



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

March 2016

tehcc.org

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Save The Date – Spring Dinner Meeting, April 22, 2016

Submitted by William Werner

The annual Spring Dinner is coming up on April 22nd at the Eastman Lodge from 5:30 to 9:00 pm. Food will be salad, garlic bread, lasagna, and vegetarian stuffed shells provided by Giuseppe's. After dinner, Asheville-based author Danny Bernstein will present stories and photos from her latest book **Forests, Alligators, Battlefields: My Journey through the National Parks of the South**. The book details Danny's visits to all 71 National Park Service units in the Southeast. Danny hikes and leads hikes for the Carolina Mountain Club, Friends of the Smokies, and other outdoor groups. She's written two hiking guides, *Hiking the Carolina Mountains* and *Hiking North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains*, and a narrative on her MST hike, *The Mountains-to-Sea Trail across North Carolina*. She blogs at www.hikertohiker.com.

More information and a sign-up sheet will be available in the TEHCC April newsletter.

Volunteer Recreation Pass

Submitted by Vic Hasler

Appalachian National Scenic Trail participates in the "Volunteer Pass" program, which provides a one-year pass to participating federal recreation sites for volunteers who have completed a "significant" amount of service. The service threshold has been defined as 250 cumulative hours of Trail maintenance since January 1, 2007. Roughly 100 TEHCC members currently qualify. If you are interested, consult the ATC website ([link](#)) for the program FAQs and submission form. The club keeps a record of service hours of which I have a recent extraction to provide the supporting hours. The Volunteer Pass is non-transferrable, thus good only for the volunteer completing the A.T. service hours.



In Memory of Ray Douglas, "Otto"

Submitted by Tim Stewart and Carl Fritz

Ray Douglas, "Otto," was a hiker friend to many on the Appalachian Trail. On December 22, 2015, Otto lost his battle with cancer. He spent the last month and a half in a VA hospital with numerous visitors.



Otto just missed being counted as one of only a few that attended all 15 Hard Core's with TEHCC. He attended 14, missing only the 2014 event because he was hiking on the Pacific Crest Trail. He did attend the 2015 Hard Core.

In addition to Hard Core, Otto accumulated over 700 volunteer hours with TEHCC while working on the A.T. He was a great worker, and if you have hiked any of our 134 miles you have trod across a step that was placed by Otto or a rock crib that he built.

While a student in 2005, Otto started a Trail Crew at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC. The club is still active today and works on many trails in North Carolina and on the A.T. with TEHCC. He was also a board member for the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association for a couple of years.

Trail Wiki Update

Submitted by Tim Schaefer

A lesson learned many times, progress usually happens faster in my head than in reality. Also, getting out and hiking is the easy part. Entering the notes, photos, and GPS logs can take almost as much time as the hike. But I know it's worth it; I know several people that comment how they already find the website useful for finding hikes in our area. This month [Three Top Mountain](#) and [Snake Mountain](#) were recently added by others. Progress continues. We hope you find it useful and will one day help out as well. Someday soon, I'll get Little Stony Creek Falls updated after my recent hike there.

Invasive Species - Garlic Mustard

Submitted by Vic Hasler

Two opportunities are available in mid-April to help mitigate garlic mustard before the plants go to seed...

Because garlic mustard has a shallow root system, it is easily pulled from the ground. The collected weeds will be bagged and weighed before proper disposal in a landfill. Appropriate equipment for these events includes work gloves, comfortable shoes, suitable attire and sun protection for variable spring weather, plus lunch and water.

Garlic Mustard Pull at Roan Mountain, Saturday, April 16, 2016

Contact: Greg Kramer, 423-349-6125 or Vic Hasler, 423-239-0388

Roan Mtn State Park, Souther Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, ATC, and other groups are partnering to work this day – with ATC/TEHCC focused on the Trail at Hughes Gap. Meet at 8:30 am in Colonial Heights to arrive at Roan Mtn State Park main entrance by 10 am for briefing and to receive heavy duty trash bags. We'll pull until early afternoon, and then drop off the collected plants back at the park before heading home.

Garlic Mustard Challenge - Saturday, April 23, 2016

Contact: Vic Hasler, 423-239-0388 or [Amy Snyder](#) ATC (828) 357-6540

After a successful result in 2015, the ATC goal for this year is a total of 3,100 pounds or about 100 pounds per club. Since the garlic mustard seeds can germinate over several years, TEHCC would again like to address Devils Creek Gap, just north of Spivey Gap. Meet at 8:30 am in Colonial Heights for the hour drive to the work site. We'll pull garlic mustard from where it has scattered along the Trail and along the USFS road and paths until early afternoon to reach our club's goal.



