



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

February 2017

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

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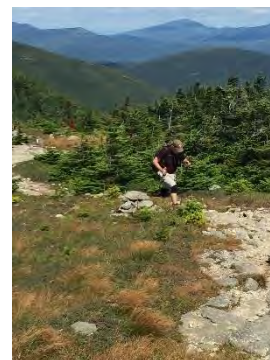
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## Bruce Darby is a 2000 Miler

*Carl Fritz reporting*

Bruce Darby started pleasure hiking of A.T. locally in late October 2000 by traversing Indian Grave Gap to Nolichucky River. To pick up more sections he hiked with his brother-in-law, Jim Foster, and the Johnson City hikers. After having four back vertebrae fused and his right knee replaced, he continued day hikes with the help of his wife, Hazel. And he continued hikes in New England, his home territory, when he and Hazel were visiting. Then he began to think that completing the trail was a possibility. He had his left knee replaced in 2014, but after therapy he continued hiking. With the help of Jim Foster and others he finished the A.T. in Ranglely, Maine after crossing Saddleback Mountain on August 17th, 2016 just before his 75th birthday. He says, "The Lord has blessed me with good health in order to complete the trail." Bruce is an active trail maintainer helping Jim as well as the Old Timers Hiking Club. He also says, "It is my opinion that the Eastman section of the trail is the best maintained section on the entire trail." Congratulations for becoming a 2000 miler through determination and perseverance, Bruce.



## Bruce Cunningham Remembered

*Submitted by Carl Fritz*

Our club has lost one of our key trail maintainers. Bruce W. Cunningham passed away on January 4, 2017 at age of 90. He and his wife, Mary, and their three children were transferred from Rochester to Kingsport by Eastman Kodak in 1961. Bruce and Mary dedicated themselves to serving non-profit organizations in our region. Fortunately, one of Bruce's focus was our club and the maintenance of the Appalachian Trail. Bruce received his 50 year service award from Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). In 1992 we started our database to collect volunteer hours and Bruce accumulated almost 6600 hours which is still the fourth highest in our club's history. About seventeen years ago our club started recruiting nontraditional maintainers like college students and



hikers. We wanted to recognize the volunteers with a special patch. Our club funding sources were limited and because of Bruce's commitment to this recruiting he paid for the first hundred patches. In 17 years since we have issued almost 3600 patches.

A big recruitment of hikers from Damascus Trail Days resulted in Hard Core where 100 hikers and 35 club members built trail for two days. Bruce and Mary for many years financed and supplied dinner on Sunday night to the entire crew. Bruce also used his minivan to shuttle some of the hikers for the two days and even returned them to their original trail location on the third day. In the 90's the trail was in bad shape in the Laurel Fork Gorge. Bruce believed there had to be a way to build the much needed rock staircases. So he paid for the special crews and then worked with them. For many years Bruce's green Dodge minivan was the transportation for maintainers from Kingsport. It could seat eight if the cooler was placed between the second row of captain's chairs. All the tools were in the back. If possible at end of work day, Bruce stopped at Bob's Dairyland or McDonalds for ice cream cones.

Bruce prided himself on not having to service his vehicle brakes for ninety thousand miles. That meant he almost exclusively used the accelerator even in the mountains. Let's say the rides were exciting. We were carpooling off 19E in Elizabethton. At end of day he turned into the carpool location by crossing two lanes of oncoming traffic. We just cleared in front of an 18 wheeler. The maintainer sitting in back row was the last to clear the truck bumper and insisted on an immediate pee break. Not surprising a new volunteer always got the privilege of riding shotgun! Such things as going through Stoney Creek ten feet behind a truck load of pumpkins was common. And the passenger side floor board never caved under the foot pressure of the new volunteer. Bruce was a hardworking and generous maintainer. He enjoyed occasionally teasing one of us. Ask Bob Peoples about the time he was new to the area and Bruce convinced Bob to hike up Backbone Rock Trail with his large farm chainsaw to cut blowdowns on the AT.

