



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

May 2017

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

Editor – [Koustubh Kulkarni](#)

Co-Editor – [Terry Oldfield](#)

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## Spring is here

*Picture Credit – Vic Hasler*



Wildflowers are popping out around the region and spring is finally here. This picture of a white trillium was taken along the Fall Creek Trail in Warriors Path State Park around mid-April. The club would love to see photos of what you observe in the region.

## TEHCC Spring Dinner, April 7, 2017

*Kay Parker reporting*

About 60 members/guests gathered at the Eastman Lodge for the Annual Spring Dinner on Friday, April, 7. After some fellowship and "Happy Trails Hour" (that was well attended!), a catered dinner from Barberitos was served, followed by pie for dessert.

### Guest Recognition

National Forest Service - Keith Kelley, Chad Ingle, Cheryl Summers, Rueben Potter

Mary Fanslow and Girl Scouts from Troop 263

Guest Speaker – Johnny Molloy and his wife Keri

New Board Members - Koustubh Kulkarni and Rahul Subramanian

### Announcements

- GSA Troop 263 made the table centerpieces and also had cookies available for sale.
- Appalachian Trail Festival will be Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at Roan Mountain Community Park on 118 Carter Street.
- Jess Schaner from Burnsville, NC is the new Roan Naturalist starting in May.
- FunFest Moonlight hike will be on Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup>. If interested in volunteering, please contact [Kay Parker](#)
- Three raffle prize winners selected from prize options of outfitter gift card and TN/NC ATC Guidebooks.

### Forest Service Awards

- **50 Hours:** Dean Baird, Mason Boring, Scotty Bowman, Pat Buchanan, Kayla Carter, Robin Dean, Joe DeLoach, Howard Guinn, Craig Haire, Mason Hicks, Bill Hodge, Mike Hupko, Karen Loven, Dory Lustig, Ryan Mariano, Collin Massman, Vanessa Medford, Eric Middlemas, Steve Perri, Brian Schloff, Jeff Sirola, Rolla Wade, Adrienne Wang, Steve Wilson
- **100 Hours:** Matthew Baker, Phyllis Cairnes, Katie Currier, Lauren D'Amato, Bruce Darby, Lynn DiFiore, Emily Dishongh, Dan Firth, Wes Ford, Danny Harper, Becky Kinder, Bill Murdoch, Ken Murray, Brian Paley, Gayle Riddervold, Chris Robey, Sina Varshaneh. (NOTE: Some 50 and 100-Hour folks are associated with SAWS working in the wilderness on the July windstorm clean-up.)

- **150 Hours:** Daryl Anderson, Jim Foster
- **200 Hours:** John Beaudet, Richard Carter, Greg Kramer, Ed Oliver
- **300 Hours:** Vic Hasler
- **400 Hours:** Ken Buchanan, Jim Chambers, Joe Morris, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe
- **500 Hours:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples
- **600 Hours:** Kim Peters
- **1000 Hours:** Carl Fritz

#### TEHCC Club Awards

- **Paddler of the Year:** Ryan Horn
- **Maintainer of the Year:** John Beaudet (*see separate write-up*)
- **Hiker of the Year:** Tim Schaefer

**Volunteer Recognition and Awards:** Keith Kelley (USFS Watauga District) read the following letter to recognize the valuable work by TEHCC.



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Cherokee National Forest  
Watauga Ranger District

4400 Unicoi Drive  
Unicoi, TN 37692  
423-735-1500  
Fax: 423-735-7306

**File Code:** 2300  
**Date:** April 6, 2017

Vic Hasler  
TEHCC AT Committee Chair

Dear Vic,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your club for your efforts in the conservation and maintenance of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail on the Watauga District of the Cherokee National Forest.

The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club members contributed 13,320 hours and provided 366 volunteers on the Cherokee National Forest in the past year. This is a truly remarkable contribution to the conservation efforts of the US Forest Service.

Key Accomplishments include:

- ✓ Maintenance of 134 miles of the Appalachian Trail and 2 miles of blue blazed trail
- ✓ Construction of 0.5 miles of new trail
- ✓ Rehabilitation of 1.4 miles of trail
- ✓ Construction of 1800 foot cattle fence on Osborne Tract
- ✓ Painted four shelters to clean up graffiti
- ✓ Coordinated with a number of partners including Wright State University students, Appalachian State University Students, Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards, and the Konnarock Trail crew

The continued support of the Club is one aspect of the uniqueness of the Appalachian Trail. It is a privilege to work with such a dedicated group of conservationists.

THANK YOU ALL for your devotion to the Appalachian Trail!

Sincerely,

KEITH KELLEY  
District Ranger



Caring for the Land and Serving People

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Johnson City based author and outdoor enthusiast, Johnny Molloy, spoke about "Outdoor Adventures in the Tri-Cities: Hiking, Camping and Paddling with Johnny Molloy". His presentation featured wonderful rivers, lakes and mountains that are easily accessible in our area. Some of the highlighted adventures are: Chief Bengé Scout Trail, Pinnacle Tower, Buffalo Mountain, Overmountain Victory Trail, Nolichucky Gorge, Great Channels of VA, Hickey Fork Falls, Margarette Falls, Squibb Creek Falls, Buckeye Falls, Unaka Mountain, Devils Bathtub, and Mount Rogers NRA.

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## Rental Equipment - Updates from Checkout Event

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*Report by Vic Hasler on behalf of Terry Dougherty, Rental Equipment Coordinator*

The inventory of club backpacks and tents were inspected during the April 24<sup>th</sup> lunchtime event to check their condition. Terry would like to thank David Jewell, Tim McClain, and Ed Montgomery for their assistance with setting up tents, while Vic Hasler examined the packs and updated the rental webpage.

