



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

August 2015

tehcc.org

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From the Chair

Submitted by Steve Ankabrandt

Be sure to reserve the date – Saturday, November 14th 2015. That is the date for our TEHCC fall banquet. This year we're trying something new and going to make the event more "EXPO-oriented." In the morning and early afternoon we are planning local hikes and a paddling event. In the late afternoon and evening we'll have a gear swap, vendor displays on hiking and paddling, and a chili cook-off at the Eastman Lodge. The gear swap will be to buy, sell, trade, or give-away items; those items you no longer need. Local outdoor equipment vendors are being invited to showcase and sell some hiking/paddling gear.

We have 8 chili cooks, but we're still looking for more – this is your chance for bragging rights and prizes. More details on the Expo will be coming in the next few newsletters. Happy trails! Steve

Bear Activity along TEHCC Section

Summary by Vic Hasler

Three reports have been received of bear activity along the TEHCC section. On June 13th, hikers were disturbed by a bear at Low Gap on Unaka Mountain who would not leave their campsite. The next day, a juvenile bear was encountered around Cherry Gap Shelter, roughly a mile from the first incident, who again did not want to leave. The leader used bear spray in an attempt to negatively reinforce the bear, which returned that evening to take a pack. The pack did not contain food, which was properly hung. On June 15th, a third report was made for three miles south of Mountaineer Falls Shelter. Along the trail it was apparent there was a lot of bear activity. Necessary precautions to limit risk of encountering a bear were taken including hanging bear bags 50 feet or more from the campsite. ATC and USFS have been notified or provided information on all of these incidents.



Bob Peoples Receives ATC Honorary Membership Award

Submitted by Steve Perri



On Saturday, July 18th Bob Peoples was presented the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Honorary Membership Award during the ATC 40th membership meeting in Winchester, VA at Shenandoah University. ATC recognizes a small select group of members for their leadership, mentorship, commitment, and dedication with the Honorary Membership award. The number of members in the list of honorary members is about 55; many of whom are now deceased, and so this is a very select group considering this is ATC's 90th year.

Due to the secrecy involved in the nomination and its formal announcement, Bob had to be summoned to the meeting since he was originally not planning to attend the membership meeting. So Laurie Potteiger, ATC's Information Services Manager, invited Bob to come to the meeting without disclosing to him what the award specifically was, but explained he really needed to be there. So Bob made the drive to Winchester from Dennis Cove that same day and was presented the award that evening. Bob was totally surprised and humbled by this recognition. The board presented Bob with a plaque and silver cup to acknowledge his contributions.

Bob has been an outstanding member of TEHCC since about 1997. He and his wife Pat retired and located to Dennis Cove to open a hostel that would be close to the A.T. We are fortunate that they chose Dennis Cove for their preferred location to settle down since Bob has been an excellent A.T. ambassador. Bob has a passion for the A.T. and giving. He has hosted on the order of 20,000 hikers over the years and his sales pitch has been to provide an opportunity for hikers to do volunteer work and stay at his hostel. This connection grew over the years and eventually culminated in the formation of the annual thru-hiker maintenance program held during Damascus Trail Days – AKA Hard Core. The program grew from 1 to 2 days of work and the number of volunteers is typically over 100 in a given year. It has developed into a massive undertaking to plan, prepare materials in the field, supply tools and safety equipment, provide training, prepare food, and manage logistics and recognitions. Bob developed a patch to thank volunteers for their commitment and over the years many people volunteer to return and so he developed rockers for the returns. Hard Core is an excellent model to involve non-traditional volunteers and first timers. Many clubs have envied what Bob has been able to do to impact others through this endeavor. But many people know that Bob has great passion for introducing people to the opportunity to give their time to do good on their journey. He takes pride in mentoring others and teaching them trail maintenance techniques. So while Bob may not be an avid computer user, he certainly has a following that surpasses a Facebook account. He sees the broad spectrum of people hiking the Trail each year from inside and outside of the U.S. and is able to win them over to volunteer their time. Bob has certainly connected with people over the years and has continued to maintain these friendships. So congratulations Bob!



TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Travis Bates	Catherine McCord	Christine Browning	Gabrielle Ashley
Kristi Bennett	Julia Horn	Jaycee Le	Ryan Schmidt
Ryan Hare	Soma Mukherjee	Dennis Ramsey	Luke Collins

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

Date	Description	Leader	Contact
Aug 7-9	New River Paddle/Camp	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
Aug 15	Watauga River Class I-II	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
Aug 16	Steele Creek Park, Lake Loop	Tim Schaefer	423-302-0846
Aug 18	TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting	Steve Ankabrandt	
Aug 22	APEs Nolichucky Gorge 1st Timers Trip & Picnic	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
Aug 23	F/B: Bays Mountain Park – Lake Road/Chinquapin Trail	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388
Aug 28-30	Babes on the Waves Pigeon River Trip	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
Aug 29-30	APEs Beginner Whitewater Kayak Course	Ryan Shealy	423-963-6066
Sept 18-20	French Broad Campout	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636

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 US 23 at Kane Street intersection (traffic light) by Food Lion. All hikes will leave promptly to stay on 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.

Details of Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

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

Contact: [Wesley R. Bradley](mailto:Wesley.R.Bradley@tehcc.org), 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](mailto:Wesley.R.Bradley@tehcc.org). We will try our best to get you outfitted for the night! Also feel free to contact Wesley for any other questions or comments you may have.