## TEHCC Welcomes New Member

Aireal Pressley	Jennifer Baird	Ashley Mohns	Subhashini Vashisth
Matt Ford	Kenny Adams	Pam Kelley	Weijun Wang
Yvonne Hawkins	Gurhan Tornaci	Thomas Donegan	Richard Ramsey
	Teni Butler	Michael Ludecker	

## Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

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

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
February 7	Bombproofing Your Roll/Bracing Clinic with Stephen Wright	<a href="#">Wesley Bradley</a>	423-647-1321
February 14	TEHCC Steering Team Meeting	<a href="#">Kay Parker</a>	423-963-8461
February 21	Freestyle Fundamentals Clinic w/ Stephen Wright	<a href="#">Wesley Bradley</a>	423-647-1321
Feb 24	TEHCC Maintainers Dinner	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-366-0128
February 25	A.T.: Watauga Lake	<a href="#">Tim Schaefer</a>	423-302-0846
March 25	A.T.: Hike Along Iron Mountain	<a href="#">Tim Schaefer</a>	423-302-0846

### 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-26 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 appreciated for the newsletter and trail wiki.

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## Details of Upcoming Events

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### Recurring Events

#### **TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting - Usually every second Tuesday of the month, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm**

Contact: Kay Parker, [chair@tehcc.org](mailto:chair@tehcc.org), 423-963-8461

Location: Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, TN; Bldg 75 PCRA

The Steering Committee guides the general program for the club. The Committee normally meets at lunchtime on the second Tuesday of each month. Meetings are open to all TEHCC members. Bring your lunch or grab a bite at the B-75 cafeteria. After going through the turnstiles at the main B-75 entrance, continue straight. The room is immediately to the right. Members who are not current Eastman employees need to contact a member of the Steering Committee at least three days prior to arrange for a temporary visitor's pass.

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

Contact: [Wesley R. Bradley](mailto: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](mailto: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

#### **Bombproofing Your Roll/Bracing Clinic with Stephen Wright, Tuesday, February 7, 2017**

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

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) is pleased to announce another of its Paddle with the Pros clinics with Stephen Wright. Jackson Team member, Stephen, is a 5-time U.S. National Freestyle Champion, took 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the World Championships in both 2009 and 2011, was the Pan American Champion in 2011 and was the World Champion for Squirt Boating in 2015. This one evening course is designed for the boater who wants to perfect their rolling and bracing techniques in a kayak. This is not a beginning rolling class. The clinic will be held at Freedom Hall Pool in Johnson City, TN. Course will be limited to 10 students. This course will likely fill up fast so be sure to send in your registration form and payment to reserve your spot ASAP.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** The focus is to learn to roll 100% of the time. Learn what to practice so that your whitewater roll will be reliable, fast, and fun!

**COURSE PREREQUISITES:** Participants should at least know the basics of the roll and have their own kayak and gear. Minors must be accompanied by parent or guardian.

**WHERE:** Freedom Hall Pool: 1320 Pactolas Rd, Johnson City, TN 37604

**WHEN:** Tuesday, Feb 7, 2017

**TIME:** 7:30-9:00 P.M.

**COST:** \$45 for APEs members (includes pool use fee); \$55 for non-APEs members (tuition includes APEs membership). **Non-Refundable after Feb 3 unless replacement found.**

**CLASS SIZE:** Classes will be limited to 10 participants

**MINIMUM PERSONAL GEAR:** Whitewater kayak, type III PFD, whitewater helmet, paddle, sprayskirt, closed-toe protective footwear, drinking water

**REGISTRATION:** There are two ways to register: **(Registration Deadline—Feb 3, 2017)**

1. **Online:** 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 also be purchased online at <http://www.riverapes.org/paypal-1.html> for \$10. No need to fill out and send in a separate membership form. Your online registration will double for that purpose.

2. **Mail:** [Click Here to download the PDF Registration Form](#) and mail in with **payment made out to APEs to Wesley R. Bradley: 243 Old Lacy Hollow Rd., Elizabethton, TN 37643**. Those mailing in their registration can add the \$10 annual APEs membership fee to their course payment. No need to fill out and send in a separate membership form. Your registration form will double for that purpose. ONLINE NOTE: Courses not listed in Registration Course Menu are full. Please contact Wesley at [dangerousdraftingman@hotmail.com](mailto:dangerousdraftingman@hotmail.com) to be placed on waiting list.

### **Freestyle Fundamentals Clinic w/ Stephen Wright**

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

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) is pleased to announce another of its Paddle with the Pros clinics with Stephen Wright. Jackson Team member, Stephen, is a 5-time U.S. National Freestyle Champion, took 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the World Championships in both 2009 and 2011, was the Pan American Champion in 2011 and was the World Champion for Squirt Boating in 2015. This one evening course will be focused on the fundamentals of freestyle kayaking. You will learn more than you ever wanted to know about how to have more fun in a kayak. You will also learn how to continue to improve AFTER the class on your own. You will be tired, sore, and happy after this class. The clinic will be held at Freedom Hall Pool in Johnson City, TN. Course will be limited to 10 students. This course will likely fill up fast so be sure to send in your registration form and payment to reserve your spot ASAP.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Learn to have more fun in a playboat! Learn how to make a freestyle kayak move in all directions and how to practice so that you can learn almost any trick, from a stern squirt to a loop.