HB-1, a large vintage Diamond Brand external frame in good repair, was discovered in the fleet. It appears that someone might have cleaned their garage as this '90s pack has been gone since before 2003 per club records. HB-3, Kelty Tornado (twin of HB-2), was retired as was HB-15, a rarely-used green daypack. HB-35, a new Granite Gear Escape 60 internal frame pack, was labeled correctly.

HT-21, a damaged four-person Hobitat tent, was replaced with a yet-to-be-used six-person ALPS Mountaineering Sundance unit. Definitely for car-camping as its bagged weigh is 21 pounds. Similarly, the six-person HT-27 tent was swapped for another of ALPS Mountaineering Camp Creek design.

Other club equipment added to the tehcc.org rental webpage was HA-3 (SteriPEN Freedom portable UV water sterilizer), HA-4 (MSR PocketRocket backpacking stove – must provide own fuel), and HA-5/6 (two BearVault Solo bear resistant food containers).

Articles about the new equipment will be published in future newsletters.

Finally, Terry has expressed interest in passing this role to the next coordinator, who would help the club manage the set of packs, pads, tents, and other gear stored in Recreation Building 310. The position also recommends new pieces to add/replace using the roughly \$425 budget. If interested, please contact anyone on the Steering Committee.

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## John Beaudet, “Bodacious”, TEHCC Maintainer of Year 2016

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*Story by Carl Fritz*

John's first participation as hiker “Bodacious” with our club was Hard Core 2007 while we were digging 3,700 feet of new trail near Cherry Gap. By 2010 he was working with us regularly. The quality of his trail building whether it is simple sidehill or rock steps is second to none. By his example, John has improved the quality of our trail building ever since.

And Bodacious does not sacrifice quantity for quality. He goes at 100% for him which is equivalent to about 180% for the rest of us. If there is a big rock to move, he is there. John visualizes the end result and strategizes a plan to accomplish it. At the end of a big day, John literally cannot walk back to the vehicles without resting several times along the way because he used all his energy at the work site.

A recent health issue set him back... but while we could not have gotten out of bed, he was out giving his 100% of what he was capable. Fortunately, in 2016, John started coming back more strongly.

Bodacious has made the AT a much better place as well as making us other maintainers better. However, he really does not like to cut weeds!



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## Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS) Recognized as ATC Southern Region 2017 Partner of the Year

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Submitted by Vic Hasler and Steve Perri

Congratulations go to the Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS) for being selected as the Southern Region Partner of the Year. Nominations are solicited annually to recognize those individuals or groups that have a significant impact among the maintaining trails clubs, ATC and agency partners. SAWS was selected in recognition of their continued hand-in-hand work with A.T.-maintaining clubs to support efforts in designated wilderness areas along the Trail. In addition to SAWS, ATC recognized Jay Dement from GATC as the 2017 Volunteer of the Year and Betty Jewett from the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Supervisor as the 2017 Agency Partner of the Year. Jointly with the ATC and the U.S. Forest Service, SAWS has given many volunteers the skills needed to work in wilderness through the Wilderness Skills Institute. SAWS has also adopted 11.5 miles of the A.T. in the Big Laurel Branch Wilderness Area, as the section's hand tool restriction and remoteness make it difficult for TEHCC volunteers to maintain. Over the last several years, SAWS personnel have demonstrated commitment to this partnership by completing a variety of projects along the Trail, including the removal of almost 100 blowdowns within two weeks of a large windstorm in July 2016.



The history of the Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards as an organization begins in November 2010. At that time, the Tennessee Wilderness Act was introduced into the U.S. Congress to expand multiple sections of the Cherokee National Forest. There was some opposition due to the restrictions involved with the wilderness designation since mechanized maintenance equipment such as chainsaws would be forbidden. SAWS was formed as a non-profit of The Wilderness Society to be dedicated to using the primitive methods and tools. This impact does affect the Appalachian Trail as the path winds through several wilderness areas.

The organization has expanded to assist with protection of 45 wilderness areas in public national forests located in Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia. SAWS serves as a resource for the federal agencies, supplementing existing stewardship efforts and providing support where there are none.

In 2012, SAWS formed the “Wilderness Skills Institute” as a two-week training course for the techniques appropriate to maintain trails with traditional tools and interacting with the public. This annual event is hosted in partnership with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and US Forest Service with target audience of volunteers and employees from both non-profits and federal agencies. In 2014, the SAWS organization built 920 feet of new, sustainable trail for a reroute of the Appalachian Trail at Turkey Pen Gap, located between Vandeventer and Iron Mountain shelters. Congratulations to SAWS and to Bill Hodge, Executive Director, for his leadership and support in guiding SAWS within the A.T. partnership.



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## 2017 ALDHA Care Spring Clean Up

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Report by Jim Chambers (ALDHA Care Coordinator)

Kincora Hostel, named after the 11th century Irish royal residence of Brian Boru, has been open to Appalachian Trail hikers since 1996, and Bob Peoples has been ever present in his desire to give all his guests a true Hiker Experience. Therefore, after 21 years and 23,000 Appalachian Trail hikers, Bob Peoples and Kincora Hostel in Hampton, Tennessee was selected as the recipient of the 2017 ALDHA Care Spring Clean Up.

On April 8th, ALDHA Care converged upon Kincora Hostel to perform a thorough cleaning and help make many upgrades to the never closed AT service provider. Bob Peoples has touched every aspect of the Appalachian Trail in his lifetime, and the participants in the 2017 ALDHA Care Spring Clean Up reflected the entire Appalachian Trail community. The participants this year were trail maintainers from Tennessee Eastman Hiking Club, numerous past and present thru-hikers, and many long time ALDHA members. As such, this diverse group came together to pay tribute to Bob People and Kincora Hostel.

Many participants arrived as early as Friday afternoon, and some got right to work making improvements to Kincora Hostel. As Saturday morning arrived, over 20 people were on hand to thoroughly clean the hostel, build the new shower and bathroom, and clean up the damage from last Summer’s severe wind storms. Everyone worked together throughout the day to make Kincora new again, while 12-time Thru-Hiker “Seiko” prepared a wonderful evening meal for us all.