Photo by Bill Johnson (NPS)



Photo by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Sen Li

Austin Fullbright

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

For information on paddling events, see <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/category/regional-events/>.

Date	Description	Leader	Contact
March 12	Guest River Gorge Hike	Tim Schaefer	423-302-0846
March 15	TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting	William Warner	423-408-4469
March 19	3 rd Saturday Hiking with Tools	Kim Peters	423-366-0128
Mar 19-20	Wilderness First Aid	William Warner	423-408-4469
March 20	F/B: Phipps Bend Trail	Tim and Carrie Schaefer	423-302-0846
April 2	APEs Downriver Jam Session with Pat Keller	Wesley Bradley	423-647-1321
April 3	F/B: Little Oak Recreation Area	Tim and Carrie Schaefer	423-302-0846
April 10	A.T. Coon Den and Laurel Fork Falls	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388
April 16	Garlic Mustard Pull at Roan Mountain	Greg Kramer	423-349-6125
April 20	Rental Equipment Check	Terry Dougherty	
April 22	Spring Dinner Meeting		
April 23	Garlic Mustard Challenge – Devils Creek Gap	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388

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.

Details of Upcoming Events

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

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 two 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](#).

3rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!

Contact: Kim Peters, atmaint@tehcc.org, 423-366-0128

Hiking with Tools! is an opportunity to enjoy a day hike on our beautiful section of the A.T. while helping out with some routine maintenance, such as breaking up fire rings, cleaning out waterbars and steps, lopping rhododendron, and painting blazes. All tools will be furnished and no prior experience required! Last year we typically had four to five people on each trip – with eight new volunteers making a contribution. Contact Kim for hike details, including meeting time and place.

Scheduled Events

Guest River Gorge Hike, Saturday, March 12, 2016

Leader: *Tim Schaefer*, 423-302-0846

[Guest River Gorge](#) is an 11.6-mile round-trip, in-and-out hike along the Guest River. Another rails-to-trails project, it has a gentle grade and wide path and includes an old train tunnel and use of wood trestles. Meet in the [parking lot between McDonalds and State of Franklin Bank](#) in Colonial Heights along Fort Henry Drive. We'll depart at 9:00 am. You may also meet us at the trail head as we expect to be there at 10:10 am. We should be done and back to Kingsport by 5:00 pm. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, contact Tim Schaefer, 423-302-0846 or tim@tehcc.org.

TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, Tuesday, March 15, 2016, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Contact: William Warner, 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 at lunchtime on the third Tuesday of each month. Meetings are open to all TEHCC members. Bring your lunch or grab a bite at the 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 visitor's pass.

Wilderness First Aid Class, Saturday and Sunday, March 19 - 20, 2016

Contact: *Scott Fisher*

TEHCC is partnering with APes (Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts) for another WFA course. The class will be held at the Eastman Lodge from 8:30am – 5:00 pm on both Saturday and Sunday. The cost is \$115 for WFA and \$35 for CPR. Fast paced and hands-on, this two-day course covers a wide range of wilderness medicine topics for people who travel and work in the outdoors. If you plan to spend time in the backcountry, this training will provide you with the tools to provide patient care in remote settings where assistance may not be readily available. Training will include both classroom instruction and structured scenarios. All levels of training and experience are welcome. Minimum age is 18 years old, or 12 years old if accompanied by a chaperone. This class can be used to recertify Wilderness First Responder for an additional \$15. Class size is limited and registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis. TEHCC has limited positions available for sponsorship in the form of partial course fee reimbursement (~\$50). You must be a TEHCC member to apply. Contact William Werner at wwerner@eastman.com for additional information. Register online at <http://www.riverapes.org/registration.html>. After submitting your registration you will be directed to <http://www.riverapes.org/paypal-1.html> to pay for the course using PayPal. APes (or TEHCC) membership is required to participate and can be purchased for \$10 also using PayPal. No need to fill out and send in a separate membership form. Your online registration will double for that purpose. Please Contact Scott Fisher at <mailto:TFisher1@its.jnj.com> for additional information.