Most Thursdays: Weekly A.T. Trail Maintenance

Contact: [Carl Fritz](mailto:Carl.Fritz@tehcc.org), 423-477-4669, 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](mailto:George.Mauger@tehcc.org), 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 summer months, the outdoor pool is closed off to the public and available specifically for kayaker use with occasional opportunities to play in the lazy river. 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](mailto:George.Mauger@tehcc.org) (864-414-0296). For additional event details, click [here](#).

Every Other Saturday, Lower Watauga, Class I and II, 3 – 7 pm

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](mailto:Debbie.Briscoe@tehcc.org), 423-534-3636

We will launch from Riverside Park in Elizabethton behind the Ballpark at 3 pm unless there is water elsewhere. Call first to check and see if it's on! Also, we stop for a break about half way down, so don't forget your snacks! We are usually off the water by 7:00 pm or so and then we can go for dinner in town. Please be prepared for cold water and wear appropriate gear.

Directions: From W Elk Avenue in Elizabethton, turn between the Krystal Burger and Rite-Aid onto West Mill Street. Take the first street on left onto Ash Street. Follow that street to the end and you will see the river. Turn left and pull into the small paved parking area near a covered picnic area. Look for boats!

Thursday Evenings During the Summer: Paddle to the Grill, 6:30 pm

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](mailto:Debbie.Briscoe@tehcc.org), 423-534-3636

Bring your touring kayak or canoe to meet with the Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (www.riverapes.org) and TEHCC. Meet at 6:30 at Boonedocks Restaurant, Boone Lake Marina, 452 Sportsman Dock Rd, Piney Flats. We will launch by 7:00 pm to paddle the 3 miles (which takes about an hour) to Davis Marina (641 Buffalo Rd, Blountville), have dinner and social time, then paddle back by moonlight! As we may be paddling back during low or no light, please have a stern light for your boat, and PFDs are mandatory. For more information, contact Debbie Briscoe.

3rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!

Contact: [Kim Peters](mailto:Kim.Peters@tehcc.org), 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](mailto:Kim.Peters@tehcc.org) for details and meeting time and place.

Scheduled Events

New River Paddle/Camp, Class I-II, August 7 - 9, 2015

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](mailto:Idcakes@hotmail.com) (Idcakes@hotmail.com) 423-534-3636

Friday: We'll meet at New River State Park. We'll run the shuttle and try to put-in by 11:00. The New River State Park is in Scottville, NC, at river mile 15. To get to the park, take US Hwy 221; the park is 9/10 mile from New River Outfitters. N.R.S.P. GPS coordinates are 36.467680,-81.340350; address is 10000 U.S. 221, NC. We will paddle approximately 7 miles or 4 hours to Twin Rivers Campground for the first night where we have reservations.

Saturday: We will paddle to Allegheny Access campsite about 5 river miles or 2 hours of paddling. This primitive campsite has no road access and is only accessible by water. There are several trails in the area, so we can do some hiking either on Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning.

Sunday: We will continue down the river about 4 miles or just under 2 hours of paddling to the takeout at the NC Rt. 93 bridge near the Mouth of Wilson. There is potable water at the campsites, so there is no need to carry or treat water. There is firewood available for purchase too. At Twin Rivers Campground I have reserved 2 campsites for Friday night that are \$20.00 a night and \$5.00 for each additional person over three. We pay when we get there. At Allegheny Access there is a small fee to camp; it's on the honor system, first come first serve (less than \$5 each as I recall). Paddlers should be self contained, which means you must be able to carry all your camping gear in your kayak or canoe. You will need food for dinner on Friday and Saturday and breakfast on Saturday and Sunday. I also suggest bringing 3 lunches, for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We may take out in time for lunch Sunday, but we will be out in the boonies and there are not many purchasing options. Helpful links: [Twin Rivers Family Campground](#); [New River State Park](#); [River Map](#). Please confirm with Debbie Briscoe if you are going and if you are interested in carpooling; it may be possible.

F/B: Steele Creek Park Loop, Sunday, August 16, 2015

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

Another hike, another chance to collect missing details for our trail wiki. This hike will include kids, so hiking speed will be adjusted accordingly. Come on out and join us to hike and document another nearby trail treasure. Contact Tim Schaefer for meeting location coordination and details.

TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, Tuesday, August 18, 2015, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Contact: Steve Ankabrandt, 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.

APes Nolichucky Gorge 1st Timer's Trip and Picnic, Saturday, August 22, 2015

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

Cost: \$5.00 for USA Raft bus shuttle.

Nolichucky Gorge River Trip (Class III/IV*) led by Wesley R. Bradley: Meet at the USA Raft Outpost (take-out) at 11:00 am. USA Raft will be shuttling our group up to the put-in using one of their raft buses and a boat trailer if needed! This will make our logistics for shuttling very easy and our cars will be waiting for us back at the take out when we get off the river! Please bring \$5.00 to help cover the cost of this shuttle ride.