As the sun began to set on April 8th, this year’s participants had transformed Kincora Hostel back to its former glory. The emotion and gratitude for all that Bob Peoples has done for the Appalachian Trail was obvious on everyone’s face. After a wonderful meal and great fellowship, another ALDHA Care Spring Clean Up came to an end; and what seemed a fitting end to an eventful day, three hungry thru-hikers arrived and finished off all the leftovers from our evening meal.....it was business as usual at Kincora.



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## TEHCC Welcomes New Member

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Phil Geiger

Adrian Holt

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## Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

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

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
May 4 - 6	Konnarock Crews on Backbone Rock	<a href="#">Carl Fritz</a>	423-477-4669
May 5 – 7	Jocassee Lake Paddle/Camp Weekend	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
May 6	Roan Mountain AT Community Celebration		
May 9 <sup>th</sup>	TEHCC Steering team meeting	<a href="#">Kay Parker</a>	423-963-8461
May 20	Hiking with tools	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-366-0128
May 20 - 21	APE's & TEHCC Wilderness First Aid & CPR Courses	<a href="#">Jerry Smith</a>	423-213-3337
May 26-28	Bluestone River Trip 38th Year	<a href="#">Terry Dougherty</a>	423-502-5177
June 3	Lower Watauga, Class I-II	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
June 10-11	Hootenany Hang & Paddling Trip Weekend	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
June 16-18	APE's & TEHCC Basic Swift Water Rescue Course	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
June 15	Paddle to the grill	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
June 17	Lower Watauga, Class I-II	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
June 17 – 18	Rhododendron Festival		
June 17	AT: 19E TO DOLL FLATS (Joint Hike with MAHC)	<a href="#">Vic Hasler</a>	423-239-0388
June 17	Hiking with Tools	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-366-0128
June 22	Paddle to the grill	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
June 29	Paddle to the grill	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636

### Standard Hike Information

Hikes leaving from "Colonial Heights" gather at the parking lot below McDonalds, 4317 Fort Henry Drive, which is NW of I-81 Exit 59. 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](#), 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](#), 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.

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

Contact: [Kim Peters](#), 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 cleaning out waterbars and steps, lopping rhododendron, breaking up fire rings, 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. The more people show up, the less work each individual has to do and the trip becomes a nice hike - with tools! Contact Kim Peters ([atmaint@tehcc.org](mailto:atmaint@tehcc.org)) for hike details, including meeting time and place.

### **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](#).

### **Thursday evenings from June 15 to Aug 31: Paddle to the Grill, 6.30 pm – 9.30 pm**

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

Alternating from: Boone Lake Marina, 452 Sportsman Dock Rd, Piney Flats, TN & Davis Marina & Boonies Restaurant & Pizzeria 641 Buffalo Rd, Blountville, TN. We have boat ramps at both locations now. Bring your touring kayak/canoe to meet with The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts ([www.riverapes.org](http://www.riverapes.org)) & TN Eastman Hiking & Canoeing Club ([www.tehcc.org](http://www.tehcc.org)). We will be launching within 30 minutes of meeting to paddle 3 miles to the restaurant, which takes about an hour. We'll have dinner and social hour then paddle back under the stars. As we may be paddling back during low or no light, please have a stern light for your boat and a head light for when we land. PFD's and Stern Lights are TWRA Regulation. If you aren't on the contact list call for location each week

### **Biweekly on Saturdays, Lower Watauga, Class I-II, 3 pm**

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

Call first to check and see if it's on! Also we stop for a break about halfway down so don't forget your snacks! We are usually off the water by 7:00 or so. After we get back to the Ballpark & transfer boats back to our vehicles we can then go for dinner in town. Please be prepared for cold water and wear appropriate gear.

Directions: From W Elk Ave in Elizabethton Turn at the Rite-Aid onto West Mill Street, take the first street on Left onto Ash Street, follow that street to the end and you will see the river, turn left and pull into the small paved parking area near a covered picnic area. Look for boats! Map: <http://goo.gl/maps/37X1>

## **Scheduled Events**

### **Jocassee Lake Paddle/Camp Weekend, May 5-7, 2017**

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

The most crystal clear water you will ever see this close to home with waterfalls, waterfalls waterfalls! We made 2 trips there last spring and are excited to offer this trip again this year! Friday, May 5: Meet at the State Park at 10:00AM to pack boats and paddle 1 mile across the lake to the secluded boat-in only camp sites. There are fire rings, lantern stands and pit toilets. Saturday we will be paddling to waterfalls and will have a picnic lunch on the way! We can stop for ice cream at the state park on the way back (if desired a shower is available there too)! Sunday after breakfast and packing up we will paddle to one more waterfall and then back to the car at the State Park. This is a self supported trip, all gear must be packed in your boat and you must bring all your food & water. A group meal can be planned if desired.

## **APE's & TEHCC Wilderness First Aid & CPR Courses, May 20-21, 2017**

Contact: [Jerry Smith](mailto:Jerry.Smith@riverapes.org), 423-213-3337

Dates: WFA: May 20-21, 2017 / CPR: May 20, 2017 (eve only)

Times: WFA: 8:30 AM—5:00 PM both days / CPR: 5:30 PM—7:30 PM

Cost: WFA: \$100 / CPR: \$25 (+\$10 if not APE or TEHCC member)

Location: Eastman Lodge, 404 Bays Mountain Park Rd, Kingsport, TN 37660

**Course Description:** The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) and Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoe Club (TEHCC) will host a Wilderness First Aid (WFA) course taught by Jerry Smith on May 20-21, 2017. 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.