F/B: Phipps Bend Trail, Sunday, March 20, 2016

Leader: *Tim and Carrie Schaefer*, 423-302-0846

Come see an abandoned nuclear power plant project (from afar) and hike along the shore of the Holston River. The complete one-way trail is close to three miles. We'll hike as far as the group is willing, then turn around and head back, likely doing between four to six total miles. See trail details at http://tehcc.org/wiki/Phipps_Bend_Trail. Meet in the [parking lot between McDonalds and the Bank](#) in Colonial Heights along Fort Henry Drive. We'll depart at 12:30 pm. You may also meet us at the trail head as we expect to be there at 1:15 pm. We should be done and back to Kingsport by 5:00 pm. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, contact Tim Schaefer, 423-302-0846 or timcarrie@tehcc.org.

[APes Downriver Freestyle Jam Session with Pat Keller](#), Saturday, April 2, 2016

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

(Registration Deadline—Mar 27, 2016)

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) is pleased to announce another of its “Paddle with the Pro” Sessions with Pat Keller. Pat is a Liquidlogic Factory Team paddler and one of the most well known iconic figureheads in our sport today. Pat’s paddling portfolio is filled with first D’s, inspiring the old-school renaissance, expeditions and awards like: Canoe & Kayak’s Male Paddler of the Year, Multiple Green Race Championships and ‘Rey del Rio’ Waterfall World Championship title.

This river jam session is designed for the intermediate/advanced boater and will focus on downriver freestyle techniques. Get ready for lots of rock spins, splats and eddy line tricks. Pat will share ideas and concepts to help you get to the next level of your paddling. This session will be held on the Nolichucky Gorge in Erwin, TN. We will meet at USA Raft at 11 am and should be done by late afternoon. Participants should be comfortable on class III-IV water and have a reliable roll. Session will be limited to 20 students. This session will likely fill up fast, so be sure to send in your registration form and payment to reserve your spot. For registration information, go to <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/2016/02/04/apes-downriver-freestyle-jam-session-with-pat-keller/>.

F/B: Little Oak Recreation Area, April 3, 2016

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

More nice hikes along the lake. We saw South Holston Lake from the north in February; this is to see it from the south. There are two short trails at the recreation area; we’ll try to do both for a total of around 4.5 miles. See trail details at http://tehcc.org/wiki/Little_Oak_Recreation_Area. Meet in the [parking lot between McDonalds and the Bank](#) in Colonial Heights along Fort Henry Drive. We’ll depart at 12:30 pm. You may also meet us at the trail head as we expect to be there at 1:30 pm. We should be done and back to Kingsport by 5:00 pm. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, contact Tim Schaefer, 423-302-0846 or timcarrie@tehcc.org.

A.T.: Coon Den and Laurel Fork Falls, Sunday, April 10, 2016

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

Rating: *Six miles hiking of medium difficulty because of multiple elevation changes*

Let’s enjoy a waterfall two-fer from the Dennis Cove parking lot. First, we’ll take a 3.3-mile loop hike starting southbound on the A.T. uphill following the white blazes through old farm pasture and into the forest. A couple of rock outcroppings will provide views of the nearby mountains. The Coon Den Falls Trail heads downhill to reach the waterfall. When we’re done admiring the tall, thin Coon Den Falls, the group will continue, steeply down to the road and take a short walk back to parking lot. Second, we’ll take the 2.6-mile in-out hike heading northbound on the A.T. crossing the Koonford Bridge to the recently repaired rock steps down to the popular Laurel Fork Falls. After enjoying the wide, 50’ waterfall, we’ll trace our steps back to the vehicles. Departure time from Colonial Heights is 1 pm or meet at the Dennis Cove parking area by 2 pm. Both hike segments are expected to take a couple of hours each, thus putting us heading back around 6 pm. Sunset on this Sunday is 8 pm. Trekking poles are recommended for this hike by some blogs. For further information, please call or e-mail the hike leader.

For the Record

Annual Maintainer’s Dinner, Friday, February 19, 2016

Kim Peters reporting

The kickoff meeting for the 2016 A.T. maintenance season was held on Friday, February 19, at the Eastman Lodge. It was well attended by more than 50 maintainers and individuals interested in helping to maintain the Appalachian Trail. The dinner was once again graciously prepared by Ed Oliver with help from Ted Mowrey, Daryel and Juana Anderson. We enjoyed barbecue from Phil’s Dream Pit, coleslaw, pasta salad, and baked beans with banana pudding and brownies for dessert, along with tea, lemonade and coffee. What a bargain for only \$5! After the meal, we reviewed our 2015 accomplishments, our 2016 major project plans, handed out awards, and discussed issues related to our club’s trail maintaining responsibilities.

