We did minor chainsaw clearing in three locations with my new 16" Greenworks electric.

**Reporting:** Scott Alan

**Date:** 3/7/2015

**Purpose:** Check section

**Location:** Section 12a, From hostel to Walnut Mountain Road

**People:** Scott Alan

**Summary:** I went out to check the section prior to the thru-hiker rush. I cut back laurel and picked up a few branches. There were no major blowdowns. This section is open and in good condition.

**Reporting:** Vic Hasler

**Date:** 3/7/2015

**Purpose:** Demolish campfire rings and replace tools at shelter

**Location:** Section 19b, From Outfitter to Curley Maple Gap Shelter

**People:** Vic Hasler

**Summary:** Six campfire rings were disassembled to achieve Leave-No-Trace standards following the instructions given at this past week's Maintainers Dinner. Per Luke 21:6: "As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down." All of the rocks were carried and hidden in the rhododendron and dog hobble or tossed into ravines, so that fire circles cannot be easily recreated. A tall campfire ring at one site contained over a hundred stones – and also a full grocery bag of trash.

Waterbars and channels were again cleared while continuing up the trail. Three trios of college students on spring break were heading northbound, while a mother/daughter pair hiked the other way. A couple, walking four labs, and a speed hiker were the other folks observed in this section today. The trail from the outfitter to the shelter was free of blowdowns – and the blazes are in great shape for this year.

Curley Maple Gap Shelter needed some cleaning. Another bag of trash was collected including a bright orange, light-weight tarp floating in the water source. Someone was burning the thick boards used as seats around the campfire, which was the only ring not demolished today, but cleaned. The shelter logbook has plenty of space for the thru-hiker wave. The existing broom was in good shape, but a new shovel was left, as only a small military-style spade was present.

A good day to be on the Appalachian Trail, once three ibuprofen were taken for the general soreness from carrying rocks.

**Reporting:** Craig Haire

**Date:** 3/8/2015

**Purpose:** Clear blowdown

**Location:** Section 16a, Hughes Gap to Greasy Creek Gap, middle of section

**People:** Craig Haire

**Summary:** I cleared a tree that had fallen lengthwise into the trail a few hundred yards north of Little Rock Knob.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 3/8/2015

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

**Location:** Section 9b, Blue-Blaze to Pond Flats

**People:** Joe Morris, Robin Dean

**Summary:** We performed routine maintenance on the blue-blaze approach to Pond Flats. We lopped and removed minor blowdowns and tangles from the trail, and rehabbed some trail. We encountered a large blowdown approximately 3/4 mile from the top of Pond Flats and removed the root ball. The trail is passable but the blowdown will need to be removed with a cross-cut saw. The recent improvements to the blue-blaze trail were draining very well. We cleaned the spring at the top and marked the best place to get water with blue paint. With the exception of the partial trail blockage from the blowdown, the trail in this section is clear. Hiking out in the dark is an adventure over this rugged area.

**Reporting:** Faye Guinn

**Date:** 3/12/2015

**Purpose:** Make trail passable

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

**People:** Howard Guinn, Faye Guinn, Wayne Jones, Brigitte Koegel

**Summary:** We knew there were some blowdowns to the big rock and we wanted to see if there were any past there that needed a chainsaw. With handsaw and loppers, we hoped to make the trail passable until we can take in the chainsaw. We cleared a lot of smaller things out of the trail, but found we will need a chainsaw to clear 10 trees that cross the trail. We will be back as quick as possible to cut these trees and make the trail passable.

**Reporting:** Eric Middlemas

**Date:** 3/12/2015

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

**Location:** Sections 17 and 18, Iron Mountain Gap to Indian Grave Gap

**People:** Eric Middlemas, Judy Middlemas

**Summary:** We walked from Iron Mountain Gap to Indian Grave Gap removing limbs and litter from the trail. We noted additional maintenance tasks for planning and future work groups. We recorded by GPS the locations of about 15 blowdowns, firerings needing removal, and eroded sections of the trail needing rehabilitation.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/12/2015

**Purpose:** Determine interest in Carter County as A.T. Community

**Location:** Elizabethton, Carter County Chamber of Commerce

**People:** Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Mike Hupko, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** Several representatives from Hampton, Carter County, Roan Mountain and Roan Mountain State Park participated in an initial kick-off meeting to determine interest in becoming a designated A.T. Community. TEHCC was well represented. Julie Judkins provided a good overview of the program, benefits and the requirements. Discussion indicated that there is definite interest. There was some discussion as to whether there should be one or multiple A.T. Communities in the county. Carter County has over 80 miles of the A.T. within its boundary or within several hundred feet of its boundary. A follow up meeting will be scheduled.