**Optional CPR Class:** Jerry has offered to conduct an optional CPR class on Sat eve, May 20<sup>th</sup>, for those wanting to become CPR certified or re-certified at a cost of \$25. This is a separate class and participation in one is not required to take the other. CPR is a recommended certification for outdoor professionals and provided immediately after cardiac arrest may double a victim's chance of survival. This 2-hour class teaches you adult & child CPR and choking rescues using the American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI) curriculum.

**REGISTRATION:** There are two ways to register to reserve your spot :

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 packet with Registration Form](#) and mail in with **payment made out to APEs to Jerry Smith: 610 Bradley Street, 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 Jerry at [jstylar@yahoo.com](mailto:jstylar@yahoo.com) to be placed on waiting list. Class size is limited to 10 and registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

**Included in this registration packet are:**

- Registration Form (N/A if registering online)
- Gear List
- Directions to Eastman Lodge
- Additional Information

[Click here to download the PDF packet for complete info](#)

Please free to reach out with any questions or concerns that you may have prior to the course. Additional information will be sent out as the course date nears. We look forward to seeing you!

## **Bluestone River Trip 38th Year, May 26 – 28, 2017**

Contact: [Terry Dougherty](mailto:Terry.Dougherty@riverapes.org), 423-502-5177

Bluestone River Trip, May 26-28, 2017, 38th Year, Leader: Terry Dougherty, 423-502-5177. The annual Bluestone River Trip (38th Anniversary) is scheduled for May 26-28, 2017. We will stay at the beautiful Pipestem State Park (Mountain Creek Lodge). We have reserved a block of rooms, please call 800-CALL-WVA (ask for Pipestem State Park / Mountain Creek Lodge) and reserve your room for Friday and Saturday. To secure one of the clubs block rooms, reservations must be made by May 12. Room \$ 112/night + taxes. We plan to paddle the scenic Bluestone River both Sat. and Sun. This is a Class III trip the first day and Class I the second day. You can skip the second day, if you like. Other options include family camping at the state park campground and/or driving up on Saturday morning. This is a GREAT trip with a lot of family fun, scenic river and very nice lodging. In addition to the paddling, Ed Montgomery will once again be in charge of HAPPY HOUR and libation coordination on Saturday night and is going to make this one special. Please contact the trip leader (Terry Dougherty, 423-502-5177) if you are planning to attend.

## **Hootenany Hang & Paddling Trip Weekend, June 9-11, 2017**

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

The Hootenanny Hang Weekend will be in Unicoi in the Roan Mtn area 20 minutes from the Nolichucky River or Watauga Lake. It was planned for just local folks but the property owners got excited about the idea of us renting the whole place and inviting everyone from the hammock camping group I belong to and the APE's. So there are people coming from all over the country to this



event to paddle/hike and hang out for an adventure camping weekend.

Now a Hootenanny means "Music Happening"! So there will be picking on the porch and it's open for anyone with an instrument. On Saturday night we'll do a pot luck dinner, and we're having a raffle of hammock camping gear to help pay for the use of the campground. Any money left over will go towards a deposit for next year or donated to the farm for any needed projects. There are 98 acres at Blackberry Blossom Farm of wooded property with Walk-In-Only camp sites. So you backpackers will be right at home but if any of you have heavy gear they will gladly haul all your stuff to your site with their tractor and small trailer. The sites have fire pits, picnic tables and water from an ingenious spring, gravity fed system that is potable to normal standards. There is also two bathrooms with showers and a large outside sink for clean-up near the camp store.

**Activities:** We are planning paddle trips and hikes for Saturday AM! You can choose between two kinds of kayaking, whitewater (Nolichucky River Class I-II) or lake (Watauga Lake). There will be lead hiking trips too. Hike the Roan Mountain to the balds from Carvers Gap or drive on up to the Rhododendron Gardens. The Pot Luck will be Saturday Night after the activities at the Camp Store where there is a communal fire-pit for dutch oven cooking etc. So please everyone bring a dish and put on the spreadsheet (below) what you plan to bring and if you want to lead a trip or what activity you'd like to do. Tickets to the gear raffle are sold and paid for Saturday night at the event. Bring cash to buy your tickets! \$5 per ticket or 5 for \$20. I am gathering raffle donations from hammock camping vendors but your donations are accepted too. So any spare gear you have laying around will help, it doesn't have to be a lot just something camping related someone can use.

**Camping Cost:** We have come to a flat rate agreement for the cost of the campground because we are renting the whole place for the weekend. I am only going to ask each person attending to send a donation in advance of what you can afford. So between your donation & the raffle it should cover our costs of the venue and any other expenditures like firewood, deposit for next year etc. I've set up my Paypal account to accept the donations so email me for my info. I'm not collecting money all weekend folks so please do this in advance. If you don't have a paypal account contact me and we will work something out.

#### **REGISTRATION**

Please let us know you're coming and sign up on this Spread Sheet: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets...it?usp=sharing>

Address: 250 Blackberry Blossom Ln, Unicoi, TN 37692, (423) 735-0696

Website: <http://www.blackberry-blossom-campground.com/Home/home.php>

Map: <https://www.google.com/maps/dir//36.202754,-82.257857/@36.203074,-82.257572,10z?hl=en>

### **APE's & TEHCC Basic Swift Water Rescue Course, June 16-18, 2017**

Contact: [Scott Fisher](#) at 276-698-4644

**Location:** Riverpark Campground – Jonesborough, TN

**ACA Instructor:** Scott Fisher

**Assistant Instructors:** Jeremy Gass & Wesley R. Bradley

Whitewater enthusiasts participate in hazardous activities in wilderness environments. Are you prepared to rescue yourself or your best paddling friend? Are they prepared to rescue you? Help in many cases may not be immediately available, and might be hours, not minutes away. Sign up and bring your favorite paddling crew to this clinic. It's like buying yourself, and them, the safety line that may save your lives. The Basic SWR Course, sponsored by Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) and Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoe Club (TEHCC), is one in a series of swiftwater rescue courses offered through the American Canoe Association. The course is led by ACA certified swiftwater rescue and kayak instructor Scott Fisher and is designed to teach the recreational paddler basic swiftwater rescue techniques where limited personnel and/or safety gear is available. Scott has provided instruction to hundreds of individuals, paddling clubs, firefighters, rescue personnel, staff of church youth camps, and local outfitter guides. The clinic will include classroom instruction, river skills and realistic scenarios. Successful completion of this course will prepare you to self-rescue and aid in the rescue of others in whitewater environments.