Summary of 2015 Major TEHCC Maintenance Accomplishments

- Maintained 134 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 0.6 miles of new trail
- Rehabbed 1.2 miles of trail
- Conducted Trail Value Assessment
- Completed the 15th and last Hard Core on our trail section

Cumulative Hour Award Recipients 2015

50 Career Hours – Rio Berry, David Douthat, Benjamin Jack, Nicole "Cinderella" Laeger, Anthony "Fahmah" Lang, Randy "Solo" Madigan, Adama Malkia "Wild Child" McGaepth, Helga Maria Mitchell, Lotta Murray, Brian Schloff, David "Ramblin Man" Skelly, Fritz Swanson, Deb "Maw" Tucker

100 Career Hours – Kendall "Rockhopper" Abruzzese, Kayla Carter, Robin Dean, Jim Floyd, Bryan "Boo Boo" Garcia, Franklin "Ox-97" LaFond, Ken Murray, Bill "Hat Man" Ristom, Rolla Wade

250 Career Hours – Ronald "Seiko" Batchler, Michael "Moose" Laude, Terry Oldfield, John Robbins, Kevin Sedgwick

500 Career Hours – Vic Hasler, Greg Kramer

1000 Career Hours – Faye Guinn, Craig Haire, Joe Morris, Bill Murdoch

3000 Career Hours – Ken Buchanan

12,000 Career Hours – Carl Fritz

It takes a lot of work to maintain 134 miles of the A.T. Many thanks to all the volunteers who signed up to maintain a section of our trail in 2016. Following are the people who clear the blowdowns, cut the weeds, paint the blazes, maintain the shelters and do all the other tasks required to keep our trail section open.

Jim Chambers, Steve Wilson, Phyllis Cairnes, Mike Watts, Noah Naseri, Ken Buchanan, Terry Oldfield, Kat Johnson, Kim Peters, Brenna Irrer, Scotty Bowman, Bill and Laura Hodge, Brian Paley, Wes Ford, Joe Morris, Dean Baird, Bob Peoples, Pat and Karen Loven, Tim Stewart, Scott Vandam, Gerrald Scott, Harold Wexler, Kayla Carter, Kevin Sedgewick, Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder, Bill Fuller, Lynn DiFiore, Richard Carter, Joe DeLoach, Garry Luttrell, Jim Foster, Howard and Faye Guinn, Eric Middlemas, Mike Hupko, John Beaudet, Vic Hasler, Craig Haire, Ken and Lotta Murray.

Little Stony Creek Falls, Saturday, February 20, 2016

Tim Schaefer Reporting

If the only goal was to see frozen waterfalls, the 2016 frozen waterfall hike series was an abject failure this year. Thankfully our real objectives of getting outside, enjoying nature, and meeting friends were all well satisfied. We just missed the secondary objectives of seeing frozen waterfalls. This was another beautiful gorge hike this time along Little Stony Creek. The hike goes up the river but was never a difficult grade. The washed out section between the first two bridges is still difficult to pass when leaving from the lower trail head but everyone made it through. If hiking with small children, it's advisable to hike from the upper trail head. The trails in general fairly wide but well-marked making navigation easy. Although not frozen, the flow was high compared to photos on the trail wiki. Several pools and slides were seen along the river and it is assumed that this can be a busy place on warm summer days. Joining the Schaefer family on this not-so-summer day were Tony and Joanne Ponzio.





A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Bill Hodge

Date: 11/27-28/2015

Purpose: Brushing

Location: Section 6, First Mile North of Vandeventer

People: Bill Hodge, Eric Giebelstein, Heather Eggleston, Scotty Bowman

Summary: The four of us hiked in and did a little work on Friday, November 27; then made camp and spent the night at Vandeventer Shelter. The next day we continued our work. We focused on the rhododendron growing into the corridor north of Vandeventer Shelter. We brushed a total of a mile, spread over 1.5 miles.