**COURSE PREREQUISITES:** Participants should have a solid roll and have their own kayak and gear. Minors must be accompanied by parent or guardian.

**WHERE:** Freedom Hall Pool: 1320 Pactolas Rd, Johnson City, TN 37604

**WHEN:** Tuesday, February 21, 2017

**TIME:** 7:30-9:00 P.M.

**COST:** \$45 for APEs members (includes pool use fee); \$55 for non-APEs members (tuition includes APEs membership). **Non-Refundable after Feb 17 unless replacement found.**

**CLASS SIZE:** Classes will be limited to 10 participants

**MINIMUM PERSONAL GEAR:** Whitewater freestyle kayak, type III PFD, whitewater helmet, paddle, sprayskirt, closed-toe protective footwear, drinking water

**REGISTRATION:** There are two ways to register: **(Registration Deadline—Feb 17, 2017)**

1. **Online:** 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 also be purchased online at <http://www.riverapes.org/paypal-1.html> for \$10. No need to fill out and send in a separate membership form. Your online registration will double for that purpose.

2. **Mail:** [Click Here to download the PDF Registration Form](#) and mail in with **payment made out to APEs to Wesley R. Bradley: 243 Old Lacy Hollow Rd., Elizabethton, TN 37643**. Those mailing in their registration can add the \$10 annual APEs membership fee to their course payment. No need to fill out and send in a separate membership form. Your registration form will double for that purpose. ONLINE NOTE: Courses not listed in Registration Course Menu are full. Please contact Wesley Bradley at [dangerousdraftingman@hotmail.com](mailto:dangerousdraftingman@hotmail.com) to be placed on waiting list.

### **TEHCC Maintainers Dinner, Friday, February 24, 2017**

Contact: [Kim Peters](mailto:Kim.Peters), 423-366-0128, [atmaint@tehcc.org](mailto:atmaint@tehcc.org)

The annual dinner to kick off the primary maintenance season for 2017 will be held on Friday, February 24 at the Eastman Lodge. The event will start at 5:30 with a social time followed by dinner at 6 pm. Ed Oliver has again graciously agreed to prepare the meal with a little help from Ted Mowrey and others for a bargain price of \$5, payable at the door. The meal will feature barbecue from Phil's Dream Pit along with various side items and desert. After the meal, we will present awards and discuss various issues related to maintaining TEHCC's section of the AT. All maintainers or individuals interested in maintenance activities are invited to attend. Please let Kim know by no later than Monday, February 20 if you are planning to attend so that we can get an accurate head count and have enough food available.

## A.T.: Watauga Lake, Saturday, February 25, 2017

Leader: Tim Schaefer, 423-302-0846, [tim@tehcc.org](mailto:tim@tehcc.org)

This is the continuation of our slow advance to Damascus (and beyond?). We have been splitting up these winter hikes into shorter sections and the next section will be Shook Branch Rd on 321 along Watauga Lake to Wilbur Dam Rd. Given its length of four miles, relatively flat terrain, and long trail head shuttle, we're planning on doing this as an in-and-out. We'll depart McDonalds by Ingles in Kingsport at 7:30 and arrive at Shook Branch Rd about 8:15a. We should finish early in the afternoon. Feel free to meet us at either location, but a courtesy reply so we know to look and wait for you is always appreciated. Hike details can be found at the trail wiki, [http://tehcc.org/wiki/Hike\\_Plans:2016\\_TEHCC\\_AT](http://tehcc.org/wiki/Hike_Plans:2016_TEHCC_AT). To be involved with the planning, picking the date and kept on a mailing list for discussions, contact Tim Schaefer, 423-302-0846 or [tim@tehcc.org](mailto:tim@tehcc.org)

## A.T.: Hike Along Iron Mountain, Saturday, March 25, 2017

Leader: Tim Schaefer, 423-302-0846

We're winding up our pursuit to hike the TEHCC maintained section of the A.T. with three more sections to go. We will be hiking from Wilbur Dam Rd (if accessible) to TN91. It will be a longer hike at 16.1 miles (18.1 miles if the Wilbur Dam Rd gate is closed). It will also include a 2,000' climb up to the mountain from Watauga Lake. For all of these reasons we may defer this section and complete it in a later month as a backpacking overnighiter. The alternate trip would be the next section north, TN91 to McQueens Gap. All of our planning and post-trip documenting can be found at [http://tehcc.org/wiki/Hike\\_Plans:2016\\_TEHCC\\_AT](http://tehcc.org/wiki/Hike_Plans:2016_TEHCC_AT). To be involved with the planning, picking the date and kept on a mailing list for discussions, contact Tim Schaefer, 423-302-0846 or [tim@tehcc.org](mailto:tim@tehcc.org).

