



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

January 2016

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

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## From the Chair

### *William Werner, Steering Committee Chair Reporting*

Happy New Year, everyone! It's going to be a great year for hiking, paddling, and maintaining, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve. I want to sincerely thank all of our members for the time and effort they invested in the club in 2015, and I encourage everyone to make 2016 even better. Serving on the steering committee for the past year has shown me that the officers and committee are only a small part of the club—it's the contributions of the members that make this club great.

This coming year we have three members who are rotating off the committee: Fred Mullner, Michael Watts, and Brien Lewis. Steve Ankrabrandt will continue as past-chair, Yancey Appling as treasurer, and Vic Hasler as a non-voting representative of the A.T. Committee. We also welcome our new Committee members: Mark Cox, Lane Daley, Kay Parker, and Tim Schaefer. With such an experienced and talented team, I'm confident the club can overcome any challenge it faces.

See you on the trail!

## Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

Date	Description	Leader	Contact
Jan 9	Laurel Fork Gorge	<a href="#">Tim Schaefer</a>	423-302-0846
Jan 17	F/B: Kiner Hollow Waterfalls in Laurel Run Park	<a href="#">Tim Schaefer</a>	423-302-0846
Jan 19	TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting	<a href="#">William Warner</a>	423-408-4469

### 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. The "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. The "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.

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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 Wesley 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: Ryan [Shealy](#), 423-963-6066

Interested in kayaking but don't know where to start? Basic kayak 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 \$3 for 2 full hours of fun; 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 Ryan Shealy (423-963-6066). For additional event details, click [here](#).

### Scheduled Events

#### **Laurel Fork Gorge, Saturday, January 9, 2015**

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

To kickoff the winter waterfall series, this is, I hope, an opportunity to see the beautiful ice that bedecks Laurel Fork Falls most winters, and ice-covered beaver ponds in the gorge. We will drive to Hampton and hike the blue-blazed trail and A.T. to Laurel Fork Falls and on to Dennis Cove and return. The hike is 7.4 miles round-trip with a climb of 700 feet. Depending on speed and mood of the group, we may explore other water features in the area before returning. Bring lunch, water, and appropriate clothing for a cold outing. Meet in the [parking lot between McDonalds and State of Franklin Bank](#) in Colonial Heights along Ft. Henry Drive at 8:00 am on Saturday, January 9th. We should be departing the Hampton trail head at 9:00 am if you choose to meet us there. The hike will be cancelled if roads are icy. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, contact [Tim Schaefer](#), 423-302-0846.

#### **F/B: Margarette Falls, Sunday, January 17, 2015, 1 pm – 5 pm**

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

This hike is a 1.3 mile (one way) walk up to a cascading falls and we're hoping for it to be iced over. There is one bridgeless creek crossing to navigate – maybe on stepping stones. Bring warm clothes. Past hikes have witnessed a dramatic drop in temperature with the 700' elevation climb. Meet in the [parking lot between McDonalds and State of Franklin Bank](#) in Colonial Heights along Ft. Henry Drive. We'll depart at 1:00 pm. You may also meet us at the trail head as we expect to be there at 2:00pm. A hiking stick might be useful. We should be done by late afternoon. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, contact [Tim Schaefer](#), 423-302-0846.

#### **TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, Tuesday, January 19, 2016, 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

Contact: William Warner, [chair@tehcc.org](mailto:chair@tehcc.org), 423-408-4469

Location: Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, TN; Bldg 280, Room L5 \*note location change

The Steering Committee guides the general program for the club. The Committee normally meets on the third Tuesdays each month at lunch and are open to all TEHCC members. Bring something or grab a bite at B-280 cafeteria. 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.

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## For the Record

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### Purchase Ridge at Natural Tunnel, December 13, 2015

*Tim Schaefer Reporting*

The Zimmerman family joined us for this 3.26-mile hike on [Purchase Ridge Trail](#) at [Natural Tunnel State Park](#). It was a great late fall day and fun was had by all. The trails were in good shape and the views of the tunnel were fairly clear to see with the absence of foliage. As luck would have it, shortly after starting our return we hear a train whistle in the distance. The trail head is a little hard to find with no clear parking area near by but the detail on the wiki was good enough to get us to find it. Since the campground was closed we parked at the camp store, but it's not clear where you would park in the summer months. Having fun was the Schaefer Family (Tim, Carrie, Jamie, Bob, Josie and dogs Zoinks! and Beetle) and the Zimmerman Family (Yuyan and Frankie).