**Please be mindful of the water level for the day and your skill set, if you are a first timer on this trip. We will have the trip up to 3,000 CFS, but if the flow is above 1,500 CFS we will require you to execute a few practice rolls in flatwater at the put-in before we head on down the river.*

Lower Nolichucky River Trip (USA Raft Outpost to Sawmill – Class I-II) led by Debbie Briscoe: Plan to play a lot and maybe even stop and go swimming with a snack break included to make it a fun day on the lower! Meet at the USA Raft Outpost (put-in) at 12:00 pm to set shuttle for the Lower Noli Trip.

APes Picnic: Meet at the USA Raft Area take-out at 6:00 pm. This is our last big "get together" for the year and the APes will host catering by TBD. We will have tasty food with fixin's waiting for us at USA Raft when we get off the river! Please feel free to bring any side dishes or deserts to share with the group. If you are an APes member, the dinner will be FREE; non-APes members can chow down for \$6.00. The club will provide non-alcoholic beverages for the picnic. If you wish to bring adult beverages, USA Raft has asked that you drink them from a cup (NO glass or cans!). You may also want to bring a folding chair due to limited seating. Event Contacts: Noli Gorge River Trip and Picnic - Wesley R. Bradley: 423-647-1321, <mailto:dangerousdraftingman@hotmail.com>; Lower Noli River Trip – Debbie Briscoe: 423-534-3636, ldcakes@hotmail.com. [Map link](#) [Event website](#)

F/B: Bays Mountain Park – Lake Road/Chinquapin Trail, Sunday, August 23, 2015

Contact: [Vic Hasler](#) (423-239-0388)

For Second Class rank, a Boy Scout is to use a map and compass to take a five mile hike. Bays Mtn Park offers a good location as the topo map can be oriented with the lake and surrounding ridges. The needed distance is readily covered by following Lake Road with a side diversion on the Chinquapin Trail. This hike is good for those who want to learn how to use a directional compass and interpret topological maps – and is open to club members or scouts from any troop. Departure time from Colonial Heights is 1:30 pm from a different location of the Presbyterian Church or just meet at the park dam by 2 pm. Entrance fee for Bays Mtn Park is \$4 per car, although the Scout Expo coupon is still good until the end of August. Bring plenty of water, comfortable footwear, appropriate clothing/sun protection, and your own compass, if desired. The hike will take around three hours depending on how much instruction time along the way. We'll also be on the lookout for signs of different animals and observing native plants, which are other rank requirements. For further information, please call/e-mail the hike leader.

“Babes on the Waves” Pigeon River Trip, August 28 - 30, 2015

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe \(Idcakes@hotmail.com\)](mailto:Debbie.Briscoe@hotmail.com) 423-534-3636

Hey gals, It's time!! Time to get together and have our annual "Babes On The Waves" River Run! This year we're making it a double trip on the Pigeon River, staggering an Upper and Lower run! Once a year all the female APEettes come together to rule the river. All are welcome, even you guys who don't want to be left out; we don't discriminate. But it's our day and we want to get as many female paddlers out on the water as we can! So all you gals, plan to join us on the water for a fun weekend.

Friday Night: All the Babes will meet at Joanne's house to stay the night and hang out around the pool. Since we'll be coming in at different times and will probably have had supper, just bring yummy snack foods to share please! If you can't stay the weekend and just want to paddle, you can meet us Saturday on the river. **Saturday Upper Trip (Class III):** Meet at 11:30 at the NOC; trip led by Jennifer Bradley. **Saturday Lower trip (Class II):** Meet at 2:00 at the NOC; trip led by Debbie Briscoe. After we're off the river, we can go out to eat in Newport; then you may choose to go home or go back to Joanne's. **Sunday:** Joanne wants us to enjoy a day at the pool before we have to head home, so don't forget your bathing suits! *Please contact Debbie Briscoe to confirm that you want to stay at Jo's and to get directions and the address.

APes Beginner Whitewater Kayak Course, Saturday, August 29 - 30, 2015

Contact: [Ryan Shealy, 423-963-6066](tel:423-963-6066)

If you've ever thought how much fun it would be to learn how to kayak, you're in luck!! APes will be hosting a second Beginner Whitewater Kayak Class. The Beginner Whitewater Kayak Course, sponsored by the Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APes) and TEHCC will be held August 29-30 in the Tri-Cities area. The clinic is designed for anyone wanting to learn the fundamentals of whitewater kayaking that will ensure a fun and safe time on the river. No previous experience is necessary. Instruction will consist of one day on flat water and one day on the river. As in the past, there will be a strong emphasis on safety. Participants will be responsible for providing their own gear and transportation, although loaner gear is available on a first come basis. Cost is \$75 per student (which includes a \$5 ACA event membership fee and a \$10 APes membership fee). If you are already a member of either organization, deduct that portion from the cost. **Registration deadline is August 22.** Register online [here](#). Event info and registration details can be found [here](#).

For the Record

A.T.: Carver's Gap to Grassy Ridge, Sunday, June 28, 2015

William Werner reporting

It was a perfect day to be out on the longest stretch of grassy balds in the Appalachians. The temperature was in the upper 60s, a light breeze was blowing, and the sky was cloudless. After Round Bald the crowds thinned out, and the hikers were treated to a close-up view of the goats and sheepdog of the "Baa-tany" Project. Rhododendron and flame azalea were no longer in bloom, but the participants found several specimens of the rare Gray's Lily along the trail. After a stop on Grassy Ridge for a light snack, hikers had the balds mostly to themselves for the return trip. Denise Hardin and family members participated.