Reporting: Richard Carter

Date: 1/27/2016

Purpose: Check for blowdowns

Location: Section 14c, Stan Murray Shelter to Carvers Gap

People: Richard Carter

Summary: I walked the section and surprisingly found only one blowdown after the recent snows. I cut and removed it, and removed some small branches.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 1/28/2016

Purpose: Check for blowdowns

Location: Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: We only hiked as far as the power lines because the trail was covered by three inches of snow, making travel a bit of a challenge. Between the trail head and where the Apple House once stood is a large tree hanging off a bank which is forcing hikers to go under it. The tree is too large for us to handle and will require a chain saw. Farther up the trail, we removed two small trees and sawed another large blowdown in half so we could remove it from the trail. We will return to access the trail once the snow melts.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 1/30/2016

Purpose: Clear trail

Location: Sections 9a and 9b, US 321 to Hampton trailhead

People: Craig Haire

Summary: I trimmed back rhododendron with loppers, and cleared deadfall and blowdowns by hand and with a handsaw and electric chainsaw.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 1/30/2016

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 2a, McQueens Gap to Back Bone Rock Trail

People: Jim Chambers, Robin "Miss America" Hobbs

Summary: We removed blowdowns and numerous large branches from the trail that had come down as a result of the recent winter weather and high winds. Further chainsaw work will be conducted on Monday.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 1/31/2016

Purpose: Check for blowdowns

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

People: Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

Summary: We walked the section looking for blowdowns and dead-fall, and cut a few small trees from the trail. One major blowdown somewhat cleared the trail. With a handsaw and cutter mattock, we opened up the treadway. As usual, there were a lot of ATV tracks in the snow near Isaac's cemetery. We pulled logs and limbs into the old trail, which seems to be working to keep the ATVs from going farther and cutting over to the newer trail. With every trip on this section, we've cut back multiflora rose (now dormant). We noticed some strange flagging tape near the trail and reported it.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 1/31/2016

Purpose: Remove blowdown

Location: Section 13, South of US 19E

People: Jim Chambers, Robin Hobbs

Summary: We removed the reported blowdown just north of the former Apple House Shelter.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 2/1/2016

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 1 and north, Backbone Rock Trail to Damascus

People: Jim Chambers, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples

Summary: We finished all the chainsaw work between south of the Backbone Trail and the Tennessee/Virginia state line. We also cleared the the Backbone Rock Trail, and cleared from the Tennessee state line to Damascus, VA. We also walked the flagged area on the Backbone Rock Trail where we'll be building new trail with the Konnarock Crew in 2016.

Reporting: Faye Guinn

Date: 2/2/2016

Purpose: check blowdowns

Location: Section 16b: Greasy Creek Gap to Iron Mountain Gap Iron Mt Gap to big rock

People: Howard Guinn, Faye Guinn, Lana Scott, Wayne Jones, Pat Kenny

Summary: We needed to see if the reported blowdowns were blocking the trail, and from the report, knew we would likely need a chainsaw at a later date. On this trip, we took a handsaw to remove limbs, so getting by the downed trees would be easier. We cut and removed two blowdowns on the way to the orchard and at the orchard were able to cut back the apple tree that blocked the trail to the spring, opening the trail back up. The two reported blowdowns at Weedy Gap did block the trail and after a few really hard cuts the men were able to "muscle" those trees out of the trail. One more tree was cut and removed on the way to the big rock where we ate lunch Then we hiked back the way we came.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 2/2/2016

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 2b, Abingdon Gap Shelter

People: Kim Peters, Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: On this beautiful, foggy, windy, sunny Groundhog Day we walked in from Low Gap to Abingdon Gap shelter. General tidying chores were done: taking out the trash, cleaning out the rain gutter, and shoveling out the fire pit. The log journal was not replaced, but a missing pen was added. On the trail back, we broke up two errant fire rings. The trail was essentially clear, no major blowdowns, just a couple of step-overs. No other hikers or groundhogs were spotted, but Kim's dog, Tigger, kept an eye out.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 2/4/2016

Purpose: Rehab trail and bridge

Location: Section 8, North of Watauga Lake Shelter and Shook Branch

People: Daryel Anderson, Ken Buchanan, Jim Chambers, Wes Ford, Carl Fritz, Becky Kinder, Pat Loven, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Gayle Riddervold, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

Summary: It was about 40 degrees all day, but getting out on the trail was a good cure for cabin fever. We took on a number of projects including removing all the dead roots protruding from the trail around Shook Branch. Many steps and water drainage were added for access to the trail from the parking lot. New lathe was installed on the bridge near Old Butler Road and new steps were added near it. A rock step was added to the steps near the shelter and improvements were made to the bear pole. Just north of the shelter, there was a long area of exposed roots that were buried using cribbing and locust logs. *Photos courtesy of Ken Buchanan.*



