



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

April 2018

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

Editor – [Terry Oldfield](#)

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## Bob Peoples to be Inducted into Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame

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*TEHCC received notice that Bob Peoples will be inducted into the Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame on May 4, 2018. The museum's website ([link](#)) cites his biography as...*

After retiring from the U.S. Air Force in 1988, Bob Peoples decided to devote his life to hiking trails. He initially helped to maintain the Long Trail in Vermont, a portion of which is also the A.T. Then, in 1994, Bob and his late wife Pat purchased a cabin adjacent to the A.T. near Hampton, TN and founded the legendary Kincora Hostel. Thousands of A.T. section and thru-hikers have received Bob's gracious hospitality there.

Each year, immediately after the Trail Days festival in Damascus, VA, Bob leads the Hard Core crew, comprised of the current year's class of thru-hikers. For a couple of weeks, Bob and his crew take on the most difficult and challenging trail maintenance tasks on the A.T., before they resume their adventure on the trail. Bob is perhaps the A.T.'s greatest living ambassador, inspiring young people who have experienced the Trail to give back afterwards.

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## Seventh Anniversary of the TEHCC Trail Wiki

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With the April 2011 newsletter, Tim Schaefer announced to the club (and world) that the TEHCC Trail Wiki – a site capturing information about hiking trails around our region – was born. Since then, the wiki has grown to reference 179 trails in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. It is a work-in-progress, created by volunteer contributors, with some trails fully defined with driving directions, route details, kml on the Google map, and pictures, while others need to be populated with more of this information. For example, a recent addition by Vic Hasler after a November outing is the [Laurel River Trail](#).

The forum is open to editing by anyone after they set up a basic account (to prevent vandalism by bots). If you want to contribute, please sign up for an account. If you have useful information (not covered by a copyright), but don't wish to perform editing, then send a message with the content to any Steering Committee member who will route to available resources.

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## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Trails System Act

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This year is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Trails System, which officially kicks off many events to celebrate the access and protection of American trails. On February 13, leaders of the Departments of Interior and Agriculture met in Washington, DC during “Hike the Hill” for a conversation on National Trails, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and their lasting legacy. (This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act).

To help you see the scale and impact of our National Trails System, a Webmap was created by APPA GIS Specialist Matt Robinson with the link to the map below:

<https://nps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d89951079a374f28ab4a3b9fc41025dd>

In Northeast Tennessee, there will be many events to commemorate the anniversary. Resources and promotional materials are available for networking with other groups at: <https://www.trails50.org/>.

Check the TEHCC newsletter often to see scheduled events. And please join us as we get together and promote outdoor recreation, hike, or do volunteer work in our community.

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## TEHCC Welcomes New Members

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Ying Chen  
Lena Pingilley  
Kate Pellett  
William Bond  
Jim Poteet

Charles Long  
Kimberly Maness  
Gregory Lewis  
Prachee Patel

Keith Moody  
Victor King  
Jeremiah Tomlinson  
Shirley Massengill

Michael Yang  
Jeremy Honaker  
Allen Sybert  
Connie Squires

Christopher Scarazzo  
Jonathan Sutton  
Leanne Mays  
S. Smith Wham

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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 APEs/TEHCC paddling events, see <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/category/regional-events/>.

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
April 10	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	<a href="#">William Werner</a>	423-229-2253
April 21	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-336-0128
April 21	Roan Mountain Garlic Mustard Pull	<a href="#">Greg Kramer</a>	423-349-6125
April 25-29	Suwannee River, FL, Paddle and Camping Trip	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
April 28	Invasive Species Removal	<a href="#">Greg Kramer</a>	423-349-6125
May 5	Roan Mountain Trail Festival	Jim Chambers	423-440-2518
May 5	Roan Mountain Hard Core	Jim Chambers	423-440-2518
May 8	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	<a href="#">William Werner</a>	423-229-2253
May 19	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-336-0128
May 19-20	APE's Beginner Whitewater Kayak Course	<a href="#">Ryan Shealy</a>	423-963-6066
May 20	A.T.: Spivey Gap to High Rocks Overlook	<a href="#">Vic Hasler</a>	423-239-0388

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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: [William Werner](#), 423-229-2253

Location: Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, TN; Bldg 280 Cafeteria

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-280 cafeteria. After going through the turnstiles at the main B-280 entrance, continue straight then right. Continue straight and turn left and through the hall by the vending machines. The cafeteria is directly ahead. 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 133.8-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 available in Kingsport on Thursdays at the [Kingsport Aquatic Center](#)! Admission is \$3 for two full hours of fun; Aquatic Center members may attend free! If you have equipment, you may drop it off at the door closest to the indoor pool; then enter the main door to pay at the front desk. The pool does not provide paddling equipment, but if you are just starting out and do not have your own gear, please contact Ryan Shealy (423-963-6066). For additional event details, click [here](#).