**Reporting:** Lynn DiFiore

**Date:** 3/15/2015

**Purpose:** Routine maintenance

**Location:** Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Stan Murray Shelter

**People:** Lynn DiFiore



**Summary:** I picked up a large amount of trash from the barn. The brooms have multiplied as there are now four, but the shovel is missing. I painted over some of the more offensive graffiti on the sliding door in the upper loft. I cut out two blowdowns, re-established all waterbars, and repainted blazes. I removed a moderate amount of trash from Stan Murray (dog carried it out). I saw two section hikers, numerous day hikers and a large church group on an overnight backpack. The springs are running well. It was a beautiful day to be out!

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 3/15/2015

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

**Location:** Section 2a, Abingdon Gap Shelter to VA/TN State Line

**People:** Jim Chambers

**Summary:** I removed many small blowdowns between Abingdon Gap Shelter and the VA/TN state line. I have several large blowdowns on the ground, so I'll return with my chainsaw in the coming days.

**Reporting:** Anna Hackler

**Date:** 3/15/2015

**Purpose:** Check for trash and new growth

**Location:** Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road

**People:** Anna Hackler, Anna Scott

**Summary:** We picked up trash and cleared any new weed growth that we saw. We love the new steps and improvements near the water! Several people commented on how nice it is.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/16/2015

**Purpose:** Meet with Forest Service

**Location:** Unicoi Ranger Station

**People:** Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** We had planned a large meeting with primarily Watauga Ranger District and some of regional Forest Service personnel. Unfortunately, we were confused on the time with FS thinking 10 am and we were thinking 2 pm. We did discuss some business with Lynn DiFiore. The larger meeting will be rescheduled.

**Reporting:** Joe DeLoach

**Date:** 3/16/2015

**Purpose:** Chainsaw recertification

**Location:** Unicoi Work Center

**People:** Joe DeLoach, Steve Wilson

**Summary:** Thanks very much to Reuben Potter for extending this recertification training to Steve and Joe!

**Reporting:** Ken and Lotta Murray

**Date:** 3/16/2015

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

**Location:** Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to Spivey Gap

**People:** Ken Murray, Lotta Murray, Mike Barosso, Peggy Cantrell, Drew Cantrell

**Summary:** We did routine clipping, removed small blowdowns, and cleaned the firepit at No Business Knob Shelter. The shelter log we placed there last fall was full, so we will take a new one next week. The new paint on the shelter looks good. The picnic table is a nice improvement. The wire mesh under the sleeping platform is problematic. It has already pulled away from the wood in one place. Someone has tried to hold it in place with duct tape. We will try to cover it with wood trim next week.

**Reporting:** Jim Foster

**Date:** 3/16/2015

**Purpose:** Inspect the trail and remove blowdowns

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

**People:** Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

**Summary:** Bruce and I inspected the trail and removed several small blowdowns. The trail is in good shape with no obstructions.

**Reporting:** Terry Oldfield

**Date:** 3/17/2015

**Purpose:** Maintain Double Springs Shelter

**Location:** Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter to TN91

**People:** Kim Peters, Terry Oldfield

**Summary:** We hiked to Double Springs Shelter from TN 91, and back. We picked up trash at and near the shelter, cleaned the gutter, and left a new log book. We also broke up a few firerings. On the way back, we cleaned out waterbars. The trail is in good shape, except for one 14" blowdown about one mile in from the edge of the woods. It can be stepped over, so cutting it out is not urgent.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/18/2015

**Purpose:** Dig and prepare relocations

**Location:** Section 1, Backbone Rock Trail

**People:** Ken Buchanan, Kayla Carter, Jim Chambers, Collin Edwards, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Mike Hupko, Greg Kramer, Pat Loven, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

**Summary:** Part of the crew finished digging the lower relocation closest to the parking lot and opened it. The rest of the crew reflagged the upper two relocations and cut out many of the wood obstructions. There is sufficient work prepared for Konnarock crew this year.

**Reporting:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:** 3/21/2015

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

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

**People:** Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

**Summary:** We broke apart two campsites, cleared two minor blowdowns, and cleared lots of small and medium size limbs. We reset two trail-marker posts, lopped rhododendron and multiflora rose, rehabbed 23 feet of trail, and carried out one bag of trash. We met three early thru-hikers and a section hiker.

**Reporting:** Steve Wilson

**Date:** 3/21/2015

**Purpose:** Clear waterbars and cut briars

**Location:** Section 2b, McQueen's Gap to Abingdon Gap Shelter

**People:** Steve Wilson

**Summary:** I cleared leaves and mud from the waterbars from McQueen's Gap to Abingdon Gap shelter. The shelter looks good, but may still have the water leak in the back left corner. The shovel is in good shape, but the broom is worn out and needs to be replaced. I found three significant blowdowns which will require a chainsaw to remove due to their size. The first blowdown is a steper and the other two can be ducked under; so they aren't obstructing hikers. I plan to remove them next weekend.