**Course Overview:** The **Swiftwater Rescue Course** teaches recognition and avoidance of common river hazards, execution of self-rescue techniques, and rescue techniques for paddlers in distress. Emphasis is placed both on personal safety and on simple, commonly used skills. Techniques for dealing with hazards that carry greater risks for both victim and rescuer, such as strainers, rescue vest applications, entrapments, and pins, also are practiced. Scenarios will provide an opportunity for participants to practice their skills both individually and within a team/group context.

#### **Course Objectives:**

- Promote proactive prevention of river accidents and injuries.
- Develop and practice key self-rescue skills.
- Identify and avoid river hazards by understanding hydrology, hazards, and river features.
- Focus on fast, low-risk strategies for early management of river accidents
- Develop and practice methods for recovering swimmers, and loose boats and equipment
- Develop and practice more advanced rope-based and in-water skills
- Gain experience using the rescue PFD, and understand its strengths and weaknesses
- Utilize rescue scene management principles needed within a paddling group

**Course Prerequisites:** All paddle craft are welcome. Ideally, students should be able to competently maneuver their craft in at least class II whitewater. However, all boaters, and non-boaters with an interest in swiftwater rescue (e.g., professional rescuers), will



benefit from the class. Participants should be in good health and overall fitness, possess solid swimming ability, and be comfortable swimming in moving current during river drills. Participants should dress appropriately for weather and temperature, and should expect to be in the water for extended periods of time.

**Minimum personal equipment for class:** Type III PFD designed for whitewater use (Rescue PFD is recommended but not required), whitewater helmet, protective clothing suitable for extended swimming in cold water, protective footwear, boat, paddle, whistle, throw rope, 15+ feet of one inch tubular nylon webbing, 2 locking carabiners, and 2 prusick loops (2 x 6-8 feet pieces of 4-5 millimeter polypropylene cord)

**Who:** Adults and Minors 15 years and older (Parent/Legal Guardian **MUST** accompany minor and arranged ahead). Instructors reserve the right to exclude anyone if they feel safety will be compromised.

**When:** Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup> 7:00pm – 9:00pm; Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup> 8:00am – 7:00pm (Saturday Evening Session TBD); Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup> 8:00am – 5:00pm

**Where:** Friday evening: Riverpark Campground (3937 Highway 81 South, Jonesborough, TN 37659); Saturday: Riverpark/Lower Nolichucky River; Sunday: Riverpark/Lower Nolichucky River

**Cost:** \$95; \$85 if already an APEs member; ACA members can further deduct \$5

Registration and payment **deadline is 6/9/2017 (See Cancellation Policy in PDF Application)**

**Lodging Note:** Camping is available on site and should be reserved directly with Riverpark Campground

**REGISTRATION:** There are two ways to register:

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 Scott Fisher: 109 Highland Gate Dr., Johnson City, TN 37615**. 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 Scott at [scottfisher00@gmail.com](mailto:scottfisher00@gmail.com) to be placed on waiting list.

**Questions:** Feel free to contact Scott at 276-698-4644 or [scottfisher00@gmail.com](mailto:scottfisher00@gmail.com)

## **AT: 19E TO DOLL FLATS (Joint Hike with Mid Appalachian Highlands Club), June 17, 2017**

Contact: [Vic Hasler](mailto:Vic.Hasler@mahc.org), 423-239-0388

Joining up with another hiking club to enjoy what is many times one of the best places for wildflowers due to the significant amount of elevation change during this moderate-rated six-mile round-trip hike on the Appalachian Trail. In order to stay on MAHC's schedule, we'll leave the TEHCC meeting place (below McDonalds in Colonial Heights) at 7:30am to be at Arby (I-26 Exit 24) to meet MAHC members before their 8am start time. Hike Plan per MAHC: This in-and-out hike begins where the AT crosses 19E just west of Elk Park, NC. At 0.6 mile the trail passes Wilder iron ore mine which was abandoned in 1918 and now serves as a campsite. At 3.0 miles the trail reaches the open fields of Doll Flats with views and more good campsites. From 19E to this point, we will have climbed 1680 feet. Along the way, let's look for Spring wildflowers such as showy Fringed Phacelia, Showy Orchids, Wood Anemones, Trilliums, and maybe even a Jack in the Pulpit as well as many others.

TEHCC Leader: Vic Hasler (239-0388)

MAHC Leader: Rita Blankenbecler (765-0609)

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## **For the Record**

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No hike or paddling reports this month.



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## **A.T. Maintenance Reports**

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**Reporting:** Eric Middlemas

**Date:** 2/27/2017

**Purpose:** Spring Maintenance

**Location:** Section 18, FS230 Switchback to Indian Grave Gap

**People:** Lana Scott, Mike Hupko, Marla Merrick, Judy Middlemas, Bruce Darby, Wayne Jones, Pat Kenney, Howard Guinn, Alan Liggett

**Summary:** We cleaned waterbars and painted blazes in both directions from FS230 switchback to Indian Grave Gap. The blazes and most of the waterbars from Iron Mtn Gap to Indian Grave Gap are now in good shape. The waterbars from Iron Mtn Gap to Cherry Gap remained to be cleaned.