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

Contact: [Kim Peters](#), 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 or shelters. All tools will be furnished and no prior experience required! We typically have four to five people on each trip. The more folks who show up, the less work each individual has to do... so 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.

## **Scheduled Events**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, Hiking with Tools!, Saturday, April 21, 2018, 8:30 am**

Contact: [Kim Peters](#), 423-336-0128

The weather didn't cooperate for our March, 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday; so we'll try again in April. For this trip, we will work on the 3.2-mile section of trail between Bitter End and Walnut Mountain Road. The primary task will be lopping back encroaching vegetation, mostly rhododendron. If the weather is warm enough, we may even get the blazes painted.

All necessary tools will be provided by the club; participants need only to bring work gloves and food and water for the day. We will meet in the parking lot in front of the Parkway Discount Wine and Liquor Store on South Roan Street in Johnson City at 8:30 am and carpool to the trail-head. Other meeting places can be arranged given prior notice.

Please let Kim know if you plan to attend and where you would like to meet by Wednesday, April 18, so Kim can have enough tools available for everyone.



### **Roan Mountain Garlic Mustard Pull, Saturday, April 21, 2018, 8:30 am**

Contact: [Greg Kramer](#), 423-349-6125

Roan Mtn State Park, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, ATC, TEHCC, and other groups are partnering to work this day. Meet at 8:30 am in Colonial Heights to arrive at Roan Mtn State Park main entrance by 10 am for briefing and to receive heavy duty trash bags. We'll pull until early afternoon, and then drop off the collected plants back at the park before heading home. Last year 634 pounds of garlic mustard was pulled. Rain date is Wednesday, May 2.

## **Suwannee River, Florida, Paddle and Camping Trip, April 25-29, 2018**

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

This will be a self contained trip in Sea Kayaks for a 3 day, 2 night, paddling and camping trip on the Suwannee River. Food is catered, but you need your own boat, gear, and equipment. And you must be able to pack everything inside your boat. Contact trip leaders Debbie Briscoe or Andy Lundberg for details.

## **Invasive Species Removal, Devils Creek Gap, Saturday, April 28, 2018, 8:30 am – 2 pm**

Contact: [Greg Kramer](mailto:greg.kramer@tehcc.org), 423-349-6125

Many plants imported to the US can outcompete native species and these plants are called invasive species. One invasive plant that is still being propagated in the US is the Autumn or Russian Olive. On April 28, TEHCC will be removing Autumn Olive as well as picking Garlic Mustard. Invasive species spread by a variety of methods. Garlic Mustard seeds attach themselves to clothes and animal fur, which are picked up in one place and dropped in another. Russian Olive was imported as a large shrub which can provide food and cover for birds. As birds travel the Atlantic flyway, they deposit seeds from Autumn Olive plants along the flyway corridor, which includes the Appalachian Trail.



We will be cutting Autumn Olive plants and painting their stems with herbicide to keep the plant from growing back from its roots. We'll leave from the Colonial Heights gathering location at 8:30 am to arrive at Devils Creek Gap by 9:30 am. Current plans are to work until 1 pm. In case of inclement weather, a back-up date of Friday, May 4th, has been selected.

## **Roan Mountain Trail Festival, Saturday, May 5, 2018, 9 am – 5 pm**

Contact: [Jim Chambers](mailto:jim.chambers@roanmountainat.com), 423-440-2518

**"All Trails Lead to Roan Mountain"** as the A.T. Community invites the public to enjoy fun outdoor activities, great music by local performers, and opportunities to learn about the Appalachian Trail. The festival will be held from 9am to 5pm in the Roan Mountain Town Park, 118 Carter Street, with local vendors and outdoor organizations present. Accommodations are available at several Roan Mountain hostels, cabins and bed and breakfasts. Overnight camping will also be allowed on the Roan Mountain Community Park grounds for \$10 per night. More details will be released later by the event's planning group. (Check "Roan Mountain AT Community" on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/Roan-Mountain-AT-Community-102544100270137/>)