**Reporting:** Kim Peters

**Date:** 3/21/2015

**Purpose:** Clean up campsites

**Location:** Section 8, Shook Branch to Watauga Lake Shelter

**People:** Phyllis Cairnes, Rolla Wade, Bob Byrd, Jim Floyd, Brad Leath, Olivia Leath, Connor Leath, Anna Hackler, Andrew Scott, Terry Oldfield, Kim Peters

**Summary:** What a great turnout for the first "Hiking with Tools" trip in 2015! Eleven people showed up on a cool and cloudy morning prepared to help clean up the campsites around Watauga Lake. The sun came out after a few hours and it turned out to be a sunny warm day; a lovely day to be out in the woods. We split into two groups; and equipped with shovels, rakes and trash bags, we proceeded to break up the dozens of firerings along the shore between Shook Branch and Watauga Lake Shelter. There were more firerings than I could count. We hauled out at least five bags of trash, leaving the area much nicer than we found it. Many thanks to all the great volunteers.

**Reporting:** Tim Stewart

**Date:** 3/22/2015

**Purpose:** Check section

**Location:** Section 11b, Bitter End to Moreland Gap Shelter

**People:** Tim Stewart

**Summary:** From Bitter End, I hiked to Moreland Gap Shelter to check half of my section. The trail looked good. I did some lopping of rhodos, but not as much as anticipated. The shovel, broom, and rake were present at the shelter. I placed new logbook and some hand sanitizer and removed trash. The ashes in fire pit felt warm, so was unable to disperse them. I saw 3 NOBOs and one section hiker at the shelter. On the hike back to the trailhead, I removed two firerings.

**Reporting:** Mike Hupko

**Date:** 3/24/2015

**Purpose:** Spring Maintenance

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

**People:** Faye Guinn, Howard Guinn, Judy Middlemas, Eric Middlemas, Wayne Jones, Mike Hupko

**Summary:** We cut 13 trees on the trail, repaired about 20 feet of trail where one large tree fell, cleaned waterbars, picked up trash, broke up an illegal fire ring, and checked the spring at the orchard which was flowing good.

**Reporting:** Gayle Riddervold

**Date:** 3/25/2015

**Purpose:** Clean water bars

**Location:** Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

**People:** Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

**Summary:** Today we cleaned out all the waterbars and stopped briefly to talk with Carl Fritz and the maintenance crew to check out the new camp site at Wildermine. Upon returning to the trail head, we picked up trash.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 3/25/2015

**Purpose:** Remove blowdown

**Location:** Section 9b, Pond Mountain

**People:** Joe Morris, Greg Kramer, Kevin Sedgwick, Moose

**Summary:** We removed a major blowdown near the top of Pond Mountain and did some trail rehab. This section continues to improve and is in pretty good shape for this season of NOBOs.

**Reporting:** Ken and Lotta Murray

**Date:** 3/25/2015

**Purpose:** Shelter Maintenance

**Location:** Section 20b, No Business Knob Shelter

**People:** Ken Murray, Lotta Murray, Jenny Eckenrode

**Summary:** Major task was installing 2x4s over the top edge of the hardware cloth screen which was installed this winter. The screen was coming loose and could catch on hikers and their equipment. The 2x4s will help hold the screen in place. Although this is not an ideal or permanent solution it should work for a few years. We also replaced the shelter logbook, picked up trash, and clipped along the trail.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/25/2015

**Purpose:** Remove major blowdowns

**Location:** Section 11b, Just south of Canute Place

**People:** Jim Chambers, Pat Loven, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** This crew went heavily loaded with tools to remove about four blowdowns just south of Canute Place. Some were multiple and some had their root balls pulled out and were ready to slide down to the trail. They safely removed all the blowdowns.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/25/2015

**Purpose:** Install new camping area

**Location:** Section 13, Wildermine, between US19 E and Doll Flats

**People:** Paul Benfield, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Pat Loven, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Reuben Potter, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe, Robert Torbert "Wayfarer"

**Summary:** We installed a new permanent campsite at Wildermine just above the old Apple House Shelter site. We cleaned the area of multiflora rose, rocks and down trees. We built a new rock, fire pit with rocks as seats surrounding it. Reuben demonstrated how to skillfully remove a hazard tree that was entangled with grapevine. The campsite is marked with a carsonite sign.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/25/2015

**Purpose:** Install temporary campsite

**Location:** Section 9a: US321 to Pond Flats 0.2 miles south of US 321

**People:** Paul Benfield, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Kim Peters, Reuben Potter, George Thorpe, Robert Torbert "Wayfarer"

**Summary:** We primarily installed a new campsite about 0.2 miles south of US 321 and about 300 feet north of the Wilderness boundary. This will be a temporary campsite during bear closure around Watauga Lake. It has no water source. Kim and Ed also collected some information on two bridges on the north side of US 321. Ed measured line-of-sight along US 321 for several road crossings.