**Reporting:** Eric Middlemas

**Date:** 2/27/2017

**Purpose:** Spring Maintenance

**Location:** Section 17, FS230 Switchback to Cherry Gap Shelter

**People:** Eric Middlemas, David Douthat, Grover Byrd, Tim Shipley, Jeannine Edwards

**Summary:** We painted blazes in both directions from Cherry Gap Shelter to FS230 switchback and cleaned out waterbars.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 3/25/2017

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 9a, Shook Branch to Pond Flats

**People:** Joe Morris

**Summary:** I removed two blowdowns from the north side of Pond Mountain and met several hikers. It was a great day to be out.

**Reporting:** Gayle Riddervold

**Date:** 3/29/2017

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

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

**People:** Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

**Summary:** There were two blowdowns on this trail a short distance beyond the power lines. We were able to clean most of the first blowdown that was closest to the power line. There is still a small tree hanging halfway in the trail. We couldn't cut it with our small saws and will have to return another day with better tools. A short distance from the blowdown is another bigger tree lying on the trail. Hikers are able to step over it. It's too big for us to cut and will require a chain saw.

**Reporting:** Jim Foster

**Date:** 3/30/2017

**Purpose:** Repaint blazes

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

**People:** Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

**Summary:** We repainted the blazes to the shelter and back. We also cut two small blowdowns and filled in a four-foot hole in the trail that had been caused by a large rootball turning up. We met at least 20 hikers.

**Reporting:** Ken Murray

**Date:** 4/4/2017

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

**Location:** Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to Devils Creek Gap

**People:** Ken Murray, Lotta Murray

**Summary:** The trail is in good shape from Temple Hill Gap to Devils Creek Gap except for one large blowdown close to Temple Hill Gap.

**Reporting:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:** 4/4/2017

**Purpose:** Routine maintenance

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

**People:** Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

**Summary:** It was an awesome day on the trail. We ran into eight thru-hikers. Gloria shuttled me. She walked in some but had to leave early. We broke apart two campsites, cleaned out water diversions, and managed to cut out one major blowdown with a hand saw and Pulaski. I broke my new saw blade. Luckily most of the tree fell off of the trail. I cleared some smaller blowdowns, and continued my harassment of ATV folk by dragging downed limbs across their access to the A.T. I also cut back new growth of invasive rose and briars, and fixed a spot where a small dead pine had fallen, pulling apart the tread way.

**Reporting:** Jim Foster

**Date:** 4/5/2017

**Purpose:** Repaint blazes and do general maintenance

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

**People:** Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

**Summary:** We finished painting the blazes and cleared five small blowdowns from the gap to the Shelter. We also put some finishing touches on the rootball hole that we repaired last week. There's one large blowdown about 1/4 mile north of the gap that will need a chainsaw to remove. We saw lots and lots of hikers; looks like a busy year for the trail.

**Reporting:** Scotty Bowman

**Date:** 4/7/2017

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

**Location:** Section 7, Vandeventer Shelter to Wilbur Dam Rd

**People:** Scotty Bowman

**Summary:** It was a brisk day as I hiked in to check Vandeventer Shelter. Along the way I cut back greenbriar and rhododendron, and cleaned out the two waterbars located about 2.5 miles from Wilbur Dam Road. All springs are flowing well. At the shelter there is no new graffiti and the graffiti board is working great. I picked up a little bit of trash around the shelter (not much). I talked with about 15 hikers.

**Reporting:** Craig Haire

**Date:** 4/8/2017

**Purpose:** Clear trail obstruction

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

**People:** Craig Haire

**Summary:** I used a hand saw to remove branches hanging down into the trail. There remains only one large tree, easy to step over, about a mile north of Stan Murray Shelter. Between Stan Murray and Overmountain Shelter there were fresh ATV tracks at various places and saplings at trail's edge cut flush to the ground. I later learned a crew from NC was called in to rescue an injured girl in a large hiking group. She had been hauled to the Stan Murray Shelter in a makeshift litter.

**Reporting:** Craig Haire

**Date:** 4/8/2017

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

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

**People:** Craig Haire

**Summary:** Using a hand saw, I cut and removed large branches blown into the trail from the recent storm. It was a cold and windy day.

**Reporting:** Dean Baird

**Date:** 4/8/2017

**Purpose:** Inspect and maintain trail section

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

**People:** Adam Baird, Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

**Summary:** We inspected the trail for blowdowns and debris. We cleaned brush, limbs, etc from the trail; removed a large plastic container of trash that was located at the Shook Branch trailhead; and checked the condition of the blazes.

**Reporting:** Dean Baird

**Date:** 4/8/2017

**Purpose:** Inspect and maintain trail section

**Location:** Section 9b, Pond Flats to Hampton Trailhead

**People:** Adam Baird, Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

**Summary:** We removed tree branches on the trail; there were no major blowdowns. We brushed in several spots where the old trail (that went straight up Pond Mountain) is still being used by hikers because it is difficult to determine where the current trail course is. We inspected blazes and determined that several blazes need to be repainted and double-blazing is needed at some of the areas that we brushed in. We will do the painting on another trip since we did not have any paint on this trip. We checked the springs near the top of Pond Mtn, which are clean and running well.

**Reporting:** Dean Baird

**Date:** 4/8/2017

**Purpose:** Inspect and maintain trail section

**Location:** Section 10, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail

**People:** Adam Baird, Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

**Summary:** We picked up and removed a full bag of trash. We replaced (again) some rocks that were missing from the area of heavy locust and rock cribbing, where the rock wall is very close to Laurel Fork Creek and just before the blue-blaze/A.T. intersection.

**Reporting:** Lynn DiFiore

**Date:** 4/9/2017

**Purpose:** Routine maintenance

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

**People:** Lynn DiFiore

**Summary:** I removed a moderate amount of trash from the barn, including a half dozen disposable diapers dumped behind the shelter. I cleaned out all waterbars and removed a minor amount of blowdowns (mostly limbs). There were lots of NOBOS and section hikers out. All springs are running well.