## **Roan Mountain Hard Core, Saturday, May 5, 2018, 8 am**

Contact: [Jim Chambers](mailto:jim.chambers@roanmountainat.com), 423-440-2518

Along with the **Roan Mountain Trail Festival**, the Roan Mountain A.T. Community will be hosting an inaugural Hard Core Trail Maintenance Event to provide a one-day trail work opportunity in the Roan Highlands. The local community can join A.T. thru-hikers and regular trail maintainers to perform trail rehab and erosion control just south of Carvers Gap, and just north of the peak of Roan Mountain. Participants will leave the Roan Mountain Town Park, 118 Carter Street, at 8am. All participants should dress to comfortably perform trail work above 5000 feet, bring a lunch and plenty of water, and be prepared to work hard and have fun giving back to the Appalachian Trail. Afterwards, a barbecue dinner and awards ceremony with event t-shirts will be held at the town park. For those needing a place to stay, Kincora Hostel and camping in Roan Mountain Town Park (no charge) are available. For a complete list of lodging options, go to [www.tourcartercounty.com/stay](http://www.tourcartercounty.com/stay).

## **APE's Beginner Whitewater Kayak Course, May 19-20, 2018**

Contact: [Ryan Shealy](mailto:ryan@riverapes.org), 423-963-6066

If you've ever thought how much fun it would be to learn how to kayak, now's your chance!! The Beginner Whitewater Kayak Course, sponsored by the Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) and the Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club, will be held May 19th and 20th in the Tri-Cities area. The clinic is designed for anyone wanting to learn the fundamentals of whitewater kayaking that will ensure a fun and safe time on the river. No previous experience is necessary. Instruction will consist of one day on flat water and one day on the river. As in the past, there will continue to be a strong emphasis on safety. Participants will be responsible for providing their own gear and transportation, although loaner gear is available on a first come basis.

Minimum required gear: Whitewater kayak, double-bladed (kayak) paddle, whitewater helmet, spray skirt, PFD (life jacket), closed-toe water shoes or booties (sneakers are fine too but they'll get wet). Additionally, it is recommended that each student bring a wicking type shirt (no cotton) for wear while on the water, sunscreen and a rain jacket. Students are responsible for bringing their own lunch and drinking water/sports drinks.

### Schedule

May 19th (Saturday): Lake instruction at Warrior's Path State Park, 8 am-4 pm. Students must participate on Saturday to participate on Sunday.

May 20th (Sunday): River Trip on the Lower Nolichuck River, class II, 8 am-4 pm. Note: Instructors reserve the right to exclude anyone if they believe safety will be compromised.

Cost: \$75.00 per student (which includes a \$5 ACA event membership fee and a \$10 APEs membership fee). If you are already a member of either organization, deduct that portion of the cost.

Registration: Online at <http://www.riverapes.org/registration.html>, or by mail: [Click here](#) to download the PDF Registration Form and mail in with payment made out to APEs to Ryan Shealy: 215 Hawk Street, Blountville, TN 37617 by 5/12/2018.

For course description and additional registration information go to: <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/2018/03/07/apes-tehcc-beginner-whitewater-kayak-course/>



## A.T.: Spivey Gap to High Rocks Overlook, Sunday, May 20, 2018

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

Rating: *Moderate, ~4-mile RT in-out hike along the Appalachian Trail with 1080' climb to enormous rock outcropping*

This trip is being jointly coordinated with the Mid-Appalachian Highlands Club (MAHC) to explore an adjacent A.T. section heading south from Spivey Gap. Before tree foliage is fully in place, we hope to enjoy seeing spring wildflowers and views of the nearby highpoints - a reward for the heart pumping exercise from climbing rock steps and the rising trail.

MAHC will leave their usual gathering place (near Arby's on Roan Street, Johnson City) at 1:15pm; so let's head out from Colonial Heights at 1pm sharp for carpooling. The group will arrive at the trailhead at 2pm. We'll take our time going up the A.T. to enjoy the wildflowers (and catch our breath). After enjoying the overlook, we'll return to the parking area after 5pm and back in Colonial Heights around 6pm.

For further information and to let us know of your interest, please call/e-mail the hike leader.



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## For the Record

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### Southern Partnership Meeting, March 9-11, 2018

Steve Perri reporting

Steve Wilson and I attended the Spring Partnership Meeting at Hungry Mother State Park. This meeting was attended by members of the ATC Southern Region (SORO), Virginia Region (VARO), ATC, Appalachian Trail Park Office (APPA), and numerous agency partners from the park service, USFS, and Smoky Mountains National Park. Suzanne Dickson was introduced as the new ATC

President and CEO at ATC. She provided an inspiring perspective on the ATC partnership and how she plans to elevate ATC's leadership role and stewardship in protecting the A.T. She has a lot of experience and many ideas of how to bring more funding to ATC.