Buffalo Mountain "Grand Circuit," Sunday, July 12, 2015

Tim Schaefer reporting

We had no takers, so this was a Schaefer family hike of five people. On the way to Buffalo Mountain we discovered the home of Dr. Enuf. Not relevant information, but I had occasionally wondered where my new favorite soda is made. We began the hike and made it to the very aptly named Huckleberry Knob. After filling up on berries at their peak, we moved on. We nearly made it to the cascades but were hit with a rainstorm causing us to abort the plan and execute a hasty retreat back to the parking lot. Disappointment was softened after a pigout at Pizza Inn. Buffalo Mountain was a first time visit for me and I was impressed with the nice trails and views at the outskirts of the Tri-Cities.

F/B: FunFest "New" Moonlight Hike, Thursday, July 16, 2015

William Werner reporting

A big "Thank you" to everyone who came out to support our volunteer efforts at the FunFest Moonlight Hike around the lake at Bays Mountain. The hike went off without a hitch for the more than 200 visitors. TEHCC volunteers provided an accurate headcount and stood at trail intersections to keep everyone on the right path. Participants were Mike Carrier and sons, Rick and Frances Eldreth, Glenda O'Neal, Steve Ankabrandt, Tim Schaefer, Jon Penney, Neil Dotson and children, Gerald Scott, Tim and Peggy McClain, Vic Hasler, and others.

Laurel Fork Falls, from Dennis Cove, July 19, 2015

Yancey Appling reporting

Sunday the 19th was a great lazy hike to Laurel Falls. There was a light sprinkling rain about mid-hike cooling us off. As it had rained recently, the falls were bursting with water. Along the trail we found a multitude of edible and inedible mushrooms, including a few chanterelles and some very large tawny milk caps.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/25/2015

Purpose: Estimate cost of bridge options

Location: Sections 8 and 13

People: Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver

Summary: We estimated cost of laminated versus solid bridge beams and overall costs of bridge designs for Shook Branch and south of 19E.

Reporting: Kayla Carter

Date: 6/11/2015

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 12c, Elk River

People: Kayla Carter, Sarah Ellison

Summary: The weeds were very high along the Elk River. We used swing blades to cut them back. We ate lunch beside the river.

Reporting: Bob Peoples

Date: 6/19/2015

Purpose: Cut weeds, remove bees, etc.

Location: Dennis Cove and US 19E

People: Bob Peoples

Summary: Bob cut the weeds in the field just south of Dennis Cove. While wearing a rain coat and rain hat he sprayed and removed an 8-inch bee nest from under Bear Branch Bridge. He also delivered a thank you to some of the folks near Doll Flats for their support during Hard Core.

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 6/26/2015

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 20b, Devils Gap to Spivey Gap

People: Ken Murray, Lotta Murray

Summary: We clipped rhodos and blackberries, and cut nettles with a swingblade.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 6/26/2015

Purpose: Finish trimming trail and do general maintenance

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap trail south about 4 miles

People: Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

Summary: Bruce and I finished trimming the section and cleaned the waterbars again. We also installed three check dams and replaced one rotted waterbar. There was a fairly large blowdown (14 inches) about 1/4 mile from Hughes Gap; so we decided to hand cut the sucker on our way out. Of course there was a knot on the bottom of the log where I decided we should cut. Bruce didn't complain and we finally got it cut and out of the trail. I was just about to high five Bruce when a yellow jacket stung me on the ear. It seems that we had rolled the log onto their home and they didn't appreciate it one bit. Oh well, such is the life of a maintainer.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 6/27/2015

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Stan Murray

People: Lynn DiFiore, Brian Schloff

Summary: We used a swingblade to re-cut annual growth along the trail, removed a minimal amount of trash from Stan Murray (including a pair of slippers), and removed a moderate amount of trash from the barn (including a raft). The springs are still running well. We ran into numerous trail runners and day hikers out for the day. With highs in the 50's, it was a good day to be outside!

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 6/29/2015

Purpose: Summer Maintenance

Location: Section 17, Half-mile south of Iron Mountain Gap to FS 230 Switchback

People: Judy Middlemas, Eric Middlemas, Wayne Jones, Susan Peters, Bruce Darby, Sandie Burns, Jerry Jones, Jack Lawson, David Douthat, Anthony Kozloski, Lamar Adcox, Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko

Summary: We mowed from one-half mile south of Iron Mountain Gap to FS 230 Switchback. We also lopped overhanging limbs, cut small roots, and removed two 10-inch trees from the trail. We replaced a damaged bear-warning sign in the shelter, and picked up trash at the shelter and at the campsites. The spring at the shelter was running good.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 7/1/2015

Purpose: Reset steps

Location: Section 19b, Curley Maple Gap Shelter to Nolichucky River At 4th bridge

People: Paul Benfield, James Foster

Summary: At the fourth bridge, we reset two steps and built one more. We also removed one small blowdown. The third bridge needs the metal lathes replaced.