**Reporting:** Craig Haire

**Date:** 4/9/2017

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

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

**People:** Craig Haire

**Summary:** There was a particularly nasty obstruction just north of Doll Flats. It had created a detour, which I blocked with cleared branches. All is now cleared except for three easy step-overs, too large for a hand saw, within a mile of 19E.

**Reporting:** Joe DeLoach

**Date:** 4/9/2017

**Purpose:** Section maintenance

**Location:** Section 15a, Carvers Gap to Cloudland

**People:** Andrew Ross-Sermons, Christopher Ross-Sermons, Joe DeLoach

**Summary:** First-timers, Andrew and Christopher, joined in a trip through snow to Cloudland. We cut about a half-dozen blowdowns, clipped brush, picked up trash in and around the shelter, and left a new shelter register. Hikers reported some larger trees down Trail south of Cloudland; it sounded like between Cloudland and Ash Gap.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 4/13/2017

**Purpose:** Trail Rehab

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

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

**Summary:** We cleaned out the water source at Moreland Gap Shelter. We removed a blowdown that had already been cut closer to Canute Place. We rehabbed a number of small areas where trail was sloughing. Either we redug the bench or cribbed and back filled. Tim repainted the graffiti board with a couple of coats and repainted some of the blazes. We fixed one small stream crossing by redoing stepping stones. The shelter still looks good and has no graffiti. Surprisingly, we saw only four hikers today.

**Reporting:** Kenneth Buchanan

**Date:** 4/14/2017

**Purpose:** Refresh blazes, inspect shelter

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

**People:** Ken Buchanan, Laura Jack

**Summary:** Good intentions and opportunity came together on a fine Spring day. I persuaded our daughter to go along and repaint the blazes on this section. I was a bit surprised to note weeds and grass are not yet a problem. We did encounter one blowdown which is an easy step-over. We met quite a few hikers; one wanted a picture of himself painting a blaze. A fun outing.

**Reporting:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:** 4/14/2017

**Purpose:** Paint blazes

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

**People:** Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

**Summary:** It was an awesome sunny day. We were passed by 27 thru-hikers and 4 section hikers. We painted blazes, removed one campsite, and cut out a few minor blowdowns. A couple larger ones will require a return trip with a chain saw. We continued cutting back multiflora rose and pulling down limbs across places where ATVs access the trail.

**Reporting:** Kim Peters

**Date:** 4/15/2017

**Purpose:** Paint Shelter

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

**People:** Lotta Murray, Ken Murray, Jeffrey Richards, Carl Fritz, Phyllis Cairnes, Stacy LaBare, Lowell Toof, Kat Johnson, Kim Peters, Jim Floyd, "Georgia Peach"

**Summary:** What a great turnout we had on a beautiful day for this 3<sup>rd</sup>-Saturday trip! The goal for the day was to clean and paint Double Springs Shelter, install a graffiti board and seal the leaking roof. With so many hands, this was accomplished in record time. We even had additional help when a hiker "Georgia Peach" stopped and offered his help for a few hours. Many thanks to Lotta Murray for preparing the graffiti board, as well as for carrying it in; and to Ken Murray for installing it. This marvelous invention of Lotta's has now been installed in five of our newly painted shelters and all evidence suggests that it helps reduce (or hopefully eliminates) the amount of graffiti on walls.





*Lowell, Richard, Carl, and Lotta getting ready to paint*



*Carl is sealing the leaky roof*



*Ken and the newly painted shelter*



*Lotta and the graffiti board*

**Reporting:** Ken Murray

**Date:** 4/18/2017

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

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

**People:** Ken Murray, John Beaudet

**Summary:** We cut up and removed a large blowdown near Temple Hill Gap.

**Reporting:** Vic Hasler

**Date:** 4/20/2017

**Purpose:** A.T. Spring Partnership Meeting

**Location:** Appalachian Ranger District Office, Mars Hill, NC

**People:** SAWS: Bill Hodge, Katie Currier; ATC: Morgan Summerville, Matt Drury; USFS App. RD: Kevin Knesek, Cleve Fox; USFS Unaka RD: Leslie Morgan, Cheryl Summers; USFS Watauga RD: Keith Kelley, Chas Ingle; TEHCC: Vic Hasler, Kim Peters, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Paul Benfield, Dan Firth, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Eric Middlemas

**Summary:** After being delayed – twice, the Spring A.T. Partnership gathered a few key organizations to ensure our alignment on current issues facing the Trail and the forest through which it passes. This trip report is a summary. If you need further details, please contact someone who attended.

SAWS recently relocated their office to 225 East Chestnut in Asheville. Another relocation is at Turkey Pen Gap to be opened this coming weekend during training hitch for crew leaders. SAWS is the designated distributor of a \$250K grant from the Wilderness Alliance, which is available to all types of trails (hiking, biking, etc.) to immediately support planned improvements. Deadline for submission is June 2nd, but the work and spending must be completed by end of 2017.

Keith Kelley shared that the area is still dry with at least two forest fires caused by campfires.

USFS Appalachian RD has purchased a pull mulcher for shrubs to help with open area management. NEPA paperwork for Deep Gap



(Unaka Mtn) relocation must be regenerated as the prior submission cannot be found. Permission was given, with two-weeks notice, to haul items along the old A.T. route to repair the Stan Murray Shelter before Oct 15th fire season. USFS engineers have looked at the structural concern for Overmountain Shelter and believe it can be addressed while giving OK for normal use. The report and drawings will be forwarded to TEHCC.

USFS Watauga RD is glad that Chad Ingle (from Land Between the Lakes NRA, KY) is on board for the summer. Scotty Bowman is also employed by the district as ranger in wilderness areas. A dead pine tree at Double Springs Shelter was promptly removed by forest service staff. A problem with posted advertising along the A.T. was addressed, as was an announced organized event at Osborne Farm in mid-May.