### Roaring Branch Trail, December 19, 2015

*Tim Schaefer Reporting*

"It will be a tough hike with all of the downed trees and overgrown brush," as said by Vic Hasler, or something close to that. He wasn't too far off. Roaring Branch Trail is an in-and-out 8-mile hike and a mostly uphill climb from the road to the overlook. Not having any takers to join me, possibly partly due to the below-freezing morning that was forecast, I decided to bring the dogs with me. They're two Great Danes often mentioned in trip reports, Zoinks! and Beetle. The wiki was right. The parking area is not much more than a narrow gravel shoulder on a curve of Business 23/Roaring Branch Rd. It made for some nervous dog wrangling as trucks and cars zipped by us. The light snow cover and brisk morning, to me, was perfect for a weekend hike. Several sections of trail, as warned by Vic, have some significant downed tree sections. Some were simple hop overs, others could be walked around, several required climbing over and under patches of downed logs. I didn't have too many problems, but my four legged companions had more difficulty. A few times I thought we would have to turn back, but we eventually found a way through the mess. Also difficult were the stream crossings. Roaring Branch was flowing quite well. This was the dogs' chance to show off an easy passing while I struggled to find a rock hopping path but managed to keep my feet dry. We made it to the High Butte overlook and enjoyed lunch. I noticed that the yellow-blazed trail does continue past the overlook on the right. I thought about exploring it, but with a family at home and two tired dogs that normally spend the day napping on their bed, I saved that for another day.



*A beautiful morning*



*Falls at the trailhead*



*Beetle's kingdom*



*Zoinks inspects a massive blowdown*



*High Butte south view*



*Zoinks and Beetle post Roaring Branch hike*



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## A.T. Maintenance Reports

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**Reporting:** Tim Stewart

**Date:** 11/21/2015

**Purpose:** Check section

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

**People:** Tim Stewart

**Summary:** I hiked out to Moreland Gap Shelter from Bitter End, lopping rhodos along the way. There is nothing special to report. Broom, shovel and rake were at the shelter. I replaced the shelter register and emptied the firepit of excessive ashes. I also packed out some trash and, on the way back to the trailhead, repainted some blazes.

**Reporting:** Vic Hasler

**Date:** 11/27/2015

**Purpose:** Remove blowdown; Conduct Trail Assessment

**Location:** Sections 19a and 19b, Indian Grave Gap to Nolichucky River

**People:** John Beaudet, Clark and Vic Hasler, Hunter and David Jones

**Summary:** Besides walking off Thanksgiving meals, multiple objectives were accomplished by the group. John removed a couple dozen blowdowns. Vic completed the trail assessment for both maintenance sections. Clark carried in a metal-handle shovel and hauled out three busted shovels from Curley Maple Gap shelter. Hunter finished a BSA rank requirement and clipped back some doghobble. All water sources were observed to be flowing well. A pair of dog-walking couples and a BSA troop from Morristown were seen on the Trail. As summarized by John to another club member, he had done the “real work,” while Vic completed some “paperwork.”



*Major blowdown*



*Blowdown removed by John, Vic, and crew*

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 11/27/2015

**Purpose:** Asset Inventory

**Location:** Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats

**People:** Bob Peoples, Jim Chambers

**Summary:** Bob and I conducted the Asset Inventory between Route 321 to the top of Pond Flats.

**Reporting:** Kim Peters

**Date:** 11/28/2015

**Purpose:** Maintain shelter

**Location:** Section 8, US 321 to Watauga Dam Shelter

**People:** Kat Johnson, Kim Peters

**Summary:** On a recent day-hike to look at the modifications to the bear pole at Watauga Dam shelter, it was noted that the shovel had a broken handle, there was no log book and a large amount of trash was present. So on this trip, we carried in a new shovel and

packed out the broken one. We picked up trash including lots of broken glass that someone had cleaned out of the fire pit and neatly stacked to the side, as well as a gigantic blue poly-tarp left in the shelter. We also cleaned out the gutter, which obviously had not been cleaned in the last two years while this shelter was closed. We also left a new log book as the shelter is due to be opened on December 1. On the way back out, we cleared a small blowdown that was partially blocking the trail. We also refreshed the blazes along the most recent relo around the campsites, as I had received several comments that it was confusing as to where the trail was in that area. Many of the blazes had been removed for some unknown reason. It was a fine day to be in the woods and we met many hikers and dogs also out enjoying the weather.