Friday afternoon we toured the proposed Damascus A.T. visitor's center and park. The city has worked diligently with ATC to design and staff a visitor's center to provide education, awareness and resources for visitors. Plans are to begin construction this year and to possibly open for the A.T. Days event in 2019.

On Saturday, clubs and Trail Community groups met and generated some ideas on how to partner to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Trails Act. Plans discussed include TEHCC partnering with Roan Mtn for the Rhododendron Festival on May 5, with Meet the Mountains Festival in Johnson City on August 24-25, and a possible event TBD with Unicoi. This is also the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. One attendee thought the



Artist Rendering of Damascus  
A.T. Visitors Center

Nolichucky River might be considered as a future Wild and Scenic river. I've been asked to discuss this with TEHCC paddlers.

APPA announced that the NPS Park Passport program includes a stamp of the A.T. (see image with Roan Mtn as one of the stamps).

The clubs from SORO discussed challenges and successes with training, the NEPA process, diversity/recruitment, delegation of roles, resource management, and how to coordinate with universities wanting to volunteer with clubs. Working with universities can be a challenge when they ask to work for several days with one club. We agreed to assist one another and see if other work within the partnership (including USFS) could be built in to assist with facility needs in addition to the A.T. APPA shared news that in 2019 additional funding of \$1.2M has been assigned to ATC as a result of the asset inventory process. Additional funds are anticipated in the year or two after 2019 and then will eventually level off. For TEHCC, our assets have contributed ~\$75,000 towards this allocation; so many thanks to the club volunteers for their time generating this data. APPA is planning on adding more assets to the system and so the SORO



2018 National Stamp

**Appalachian National Scenic Trail** - In 2018, the trail will celebrate its 50th anniversary as a unit of the National Park System. It is the oldest, continuously marked, and publicly protected trail in the United States. Traversing 14 states, from Georgia to Maine, hikers can experience breathtaking vistas, endemism areas untouched by development, and the significance of history along the nearly 2,200-mile trail. Since 1921, volunteers have contributed countless hours to the conservation of the Appalachian Trail. 2018 also marks the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act.

Committee asked that the data forms be provided to clubs for reporting changes since the 2015 inventory. We were also asked to ID a club rep to interface with APPA for these changes. APPA has been testing a beta version of an App called Fast Field Forms. It is a phone App that might be suitable for reporting maintenance and asset inventory info. It turns out, all Konnarock projects have been reported in the asset database system by them. Clubs need to review their campsite inventory and recommend locations that might be suitable for groups. Clubs have been asked for a point of contact for updates to the campsite inventory list as well. Visitor Use Management is getting started for areas where heavy use impacts are occurring. Morgan Sommerville led a discussion on the sustainability of privies. He cited TEHCC as a model with one privy for a high use area. But the ATC needs to think about a longer-term solution for privies elsewhere, as they require a lot of volunteer time to support. Food storage and how to mitigate bear intrusions continue to be topics of conversation. The Smoky Mtns NP may require bear canisters in the future. New acquisitions are complete or in the works for a tract near Engine Gap on the NC side and another on the TN side of Hump Mtn. Future tracts on the USFS list include several tracts in the Buck Mtn area to be paid for by the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Clubs will be engaged with ATC and their land management partners for renewal of the volunteer service agreements. One trail club noted that one of their district rangers wouldn't sign their volunteer service agreement because some club activities were outside the forests and no VIF (insurance) would cover those activities. ATC is planning to assist clubs to reconcile some of these issues. ATC



is also planning on renewing MOUs between ATC, clubs and the USFS within SORO. Some clubs have not executed an agreement since 1983. ATC prefers to have a regional director, USFS agency partner, and the club president as signatories if agreement can be reached to minimize versions. Expect more dialog with Leanna Joyner from ATC to get agreements executed this year.

The Konnarock Trail Crew assignments were reviewed. I communicated that TEHCC is willing to pass on the 2018 project slotted for Shook Branch and the Atwood property until we can get better alignment among TDOT, USFS, ATC and the club on the preferred crossing and approach. Benjamin Barry asked us to consider pushing it out to 2024 after Greasy Creek. I told him we would consider that, but crew time may not even be necessary because it likely won't be a lot of work, at least on the Atwood side. ATC and Mount Rodgers trail club will be working on Wilburn Ridge this year with Hard Core. They might request help for tools or PPE.