Reporting: Scott Alan

Date: 7/2/2015

Purpose: General maintenance

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

People: Scott Alan

Summary: Hikers reported that the non-slip wire mesh lathe on the foot bridge over Laurel Fork Creek had come undone and was bunching up causing hikers to trip. I went out with hammer and heavy duty staples and re-secured the lathe. I also cut back laurel growth from there to Bitter End and removed a few small blowdowns. A bog bridge within several hundred feet of the Bitter End trailhead bows significantly when walked across and needs to be replaced before it breaks. There have been multiple bear sightings on this section, a sow with cubs.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 7/4/2015

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 8, From Shook Branch to Dam

People: Craig Haire

Summary: On a club hike, I made cuts at six locations between Shook Branch and the dam with my 12" Greenworks electric chainsaw. One tangle was so thick it had created a detour. It rained off and on.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 7/6/2015

Purpose: TEHCC A.T. Committee/ATC Listening Session

Location: Eastman Employee Center

People: Carl Fritz, Vic Hasler, Mike Hupko, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Steve Perri, Kim Peters, Tim Steward, Steve Wilson

Summary: The evening consisted of an hour on club business, and then an hour listening session with ATC.

Multiple bear encounters along TEHCC's section have been reported since mid-June. Temporary campsite near Shook Branch is being used, as its location is shown on the TEHCC trail wiki. USFS will need to decide whether to extend closure for camping around Watauga Lake if problem persists. Third Saturday Hiking-with-Tools will work in Bishop Hollow once golden warblers have finished nesting. TDOT's request for signs at highway crossings is in agency hands at this point. TN license plate grant request was submitted for Clyde Smith/Stam Murray roofs, anti-graffiti coating for Abingdon Gap shelter, and two bridges. A group will be tackling multiflora rose in Upper Laurel Fork area in mid-July. Oriental Bittersweet at Canute Place was heavily addressed in 2014. Berry Fields are a jungle of sumac, locust, greenbriar, blackberry, etc. with need to establish long term objective and plan for area. Work on Chestoa kiosk is finally proceeding with recent photos showing frame and roof after assembly in a shop. ASU/Watauga College on August 14 is planning to have 110 freshmen plus chaperones working south of TN91. Discussion about medium gloves concluded that the club probably has enough, if rounded up from storage in members' homes. Several bridge projects are waiting on USFS design. It was noted that purchasing 22' beams can be more economical than hardware needed to build up as a lattice.

WFA/CPR training grant for sawyers/maintainers is not being used as other options were taken; thus club agreed to return the money. Training should be arranged for April 2016 when many need to renew. Vic will be editor for 15th Edition of ATC TN-NC guidebook. Deadline for updates is Feb 2016; earlier than previously projected because of Wild/Walk movies and Costco contract. It is noted that most thru-hikers do not carry maps nor guidebooks, but they are useful for pre-planning. TEHCC finances remain in great shape. Replacing missing marker post on Beauty Spot was the only new expense proposed. Kiosks and updating their information are primarily the responsibility of USFS. Having TEHCC general contact information for volunteers was suggested. USFS National Saw Policy published in Federal Register does not represent significant change for TEHCC. Database of sawyers was added to club SharePoint site. Best way for USFS to provide annual updates to sawyers needs to be determined; at maintainers' dinner was suggested.

ATC Listening Session involved Allison Williams (Volunteer and Service), Rebekah Young (Partner Communications and Resource Committee), Leanna Joyner (Trail Resources), and Julie Judkins (Education and Outreach). Steve Perri joined the conference call. Conversation reflected on best practices by the club around high participation projects (Hard Core/ASU), well-trained maintainers and sawyers, and involvement by college students and former military. Opportunity exists to use social media to continue connecting with new folks in area.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/7/2015

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 5, One and two miles south of TN 91

People: Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Jim Floyd, Carl Fritz, Danny Harper, Pat Loven, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe, Collin Edwards, Logan West, Ruth Wetherson; Scouts and Leaders: Spencer Truman, Robbi Blown, Tyler Larson, Rhett Crimin, Logan Donaldson, Cameron Lay, Kade Ramsey, Joseph Larsen, Peter Smith

Summary: It is a rare event when we have a new maintainer join us, as well as ten young people that are 17 or under. One young person was a thru hiker, another was a Kingsporter earning his community service for TN college scholarship, and the third was a step grandchild. The other seven were boy scouts from NC on a 50-mile hike who took their afternoon to work with us after having already hiked over 12 miles. Most of us installed steps and improved trail just south of bog bridges. Kim led a group that rehabbed 240 feet of sloughing trail farther south.

Reporting: Brian Paley

Date: 7/7/2015

Purpose: Post new mileage signs

Location: Section 8, Wilbur Dam to US 321

People: Brian Paley

Summary: I posted new mileage signs at Wilbur Dam Road, Watauga Shelter, and Shook Branch. I also lopped the trail from Wilbur Dam Road to Watauga Shelter.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 7/8/2015

Purpose: Remove blowdown

Location: Section 9b, Pond Mountain

People: Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

Summary: "On the Loose" a Nobo thru-hiker reported a large tangle and blowdown near the top of Pond Mountain on our Tuesday maintenance outing. This two-tree tangle was determined to consume and frustrate our Wednesday; but we were determined to complete the task, despite the broken handle on the cross-cut saw. We also lopped and cut some seasonal growth. The trail is now in good shape.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 7/8/2015