**Reporting:** Kim Peters

**Date:** 11/30 and 12/1/2015

**Purpose:** Hazard Tree Workshop

**Location:** Asheville, NC

**People:** John Beaudet, Jim Chambers, Greg Kramer, Kevin Sedgewick, Kim Peters

**Summary:** We attended the Hazard tree workshop sponsored by ATC and taught by Bill Jones, Plant Pathologist, USDA Forest Service. The first day consisted of classroom and field instruction focusing on the biology of trees to include the various deceases, insects, and animals that create a hazard tree. The field portion covered the identification and visual markers of a true hazard tree. The second day also consisted of classroom instruction and field instruction. We covered how to assess a hazard tree and what corrective action could be taken.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 12/3/2015

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 13, About a mile north of Doll Flats

**People:** John Beaudet, Paul Benfield, Jim Chambers, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Ed Speer "Hurricane Eddy", Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

**Summary:** Bill repaired our rock webbing with industrial stitching. Ed Speer "Hurricane Eddy" volunteered for his first maintenance outing. The crew had a hard time keeping their hands and feet warm in spite of working hard. They finished rearranging the rock field, rebuilt five steps and cribbing, rebuilt trail with rock cribbing and rebuilt two stone drains. Most of the rehab trail north of Doll Flats has been completed. They brought the tools home for the winter from this site.

**Reporting:** Craig Haire

**Date:** 12/4/2015

**Purpose:** Trail Assessment

**Location:** Section 20a, Nolichucky River to Temple Hill Gap, north portion of section

**People:** Craig Haire, Helga Mitchell

**Summary:** We did the structure inventory for the northern two-thirds of this section. We also blocked a couple places where people were cutting across the switchbacks. We had to cut it short due to impending early darkness.

**Reporting:** Jim Foster

**Date:** 12/4/2015

**Purpose:** Cut blowdowns

**Location:** Section 16a, Hughes Gap to Clyde Smith Shelter

**People:** Bruce Darby, John Tomko, Jim Foster

**Summary:** On a beautiful cold day we were able to clear the trail of three blowdowns that we found on our way to Clyde Smith Shelter. The trail is in good shape in all other respects.

**Reporting:** Lynn DiFiore

**Date:** 12/5/2015

**Purpose:** Routine maintenance

**Location:** Section 14b, Bradley Gap to Stan Murray Shelter

**People:** Lynn DiFiore, Brian Schloff

**Summary:** We cleaned and reshaped all waterbars, cleared numerous blowdowns ranging from 4" to 10" in diameter, and removed a moderate amount of trash from the Bradley Gap campsites and a large amount of trash from the barn. We placed a new register. We dispersed a new campsite and fire ring created trail north of the barn and obliterated the user-created trail with a creative use of Hawthornes. We also made another attempt to disperse the fire ring on Little Hump. All springs were running hard and the trail was quite muddy in places. We saw a few day hikers and a large scout troop backpacking to 19E.

**Reporting:** Bill Murdoch

**Date:** 12/6/2015

**Purpose:** Trail Inventory

**Location:** Section 14c, Round Bald to Carvers Gap

**People:** Bill Murdoch

**Summary:** Bill completed the trail inventory for this section by covering Round Bald to Carvers Gap.

**Reporting:** Kayla Carter

**Date:** 12/6/2015

**Purpose:** Conduct Inventory and Maintenance

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

**People:** Bekah Price, Kayla Carter

**Summary:** We started at the TN 91/A.T. crossing and hiked 3.5 miles to the Double Springs Shelter. We saw multiple bear hunters out with their dogs. We made sure to wear orange. On our way to the shelter, we tallied and measured features along the trail and took notes on projects to work on for our hike back out. We ate lunch at the shelter and cleaned up some trash. There was a note at the shelter about increased bear activity. The note also addressed some safety concerns that the bears were not scared away easily. The shelter log had been either eaten by mice or used to start fires. It should be replaced. Also, the picnic table seat on the side closest to the shelter is loose. The board just needs to be nailed back down. I didn't bring any nails or a hammer. On our way out, we cleaned up a total of four water bars, cut back rhododendrons and cut and removed two blowdowns. I hope to complete the second half of this section inventory very soon.