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## For the Record

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### A.T. Hike over Pond Mountain, Saturday, January 28, 2017

*Tim Schaefer reporting*

This is a great, easy shuttle hike. With trail heads only about two miles apart, it's a great opportunity to see six miles of the A.T. and not hike it twice. Even better is offering the choice to see Laurel Falls and the hike through the gorge for a three to four mile extension to get to the falls and back. Pond Mountain was a great choice for the winter, as we kept cool during the climb up and the lack of tree foliage offered excellent views of Watauga Lake and glimpses of Hampton. Upon reaching Pond Flats we saw a frozen pond and assumed it was the namesake of the mountain. Two of us opted for the Laurel Falls extension and were rewarded not only with the always beautiful Laurel Fork Gorge, but a heavily flowing waterfall. Unfortunately the view of a frozen Laurel Falls continues to elude me. Participating on this trip were Tim McClain, Charlie Outlaw, Jonathan Shumaker, and Teni Butler.



*Winter view of Watauga Lake*



*Beautiful day for a hike*



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## A.T. Maintenance Reports

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**Reporting:** Lynn DiFiore

**Date:** 12/25/2016

**Purpose:** Fifth-annual Christmas Day work hike and routine maintenance

**Location:** Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Bradley Gap

**People:** Lynn DiFiore, Lyndsey Smith, Eilidh (canine)

**Summary:** We removed a large amount of trash from Bradley Gap and the Barn. We also removed numerous small blowdowns from the recent winds. We removed a recurring fire ring at Little Hump. We saw no one except a person on a dirt bike who passed us going down the tractor access from Little Hump. He then returned and went out the trail to Yellow Mtn Estates. We saw tracks where he had driven all over Little Hump (including on the large rocks), but he did not use the trail beyond that point. Something may need to be done regarding that access, as it seems to be where most of the ATV and horse traffic originates. All water sources were running well. It was a beautiful day to be out above the clouds!

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 12/28/2016

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 9b, South Side of Pond Mountain

**People:** Jim Chambers, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Jon Rogers, Grant Dienes

**Summary:** On this last major work day of 2016, part of the crew continued the trail rehab on the south side of Pond Mountain by adding many rock steps and rock cribbing. We were happy to have two first timers, Jon Rogers and Grant Dienes, make a special effort to help.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 12/28/2016

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 10, Just north of Laurel Fork Shelter

**People:** Paul Benfield, Richard Carter, Ben Firth, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Kim Peters, Kevin Sedgwick, George Thorpe

**Summary:** On this last large workday of the year, we continued the trail rehab down the northern hill from the shelter. It is slow going here with many required steps that have to be separately backfilled. Also, the materials have to be carried fairly long distances. Many hikers were out enjoying the gorge on this sunny day and were appreciative of the improvements to get over roots.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 12/31/2016

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US19E, South of Bishop Hollow

**People:** Connie Squires, Jim Chambers

**Summary:** We removed a complex tangle of blowdowns south of Bishop Hollow.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 1/4/2017

**Purpose:** Sharpen saws

**People:** Paul Benfield

**Summary:** I sharpened two crosscut saws for Carl.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/4/2017

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 10, Just north of Laurel Fork Shelter

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Kim Peters, George Thorpe

**Summary:** We continued to rehab trail north of Laurel Fork Shelter by installing side logs to cover roots, cutting some steps into rock, and removing some rocks from the path. More work is needed to stabilize the trail.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/4/2017

**Purpose:**

**Location:** Section 9b, South Side of Pond Mountain

**People:** John Beaudet, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** This crew continued to add rock steps and cribbing. They have basically worked down to railroad grade.