Purpose: Whack weeds

Location: Section 12d, North 2/3 of section, Campbell Hollow Road to US 19E

People: Kevin Sedgwick

Summary: I weed whacked, cutting back multiflora rose and anything else that was in the way of the trail. I hiked in and started at Bishop Hollow and worked back north. I cleared all of Bishop Hollow, as needed on Woods Road, and through the fields of the open ridge (the view as everyone is calling it). I pulled limbs and debris back onto the ATV trail at the A.T. turn that is often missed south of the cemetery, and cleared in front of Isaac Cemetery. I did a few spots south of Buck Mountain Road and cleared the north side of the Buck Mtn Road crossing. I saw many section hikers going both directions.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 7/10/2015

Purpose: Remove Tree-of-Heaven

Location: Section 19b, South of second bridge along Jones Branch

People: Clifton Avery (ATC), Vic Hasler, Greg Kramer, Vincent Gould (BSA Troop 48)

Summary: This trip addressed invasive Tree-of-Heaven observed just south of the second bridge along Jones Branch. The group gathered at the blue-blaze trailhead by the outfitters. Some delay occurred when the USFS did not show due to a misunderstanding of the event date, but multiple phone calls resolved the situation with delivery of the herbicide. Vic bushwhacked around the area to flag trees to determine the extent of the infestation, while Vincent used a swing blade to trim some stinging nettle along the trail. Roughly 130 trees were cut and treated by the group working in pairs, including two larger trees (8-10" diameter by 60-80' tall) taken down by Clifton with a chain saw. The Chinese yam also reported in the same area was not found.

Reporting: Kayla Carter

Date: 7/11/2015

Purpose: Cut weeds and rhododendron

Location: Section 12c, Elk River to Jones Falls

People: Kayla Carter, Ed Carter

Summary: My father and I went back out to check on the condition of my section. The Forest Service had already cut the legendary tall weeds along the Elk River. We walked to Jones Falls with lopper and maintained the trail corridor. I have not ventured out to the other side of my trail yet. I plan to within the next couple of weeks. I think I have been hesitant to go out there since someone was riding a dirt bike on the trail the first time I went out there.

Reporting: David Clark

Date: 7/11/2015

Purpose: Check trail

Location: Section 7, Vandeventer Shelter to Wilbur Dam Rd

People: David Clark

Summary: I found two blowdowns, a 6" tree and an 18" tree across the trail. Both can be walked under, but need to be removed for safety.

Reporting: Richard Carter

Date: 7/11/2015

Purpose: Paint blazes and clear overgrowth

Location: Section 14c, North side of Grassy Ridge

People: Richard Carter, Joe DeLoach

Summary: We hiked in from Overmountain Shelter; refreshed paint on blazes from Stan Murray Shelter almost to the Grassy Ridge Trail junction; cut overgrowth to, but not including, the upper set of switchbacks; scattered one fire ring; and picked up trash at Stan Murray Shelter.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 7/11/2015

Purpose: Whack weeds (Part 2)

Location: Section 12d, North end of section, Campbell Hollow Road to US 19E

People: Kevin Sedgwick

Summary: I weed whacked from Campbell Hollow Road to south of Buck Mountain Road, and cut one small blowdown from trail. I met a few groups of section hikers. The yellow jackets are out in force; I lost count of the number of stings in the two outings.

Reporting: Scott Alan

Date: 7/12/2015

Purpose: General maintenance

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

People: Scott Alan

Summary: Responding to hiker reports, I removed one large blowdown. I also cut back laurels and removed trash from the trailhead. Several hikers have suggested there should be a bear pole or cage installed near the Mountaineer Falls Shelter for convenient protection of hiker food.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 7/12/2015

Purpose: Remove downed tree

Location: Section 7, 3/4 mile trail north from Wilbur Dam Road

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: I hiked in to remove a downed tree from across the trail and do some brushing. I was able to finish the final cut and pack up before the rain hit.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 7/12/2015

Purpose: Paint blue blazes

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter

People: Kat Johnson, Margo Frame, Kim Peters

Summary: On the last trip out to the shelter, we noted that the shelter needed a broom. So we carried a broom out to the shelter, where we picked up trash, including discarded clothing, and broke up a massive fire ring that a large group had made. The log book that I left two weeks ago is almost gone, apparently most of it ended up in the fire pit. The second entry read "Nice new log book! I'm ripping off the back page to use as a bellows." The entry after that stated that they were using their own pen because the pen provided was missing. Then we moved on to the trail to the water source and cleared a few blowdowns and painted the blue blazes. The water is running well from the recent rains. On the way back, we picked up trash at the Grindstaff Memorial and painted the blue blazes at the water source there. It was raining when we passed the piped spring, so we did not get to paint the blue blazes

there. That will have to wait for another trip. Much thanks to the hiker "Wired" for painting the white blazes along this section and to the person who taught him how, because they look great!