**Reporting:** Jim Foster

**Date:** 12/8/2015

**Purpose:** Check for and clear obstructions

**Location:** Section 16a, Iron Mountain Gap to Clyde Smith Shelter

**People:** Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

**Summary:** Bruce and I cleared the trail of all obstructions except one from Iron Mtn Gap to Clyde Smith Shelter. There were about 7 or 8 small to medium blowdowns to be cleared and lots of small stuff in the trail to be removed. There is one blowdown about 3/4 mile trail north of Iron Mtn Gap that will need a chain saw.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 12/8/2015

**Purpose:** Inspect berry fields

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

**People:** Jim Chambers, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, USFS Joe McGuiness, Matthew Gilbert, Reuben Potter, Skeeter, ATC Amy Snyder

**Summary:** Skeeter was able to cut down the primary berry field in September to include a larger area than had been cleared in probably twelve years. Based on vegetation, Joe determined the area would need to be cut yearly to maintain it. The trees outside the cut area have gotten so large that the view is limited. The access to get a tractor here is extremely difficult. Considering the resources to maintain this area and the great views at Osborne Farm, this area will probably be allowed to grow up.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 12/8/2015

**Purpose:** Inspect Accessible Trail Area

**Location:** Section 4b, Osborne Farm

**People:** Paul Benfield, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, USFS Joe McGuiness, Matthew Gilbert, Reuben Potter, Skeeter, ATC Amy Snyder

**Summary:** We observed many improvements in the area, but the primary issue was the ravine relatively near the accessible trail. That area is too steep to mow for hay and part of it can hardly be mowed with any motorized equipment. We would prefer it not grow up in locust and multiflora rose. Trees will also block most of the mountain views from the first three-quarters of the accessible trail. About a 2000-foot fence would allow the existing cattle to access this area and keep it grazed. A well in this area, although not necessary, would improve the water sources for the cattle.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 12/10/2015

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 20b, Can Lot to No Business Knob Shelter

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Jim Chambers, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Ken Murray, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

**Summary:** The Thursday Crew did a lot of trail rehab starting at Can Lot and heading to the shelter. Mostly, they cribbed with logs and rocks and back-filled to cover the roots. They also rocked some of the stream crossings. Jim and Bob hiked to the shelter and cleared the hazard tree that had been dropped earlier. Additional root sections in this area need rehab.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 12/11/2015



**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 8, Wilber Dam Road to US 321

**People:** Bob Peoples, Jim Chambers

**Summary:** Bob and I cleared blowdowns around Watauga Lake; however, someone had already gotten the most challenging trees. Based on the precise and artistic sawyer work, everyone's favorite Forest Service official, Ruben Potter, is more than likely the guilty culprit.

**Reporting:** Kim Peters

**Date:** 12/12/2015

**Purpose:** Clean water diversions

**Location:** Section 5, The first 1.7 miles south of TN 91

**People:** Kat Johnson, Kim Peters

**Summary:** Taking advantage of the mild weather after the leaves have fallen, we cleaned out all the waterbars, dips and steps that had recently been added to this section. We even found a shovel that had been left behind somehow. We lopped back the rhodys and also found two blowdowns each about 20 inches, but fortunately on the ground, which will require a chainsaw to remove. We also picked up trash that has accumulated at the non-designated campsite which has shown up in the vicinity of the big orange box. The first relo south of the trailhead needs to be blazed, as currently the only markings are the orange dots placed during the initial flagging.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 12/12/2015

**Purpose:** Remove blowdown

**Location:** Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road

**People:** Jim Chambers

**Summary:** I removed the blowdown just south of Wilbur Dam Road.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 12/15/2015

**Purpose:** Trail Prep

**Location:** Section 20b, North of Spivey Gap

**People:** Bob Peoples, Jim Chambers, Mike "Lumpy" Price, Caveman, Scott "Flying Porkchop" Ourth, Nathan "NatGeo" Sonderman

**Summary:** We harvested a good amount of Locust trees in preparation for the next day's rehab project north of Spivey Gap. We set and staked all Locust logs, and prepped all areas for digging and backfill. A southbound thru-hiker "NatGeo" joined us for the day.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 12/16/2015

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 20b, Can Lot to No Business Knob

**People:** John Beaudet, Paul Benfield, Jim Chambers, Wes Ford, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Pat Loven, Joe Morris, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Kevin Sedgwick, George Thorpe

**Summary:** We continued trail rehab by mostly installing locust side logs and back filling with soil to cover exposed roots. We also removed some obtrusive rocks mostly with a sledge hammer. Much of work was done within a half-mile south of the shelter. It was a beautiful day in mid December to be working in T-shirts. No hikers were seen, but bear dogs were abundant.