**Reporting:** Vic Hasler

**Date:** 1/5/2017

**Purpose:** Highlands of Roan Stewardship Committee

**Location:** Appalachian Ranger District Office

**People:** Vic Hasler

**Summary:** Joe DeLoach already does an excellent job maintaining a connection between TEHCC and SAHC (Southern Appalachian

Highlands Conservancy); so my objective in attending the SAHC Stewardship Committee was to help my own understanding of this organization and its scope. The 27 folks gathered represented roughly 15 organizations or were interested individuals. Research updates were given; then the working groups shared news and plans. Interesting results included the wide travel range of golden eagles tagged with transmitters.

A couple of points relevant to TEHCC: Roan Naturalist position is open for applications through mid-February. Sue Fruchey (new botanist for the Appalachian Ranger District) is the new co-chair of Grassy Balds Management working group. Cherokee National Forest is considering contracting the same cleaning service as used by Pisgah NF for the Carvers Gap parking lot and restroom to hopefully decrease litter.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/12/2017

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 10, Primarily north of Laurel Fork Shelter

**People:** Dean Baird, Paul Benfield, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Ted Mowery, Kim Peters, Kevin Sedgwick, George Thorpe

**Summary:** We continued and essentially completed the trail rehab from Laurel Fork Shelter trail north to the river. We added about 160 feet of rock cribbing and sidelogs. Then we back filled with crusher run and topped with good mineral soil. We dropped a hazard tree. Greg and Kevin cut out a 32" oak blowdown along the river, closer to the falls. The section of the A.T. immediate to both sides of the shelter is in very good shape.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/12/2017

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 9b, South Side of Pond Mountain

**People:** John Beudet, Jim Chambers, Grant Dienes, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** This crew added more rock cribbing and steps, especially as the trail leaves railroad grade. With the help of a rope pulley system, they moved some large rocks in hopes that this repair will last thirty years. The Trail is in good shape from the switchbacks installed by Hard Core to the trail junction at the blue-blaze trail towards Hampton.

**Reporting:** Lynn DiFiore

**Date:** 1/15/2017

**Purpose:** Routine maintenance

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

**People:** Lynn DiFiore, Dave Cook

**Summary:** We replaced the register and removed a large amount of trash from the barn, cleaned out the leaves from rolling dips, and removed several small blowdowns. We found a handheld GPS on Little Hump and contacted Garmin. They are arranging to have it returned to the registered owner. It was a misty/rainy day to be out, but we still saw several day hikers and two backpackers.

**Reporting:** Eloise Kaeck

**Date:** 1/16/2017

**Purpose:**

**Location:** Section 15b, Hughes Gap to Ash Gap

**People:** Eloise Kaeck

**Summary:** I went up on MLK day with loppers and hand saw and removed branches and debris. There are still about a dozen stepovers between Hughes and Ash. I saw 8 hikers, including one woman thru-hiker.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/17/2017

**Purpose:** Trail Relocation

**Location:** Unicoi Ranger Station

**People:** USFS: Keith Kelley, Alice Cohen, Lynn DiFiore; ATC: Morgan Sommerville; TEHCC: Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples

**Summary:** There were three primary discussion topics: Pre-Trail-Days party on Osborne tract, bear closure around Watauga Lake, and trail relocation on Atwood property.

The natural lay over of north bounders on Osborne tract awaiting the opening of camping at Damascus has grown over the last ten years. Now organizers are planning a two-week party. USFS has decided that the gathering on A.T. is inappropriate. Organizers will be alerted and law enforcement will visit regularly.

The closure for bears was discussed as a permanent closure. USFS decided to do another temporary closure for 2017. Data will be collected from hostels and problems reported by hikers.

Next step for possible trail relocation on Atwood property is to request TDOT to do a study. With all the issues, plus new NEPA



*Bob Peoples with beautiful rock steps*

process, any trail relocation is years off; so TEHCC will proceed with Shook Branch Bridge replacement.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/18/2017

**Purpose:** Haul bridge materials

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

**People:** Carl Fritz, Don Haas

**Summary:** Don Haas graciously provided his truck and 26-foot trailer to haul the bridge sills and beams from East TN Forestry Products in Mosheim to USFS Work Center at Watauga Lake. These beams and sills are for Shook Branch Bridge and Wildermine Bridge just south of 19E.