Reporting: Richard Carter

Date: 7/16/2015

Purpose: Cut overgrowth

Location: Section 14c, North side of Grassy Ridge

People: Richard Carter

Summary: I lopped briars and other overgrowth. The rare flowers of bent avens were in full bloom, making them easy to identify and avoid cutting. Most of the section is now adequately free of overgrowth, but several fairly small segments still need cutting.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/16/2015

Purpose: Prepare for rehab and relo

Location: Section 5, North end of section, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Brian Paley, Bob Peoples

Summary: We scouted some rehab projects for the ASU students, plus we cut out the relocation planned for them. Greg and Brian cut some steps and waterbars. More preparation remains to be done. Unfortunately, we acquired a large screw in a tire near Cross Mountain. But it did not rain except for the water dripping from our brows.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/16/2015

Purpose: Cut weeds and clean waterbars

Location: Section 4a, US 421 to Double Springs Shelter

People: Ken Buchanan, Pat Loven, Bill Murdoch, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

Summary: The crew finished the weed cutting on this section. They also cleaned all the waterbars. There are some blowdowns within about a half-mile north of shelter.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/17/2015

Purpose: Paint blazes

Location: Sections 5 to 10, Cross Mountain to Dennis Cove

People: Hiker "Wired"

Summary: A southbounder was concerned about some of the blazes headed south. So he repainted some of the blazes from Cross Mountain to Dennis Cove.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 7/17/2015

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 2b, Abingdon Gap Shelter

People: Rolla Wade, Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: It's interesting what "left behinds" one can find at a shelter. Today it was a 2-qt stainless saucepan with its lid and a patina of charred popcorn, a small oven rack, a metal drawer pull (found in the gutter along with candy wrappers), and considerable lengths of cord clothesline strung up across the shelter. We carried these treasures out; also shoveled out the fire ring, broke up a rogue fire ring a few yards away, replaced the trail journal, and asked a hiker about the water source he had just climbed up from. He said it was flowing very well, which saved us a trip down. All told, we met and talked with four section hikers who stopped briefly at the shelter. All expressed much appreciation for our small efforts and for the club's maintenance contribution in general. It was a good day.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 7/17/2015

Purpose: Mow Trail

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed and trimmed weeds, as needed along the trail across the Osborne Farm. We also mowed a large area for Watauga College to have a picnic on August 14th. Lots of hikers were out. We saw a very young black bear cub in the back field. All cairns are still standing.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 7/17/2015

Purpose: Attend ATC Membership Meeting, "Hiking Through History"

Location: Winchester, VA

People: Steve Perri

Summary: The ATC 40th membership meeting was held this year in Winchester, VA at Shenandoah University, July 17-24th. This meeting is held every other year and the coordination and location of the meeting is rotated among the trail clubs of ATC. The theme of this meeting was tied to much of the local history of the revolutionary war, civil war, and the Appalachian Trail history. The events offered in this venue included the membership meeting, scheduled hikes, workshops, excursions, training, and other informal networking. The clubs hosting the meeting were the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and Mountain Club of Maryland. Shenandoah University was a really great place to offer the venue due to its proximity to the A.T. and the interstate. I decided to stay in the dorms for my weekend attendance which was to my benefit since it was 95 degrees and humid. Many attendees camped during their stay and some mentioned the heat and humidity made their stay a little uncomfortable. Total attendance as of Saturday was 932.

The workshops were offered on Saturday through Monday and covered 88 scheduled events with 11 topical areas including: the Trail, A.T. communities, creative arts, environment, hiking and backpacking skills, history, other trails, youth outreach, trail maintenance and management, natural wonders, and volunteer leaders and club management. Hikes tend to be a big effort during these events and 82 different hikes were offered with some being offered 2 or 3 times. Excursions ran Saturday through Thursday and a total of 28 were available as well as other special activities.

The membership meeting is held for ATC to conduct its required business. The business covered on Saturday evening included the reports from the Treasurer, Executive Director, Honorary Membership Award, reports on resolutions, report from the nominating committee, election of officers and board of directors, new business, general announcements and preview of the 41st meeting by Maine Appalachian Trail Club (August 4-11, 2017). Eleven board members were elected including several younger members relative to the majority of the board. The reports offered during the meeting highlighted the newly developed strategic plan for ATC and for the Appalachian Trail Park which will guide the activities and long-term plans for both. Several resolutions were proposed and approved relating to the meeting coordinators. A new resolution was made, proposing that a new committee with specific membership be formed to plan the structure and format of future biennial meetings. This provided an opportunity for the task force to share their high-level recommendations with the attendees and for the board to provide their current thinking. This resolution struck a chord with some attendees since there were perceptions of doing away with many aspects of the meeting activities of the past. However; it seemed evident to me that while the biennial task force's recommendations have been provided to the board, there has not been any communication to the membership regarding these and no info on the board's current thinking, and what their next steps will likely be. On a lighter note, we were also provided a trailer for the upcoming movie "A Walk in the Woods" to open in most theaters Labor Day weekend and a few early releases in four locations. The closest to us will be in Atlanta. The movie is based on Bill Bryson's book "A Walk in the Woods" and stars Robert Redford and Nick Nolte. ATC also revealed a Leave No Trace video that was well-done and will likely be used in future public releases.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 7/18/2015

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 14c, Grassy Ridge side trail

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: After helping with the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy Grassy Ridge Mowoff, I cut blackberry briars and other annual growth along the Grassy Ridge side trail. This trail is kept in fairly primitive condition in agreement with the management partners.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 7/18/2015

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel to Hughes Gap

People: Garry Luttrell, Kim Peters

Summary: For the July, Third-Saturday "Hiking with Tools" trip we cut the weeds along the trail between Cloudland and Hughes Gap. It was a foggy 63 degrees when we left the parking lot at Cloudland. The fog made the walk through the pines near the summit a magical place. One almost expected to see hobbits or elves in the woods. We lopped and weeded down to Ash Gap where we had lunch. Then the hard work of weed whacking began. Since there were only two of us, we elected to use string trimmers rather than swing blades. String trimmers are loud, but do make it easier to cut the copious weeds. We cut weeds, cleared a few blowdowns and clipped woody growth all the way down to Hughes Gap. It was only 71 degrees when we got back to the car. The trail is now in good shape. What a great way to spend a hot summer day!