USFS Unaka RD currently does not have a trail technician, so has arranged with another organization to have a leader with three crew over six months to work across the district. They will have a booth at the Great Outdoors festival in Erwin on May 6th. A pair of temporary trapping grids are being set up to enable better counts for gypsy moth and bears.

TEHCC shared that "graffiti boards" are being tested at a few shelters, with what appears to be success in mitigating the problem; however, not yet through a whole thru-hiker season. The bridge at Shook Branch was recently replaced, which is good now that the lake level has been raised. Equivalent bridge replacement at Wilder Mine (near US19E) is slated for mid-summer; lumber has already been cut and supplies purchased using 2016 TN tag grant. Roan Mountain, TN will have an April 24th designation event as an A.T. Community; then a May 6th celebration. TEHCC raised a question regarding the designated status of the Grindstaff monument. USFS Watauga RD will check their records, then we'll continue the conversation at the Fall meeting. The maintenance approach of several USFS trails which intersect the A.T. was discussed, with Temple Hill Gap (#524) and Granny Lewis (#108) not being actively maintained. Holston Mtn (USFS #44) has mixed reports on whether in good condition. Konnarock Crew should finish up relocations for Backbone Rock Trail (USFS #53) this year; then the club will not be employing this group until 2020 for Weedy Gap. Jess Schaner will begin as the 2017 Roan Naturalist on May 18th.

*Reuben Potter, USFS, working on that pine  
behind Double Springs Shelter*

ATC stated that further staff changes are underway as Amanda Wheelock and Sean Ogle are leaving to pursue other opportunities. The APPA Capital Plan needs to be update by early June. Tag grants were approved for repair/painting shelters and for a large chainsaw, plus the request by SAHC for long-term artwork at the Carvers Gap kiosk. Currently the TN program is providing \$15K/year in grants. The 2012 inventory of campsites in the Roan Highlands along the A.T. will be updated this year with assistance by Dan Firth, who is also working on rare plant monitoring. Dan Firth and Bill Tindall have agreed to identify ash tree stands along the Trail for treatment for the Emerald Ash Borer invasive species. (FYI, Bill Tindall says EAB has been seen in Church Hill, TN.) Jason Zink would like feedback on ATCAMP app, which can allow hikers to indicate where they will be staying along the Trail.

Next meeting is proposed to be Wednesday, October 4th at Watauga Ranger Station in Unicoi, TN. SAWS has a known conflict.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 4/22/2017

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

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

**People:** Paul Benfield, Richard Carter, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Gerald Scott, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe; ASU Trail Crew: Lawson Osteen, Austin Babb, Brian Everette, Beau Clark

**Summary:** Four enthusiastic ASU Trail Crew members joined us to rehab some wet areas between Walnut Mtn Road and Elk River. With the rain this week, we thought we could find some problems and we made significant progress in improving them. We cleaned most water diversions. On the old road we improved some waterbars by adding new logs. Several drainages were redug to allow water to drain. Locust logs were added to turnpike and rocks were placed for step-overs. A couple of areas were rehabbed that were sloughing. One required some rock cribbing. Fortunately, we only took one shower today. Gerald placed the new shelter sign. We saw almost 40 hikers.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 4/25/2017

**Purpose:** Flag trail relocations

**Location:** Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap to 0.3 mi North of Weedy Gap

**People:** Carl Fritz, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** Hikers by the dozens, fog all day, beautiful greening hillsides with numerous wild flowers, and muddy trail were all abundant today. We feel pretty good about five flagged, long relocations to take out the steepest areas. There is only one switchback and it is doubtful that anyone will cut it, but it may take twenty steps to install it. Getting resources here will be a problem.

**Reporting:** Dan Firth

**Date:** 4/25/2017

**Purpose:** Manufacture wedges for hand saws

**People:** Dan Firth

**Summary:** The Silky and other hand saws create a narrow kerf that standard plastic wedges do not fit into. To make the hand saws

more effective, wedges were made with narrower tips to fit these kerfs.

**Reporting:** Dan Firth

**Date:** 4/25/2017

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

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

**People:** Dan Firth

**Summary:** Though misty most all day, it was a great day to walk the section. I cleared several blowdowns, picked up trash and cleaned a number of water diversions after the recent rains. Thru-hikers were coming by the dozen along with one SOBO. The newly installed graffiti board at Double Springs Shelter has already been put to use.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 4/25/2017

**Purpose:** Mow Trail

**Location:** Section 4b, TN 91 Osborne Farm

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** We mowed about half of the Trail across the Osborne Farm, but didn't finish due to mower problems. The grass was tall and very wet. The grass on the trail needs to be sprayed as soon as possible. We plan to return on Thursday and complete the mowing at the Osborne Farm and the Over Mountain Shelter. Two trees are reported down between Vandeventer Shelter and Iron Mtn Shelter. Nineteen hikers passed by while we were mowing.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 4/27/2017

**Purpose:** Mow Grass

**Location:** Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** We mowed and cut weeds at the camping area and along the trails as needed at the Overmountain Shelter. We picked up a bag of trash and removed two fire pits. The upper Spring has plenty of water. The lower spring has plenty of water, but the pipe isn't running at this time. This needs to be addressed later when the upper spring starts to dry up.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 4/27/2017

**Purpose:** Mow Grass

**Location:** Section 4b, TN 91 Osborne Farm

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** We completed the mowing of the trail across the Osborne Farm. Due to the recent rain and warm weather, the grass was about to get ahead of us. The trail is completely mowed and looks good. We will need to remove it very soon due to the fast growing this Spring.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 4/27/2017

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 17, Two miles in from north end of section, Iron Mountain Gap

**People:** Daryl Anderson, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Eric Middlemas, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

**Summary:** We removed one large leaner that was crowding hikers. Otherwise, we redug a lot of trail that was sloughing due to roots. We added much locust log cribbing. Hikers were abundant and most thanked us. A hiker remarked that our trail was excellent in the recent heavy rains compared to what she expected in her area of New York/New Jersey.