**Reporting:** Jim Foster

**Date:** 1/19/2017

**Purpose:** Check trail and clean waterbars

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

**People:** Bruce Darby, Mike Holingshead, Jim Foster

**Summary:** We cleaned all the waterbars and cut out 8 mid-size blowdowns. We had to leave a large step-over. We also cleaned around the shelter and noted it was dry inside. Thanks to those folks who worked on the roof and painted the shelter; you did a great job! It was a beautiful day for mid January.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/19/2017

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 19b, Curley Maple Gap Shelter to Nolichucky Expeditions

**People:** John Beaudet, Paul Benfield, Grant Dienes, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

**Summary:** We did trail rehab by adding a lot of rock cribbing and rock steps. The areas on the hill were mostly just sagging, narrow trail. We essentially completed all the critical areas. Late in the afternoon and very tired, we decided to stay to complete the job, so we would not have to hike the 2.5 miles in again. (I promised that everyone will collect time and a half.) We cleared seven blowdowns to the shelter with hand saws and pulaskis. Most of the water diversions were cleaned and reemphasized. No hikers were encountered today.

**Reporting:** Kim Peters

**Date:** 1/19/2017

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 5, TN 91 to Grindstaff Monument

**People:** Ken Buchanan, Pat Buchanan, Pat Loven, Kim Peters

**Summary:** We set out to clear two large blowdowns that I had found previously, but ended up cutting 8 or more - we lost count. Actually, Pat Loven did all the cutting with his chainsaw, which Ken carried. We also removed lots of smaller branches from the trail, evidence of high winds in the area. Pat Buchanan carried the loppers and cut back rhodys and briars. This section is now in good shape. We met one day hiker on this fine day to be out in the woods.

**Reporting:** Jim Foster

**Date:** 1/21/2017

**Purpose:** Check for trail obstruction

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

**People:** Jim Foster

**Summary:** What started as a walk ended up as a maintenance trip. The trail was full of debris and small blowdowns, so I took care of them. I don't think Howard and Faye will mind. There's one large single tree blocking the trail that hikers will have to go either around or over. The rest of the section is open and in good shape.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 1/24/2017

**Purpose:** Sharpen saw

**People:** Paul Benfield

**Summary:** I cleaned and sharpened the club's crosscut saw.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/24/2017

**Purpose:** Purchase and deliver bridge materials

**Location:** Sections 8 and 13

**People:** Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Johnny Grills, Ed Oliver

**Summary:** We purchased the remaining lumber for hand rails, posts and piers for the Shook Branch and Wildermine bridges. We



delivered it to Watauga Ranger District Work Center. We are ready to soon start the cutting and drilling of all the wood materials.

**Reporting:** Phyllis Cairnes

**Date:** 1/25/2017

**Purpose:** Maintain shelter

**Location:** Section 2b, Abingdon Gap shelter

**People:** Rolla Wade, Phyllis Cairnes

**Summary:** First we affixed a mileage sign to a tree on the trail south from Low Gap. Then we walked north toward Abingdon Gap Shelter. Along the way we lopped back greenbriar, removed fallen limbs, and took photos of downed trees to report. At the shelter we did the usual maintenance: replaced the journal, shoveled out the fire ring, cleaned the gutter, swept the floor, and picked up trash. I'm happy to report the walls are still free of grafitti. Writing and drawing has been limited to the grafitti board. It was a gorgeous day to be outside.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/25/2017

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 7, Spring to Wilbur Dam Rd

**People:** Paul Benfield, Richard Carter, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Jimmy Mills, Ted Mowery, Kim Peters, George Thorpe

**Summary:** The Trail condition from Wilbur Dam Rd to spring was very good. We improved several small areas that needed steps stabilized or sidehill redug. Several minor blowdowns and a large limb hanging over the kiosk were removed.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/25/2017

**Purpose:** Rehab Trail

**Location:** Section 8, Wilbur Dam Rd to dam

**People:** John Beaudet, Jim Chambers, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** Besides removing three blowdowns, the crew improved a switchback, removed some rocks and rehabbed trail over Killer Hill. Ice in the trees from the fog pelted the maintainers as the sun shone and the temperature climbed to 60 degrees.

**Reporting:** Craig Haire

**Date:** 1/25/2017

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 18, FS230 switchback to Indian Grave Gap, south end of section

**People:** Craig Haire

**Summary:** I removed 20 trees between Indian Grave Gap and Beauty Spot, requiring 24 cuts with my 12" Greenworks electric chainsaw. Not knowing what to expect, I took my 16" saw also, but didn't need it. I also didn't need my extra batteries, and there was 25% charge left in the battery I used. It was a nice, sunny day after the morning chill. I saw no other hikers. As I drove there in my LEAF, no fossil fuels were needed for this maintenance. I only inconvenienced a few electrons.



*Maintenance is not all work. Here's the early morning view of Watauga Lake.*