Reporting: Pat Loven

Date: 7/18/2015

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 11a, Canute Place

People: Patrick Loven, Pat Loven

Summary: We used a swing blade to trim around the trail in Canute field. The field is very high with weeds and grass. We also provided an update on the oriental bittersweet invasion on the south perimeter of the field.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 7/19/2015

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed the camping area and the trail to the water source and privy. We also removed trash from the shelter. Hikers reported two blowdowns between Greasy Creek friendly and Overmountain Shelter. They were not sure of the exact location of the blowdowns. There were lots of loose limbs on the trail.

Reporting: Bob Peoples

Date: 7/20/2015

Purpose: Check section

Location: Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road

People: Bob Peoples

Summary: Bob walked the entire trail section to Hampton. There was a huge blowdown between the two lower bridges. Its root ball was on other side of the river but its 10" branches were across the A.T. He was able to cut the branches with his hand saw. There is some standing water between the two lower bridges. Otherwise water on the trail was not a problem. He has never seen so much water damage to the trail in the gorge. Areas like the steps going down to the falls are washed badly. Rehab will be required. A trail junction sign has been stolen. The blue-blazed trail to Hampton rehabbed last winter still looks good.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 7/23/2015

Purpose: Prepare for rehab and relo

Location: Section 5, North end of section, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter

People: Ken Buchanan, Kim Peters, Joe Morris, David LaPorte, John Botts, Pat Loven, Danny Harper, Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery, Tim Stewart, Brian Paley, Ed Oliver

Summary: We continued preparations for the ASU outing next month. We cut and staged log steps, waterbars, side logs and stakes. Several large rocks were moved and the drainage improved on the first section of the relo.

Reporting: Gerald Scott

Date: 7/24/2015

Purpose: Summer Maintenance

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

People: Gerald Scott

Summary: I used a string trimmer to cut weeds and vines, lopped rhododendrons, and cleared several small (4-8") blowdowns and lots of limbs. I removed and carried out trash from Mountaineer Falls Shelter.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 7/24/2015

Purpose: Cut weeds and perform general maintenance

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

People: Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

Summary: Bruce and I used the swing blade, clippers and hand saws to clean and clear this section of trail. There were no large blowdowns, so our job was mostly just dealing with the small stuff. We completed the job and the section is in very good shape. We hope John will make a full recovery and be back soon. In the meantime we're glad to help out. We know he'd do the same for us.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 7/25/2015

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

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

People: Craig Haire

Summary: I cleared two blowdowns on a club hike, one on the switchbacks coming up from the river, the other as the trail starts down from Temple Hill toward Temple Hill Gap.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 7/25/2015

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

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

People: Craig Haire

Summary: Continuing on the club hike, I cleared at two or three more locations. One was a particularly messy spot, 1.5 miles north of No Business Knob Shelter, with several big branches, waist- and head-high. Another was a step-over, a few hundred yards up from Spivey Gap.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 7/25/2015

Purpose: Check section

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

People: Tim Stewart

Summary: I went in via Moreland Gap shelter. Water was flowing at the spring. On the way to the Canute Place, I removed one blowdown and used the swing blade to remove weeds. The grass at Canute Place was not too bad, but I did widen the path some. I also made the blue-blaze to the water source more visible. The spring was flowing well. Back at the shelter, I cleaned the fire pit and picked up trash. Broom, shovel and rake were in place. The shelter looked OK. The access trail was becoming overgrown, so I lopped some of the rhodos on the way out. It was a long day. I saw one long-distance hiker who helped remove the blow down.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 7/26/2015

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 15a, Cloudland to Roan High Knob

People: Craig DeLoach, Joe DeLoach

Summary: We started with some weed-whacking just south of Carvers Gap, painted the blue-blazed trail to the spring and removed a redundant A.T. Foot-Travel Only sign that was nailed to a tree. (There is one on the post at the road, which will soon have the mileage sign on it also.) We then drove to Cloudland where we had a nice chance encounter with former TEHCC Maintenance Coordinator Ted Malone and his wife Wendy. We cut briars, two blowdowns, and painted blazes to the side trail to Roan High Knob Shelter. We also painted the blue-blazed trail to the shelter and spring, and picked up trash, not too much. The spring at the shelter is running fine.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 7/26/2015

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 1, TN/VA state line to Backbone Rock Trail

People: Craig Haire

Summary: I cleared two blowdowns with my 16" Greenworks chainsaw on a club hike. One was just south of the VA line, and the other was near the Backbone Rock Trail. Trail hours reflect half of the total time, as I also cleared two big trees between Damascus and the TN line and am trying to report those hours to the Mt. Rogers Appalachian Trail Club.

Reporting: Brian Paley

Date: 7/27/2015

Purpose: Trim weeds

Location: Section 8, US 321 to Forest Service Gate

People: Brian Paley

Summary: I trimmed weeds, including multi-flora roses, from US 321 to the Forest Service Gate on Watauga Lake.