**Reporting:** Kayla Carter

**Date:** 12/20/2015

**Purpose:** ATC Inventory and Maintenance

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

**People:** Kayla Carter, Noah Naseri, Donny Brock

**Summary:** We cleared out every single waterbar along this section. We also used loppers to clear the corridor. We also counted all the trail features. I will turn in my inventory report for Sections 4a and 4b before the end of the year. There were a total of 11 blowdowns that we were unable to clear on our own — chainsaw required. The shelter still doesn't have a log book.

**Reporting:** Eric Middlemas

**Date:** 12/21/2015

**Purpose:** Inspect trail and remove blowdowns

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

**People:** Eric Middlemas, Pat Kenney, Judy Middlemas

**Summary:** We removed four blowdowns using a handsaw, removed dead branches from trail, picked up trash, and cleaned out the spring at the shelter. There is one remaining blowdown approximately one mile north of Cherry Gap shelter that will require a chainsaw for removal.

**Reporting:** Faye Guinn

**Date:** 12/22/2015

**Purpose:** Remove tree across trail

**Location:** Section 16b, Iron Mountain Gap to Old Orchard

**People:** Howard Guinn, Lisa Guinn

**Summary:** We walked from Iron Mountain Gap to the orchard and back with a chainsaw. We cut three 8 to 9-inch blowdowns -- one of which had blocked the trail.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 12/23/2015

**Purpose:** Clean water diversions

**Location:** Section 3a, McQueen's Gap to Spring 2.3 miles North of Low Gap

**People:** Paul Benfield, Carl Fritz, Mike Hupko, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

**Summary:** We worked on 27 water diversions on the entire section. Mostly, they had to be redug since they had not been cleaned for years. We redug 150 feet of sloughing trail at McQueen's Knob and we removed two minor blowdowns. In spite of light rain, it was a fascinating outing for late December with 55 degree temperatures at this elevation.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 12/23/2015

**Purpose:** Clean waterbars

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

**People:** Bill Murdoch, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** Bill and Tim cleaned all waterbars, which were in good shape except for an accumulation of leaves. Water was flowing well in the first plastic pipe at the shelter water source. The water was hardly flowing through the lower metal pipe until it was cleaned. It is now flowing well.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 12/23/2015

**Purpose:** Remove blowdown

**Location:** Section 4a, Cross Mountain Road to Low Gap

**People:** Joe Morris, Jim Chambers

**Summary:** Joe and I removed a substantial amount of blowdowns between Cross Mountain Road and Low Gap. We removed three blowdowns south of Double Springs Shelter, ten blowdowns between Double Springs Shelter and Low Gap, and one blowdown just north of Low Gap. We also cleaned the water bars for 1/4 mile north of Low Gap and reestablished the blazing at the Low Gap road crossing so that it is less confusing for northbound hikers.

**Reporting:** Lynn DiFiore

**Date:** 12/25/2015

**Purpose:** Routine maintenance

**Location:** Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Little Hump

**People:** Lynn DiFiore, Lyndsey Smith, Brian Schloff

**Summary:** Our annual holiday trip for trail maintenance was cut short due to rain this year, but we still made it up to Little Hump. We removed a moderate amount of trash from the barn and noted that all the shovels have disappeared, although two brooms still remain. The campsite we had obliterated trail north of the barn a few weeks ago has been reopened, so we again dispersed the fire ring and dragged brush back across the user created trail. We removed a few minor blowdowns. The waterbars are working well and all springs are running. The campsite at the rocks at Little Hump is growing ever larger with the addition of a new fire ring (which we dispersed) and a new tent pad. A small amount of trash was removed from that site. We saw no hikers. Despite the rain, it was a very warm day for December. Merry Christmas!

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 12/27/2015

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns and flag sections for rehab

**Location:** Section 1, Abingdon Gap Shelter to TN/VA State line

**People:** Jim Chambers

**Summary:** Due to recent weather, I assessed my section for new blowdowns. I have some new chainsaw work just north and south of the Backbone Rock Trail which I will get one day this week. I also flagged some side-hill sections that are ready for rehab.