Reporting: Kayla Carter

Date: 2/6/2016

Purpose: General maintenance

Location: Section 12c, Campbell Hollow Road to Elk River Falls

People: Kayla Carter, Sarah Ellison, Kristen Lane

Summary: Since we've had a mild winter, I thought it would be good to investigate the condition of my section this week. I created a Facebook event to invite my friends to come with me, and also used this opportunity to promote the goals of the ATC Next Generation Advisory Council (NGAC). I went over some safety information prior to hitting the trail since Kristen was a new TEHCC volunteer. Kristen used the outing as a way to complete her AmeriCorps/Appalachia CARES requirements. REHAB: We spotted two areas that need some rehabilitation, which is mainly just digging the sidehill back out. The areas were roughly 2 miles and 2.5 miles north of Campbell Hollow. There is also some side hill that needs to be rehabilitated along the blue-blaze to Jones Falls. BLOWDOWNS: There is a large blowdown right at the end of the section. A large tree fell across the trail just as soon as you come out of the nook after crossing Sugar Hollow Creek. We picked up one trash bag full of junk, cleared about 5 smaller blowdowns, trimmed brambles, cut back rhododendrons and cleared steps of leaf debris.

We stopped for lunch at Jones Falls, which was still slightly frozen. The grass along the Elk River has recently been maintained by the Forest Service. There was evidence of flooding through there as well. I'm planning more outings for this year, as it is a requirement of the ATC NGAC. I'd like to make the sidehill rehab a project for future outings, and have a couple groups interested in helping out.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 2/16/2016

Purpose: Determine Maintenance Policies for Roan Mountains

Location: Unicoi

People: Joe McGuiness, Chris Stoeihrel, Amy Snyder, Garry Kauffman, Marquette Crockett, Ed Oliver, Carl Fritz

Summary: Thanks to an excellent representation of biologists from USFS and ATC, plus Marquette from SAHC, we discussed how to best conduct weed cutting along the Appalachian Trail in the Roan Mountains and protect the rare plants. A policy was outlined that will have fewer time constraints for maintainers that can identify the species on their section. Documents and pictures will be developed to help educate new maintainers.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 2/18/2016

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to the wilderness boundary

People: Dean Baird, John Beudet, Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Jim Chambers, Wes Ford, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe, F.L. Simon "Driftor"

Summary: We took advantage of another winter break and rehabbed much of the trail climbing the switchbacks south of US 321 to the wilderness boundary. We added a lot of locust and rock cribbing plus about seven steps. We will need another day to complete this area.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 2/18/2016

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: We walked about halfway up the trail, cleaning waterbars and removing branches. We encountered 7 small trees that had fallen on the path, 2 of which required some sawing. Upon returning to the trailhead, we picked up a small bag of trash.

Reporting: Terry Oldfield

Date: 2/20/2016

Purpose: Maintain Shelter

Location: Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter

People: Kim Peters, Terry Oldfield

Summary: We hiked to Double Springs Shelter from TN 91 through snow and slush, and surprisingly, didn't encounter any blowdowns. We left a new shovel and log book at the shelter and picked up the small amount of trash that wasn't covered by the snow. We did see the roof leaks that a hiker had reported to Carl. The underside of the roof was wet where water had seeped through from the ridge cap, more noticeable toward the right side facing into the shelter. We talked with one thru-hiker who caught up with us more than once and stopped at the shelter for lunch.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 2/20/2016

Purpose: Trail Work

Location: Sections 8 and 9a, North and South of US 321

People: Bob Peoples, Jim Chambers

Summary: We reattached the pole to the Bear Pole at Watauga Lake Shelter. We also felled more locust trees and cut stakes in

preparation to finish the rehab work south of US 321.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 2/22/2016

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed the section near the stiles where all the briars are located. We completed the mowing up to the hayfield back to where we had mowed the section by TN 91.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 2/23/2016

Purpose: Transfer Hard Core

Location: Damascus

People: Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart; MRATC Terry Walker, Anne Maio, George Kilgore, Crazy Larry Riddle, Janet Gibbons; ATC Andrew Downs, Josh Kloehn

Summary: We were invited by MRATC (Mount Rogers A.T. Club) for another and probably the last round-table discussion about Hard Core for 2016. MRATC and ATC have a plan outlined and are working on detailed tasks to continue the two-day tradition. For this coming year they will reduce the number of participating hikers by about half. Bob gave them about thirty day packs and signup boards from last year. TEHCC's role will be to loan them some tools and help sign up hikers during Trail Days. Ed is gathering detailed information on food to feed the masses. Jim Chambers presented a \$250 check from the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association to MRATC to help defray the cost of Hard Core.