A few more notable items:

- This is the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary year for Morgan Sommerville at ATC. He was well-roasted Saturday night.
- SORO volunteer of the year: Don Hicks of GATC
- SORO Agency Partner of the Year: Kevin Gibbs, Park Manager, Amicalola Falls State Park
- The 2018 Fall RPC Meeting will be October 20 at the Asheville ATC Office.
- The 2019 Spring Southern Partnership Meeting will be March 8-10; location TBD.



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## A.T. Maintenance Reports

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**Reporting:** Tim Stewart

**Date:** 2/24/2018

**Purpose:** Check section

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

**People:** Tim Stewart

**Summary:** Taking advantage of the nice weather, I hiked in from Bitter End lopping rhodos and clearing some blowdowns. I did not make it all the way to the shelter. The trail was in pretty good condition.

**Reporting:** Joe DeLoach

**Date:** 3/1/2018

**Purpose:** Open Areas Meeting

**Location:** Watauga Ranger District Office, Unicoi

**People:** Joe DeLoach

**Summary:** This is an annual meeting to match open areas to be maintained with available funds. It applies to all of the A.T. north of the Smokies in North Carolina and Virginia. Attendees included all three district rangers whose districts are on the TEHCC section, Matt Drury from ATC, Cherokee North Zone biologist Joe McGuiness, two representatives from the Carolina Mountain Club, and other USFS personnel. Although never totally certain, the budget looks adequate this year to treat the open areas deemed important by their management partners.

**Reporting:** Lynn DiFiore

**Date:** 3/2/2018

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

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

**People:** Lynn DiFiore

**Summary:** I cleared numerous limbs and blowdowns from the recent storms. I also reconstructed the existing waterbars, removed a large amount of trash, and dispersed the ever-recurring fire ring at Little Hump.

**Reporting:** Dean Baird

**Date:** 3/3/2018

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

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

**People:** Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

**Summary:** We re-painted blazes and removed several blowdowns. The spring at the top of Pond Mountain is flowing very well.

**Reporting:** Dean Baird

**Date:** 3/3/2018

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

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

**People:** Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

**Summary:** We re-painted blazes and added some new blazing. Specifically, this meant blazes and double blazes closer to the top of Pond where the re-routed trail has abrupt turns in the rocky areas. We also brushed in one area where the straight, former trail still appears to be used. The old trail appears inaccessible from either one end or the other (although not both) in all of these locations. (In the past this has been temporary; stay tuned.) We also painted a double blaze at the Laurel Fork end of the section where the A.T. meets the Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail. We removed some blowdowns. It was a beautiful day to be on the trail.

**Reporting:** Dean Baird

**Date:** 3/3/2018

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

**Location:** Section 9b, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail

**People:** Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

**Summary:** We removed one blowdown and moved one rock at the area where the trail is log/rock cribbed between the rock wall and the creek. The water coming out of the bank into the trail is currently gushing and leaf debris has clogged the rock cribbing, allowing the trail to fill with water. The good news is that, for now, all of the rocks are still on the trail and have not been tossed into the creek. We also picked up a small amount of trash.

**Reporting:** Ken Buchanan

**Date:** 3/3/2018

**Purpose:** Remove reported blowdown

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

**People:** Ken Buchanan, Pat Buchanan, Wayne Buchanan, Steven Buchanan

**Summary:** I was told an 8-10 inch blowdown was across the trail South of the shelter. Perhaps getting wiser as I get older, I took loppers, an axe, and a couple of operators with me this time. We used a tag team to remove two blowdowns. We also trimmed green briars and cleared limbs from the trail. It was a fine day to be out and about. Three hikers and a family on an outing passed us.

**Reporting:** Tim Stewart

**Date:** 3/3/2018

**Purpose:** Check section

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

**People:** Tim Stewart

**Summary:** Another nice day, another trip out to Bitter End. This time I hiked all the way to Moreland Gap Shelter. Lopping rhodos and clearing blowdowns was the name of the game again. The shelter looked good. I placed a new register inside and removed some trash. After a small mishap with the paint, I repainted the graffiti board. It was a good day.

**Reporting:** Vic Hasler

**Date:** 3/3/2018

**Purpose:** Fourth trip to trim back dog hobble

**Location:** Section 19b, Curley Maple Gap Shelter - Nolichucky River, Around the third bridge

**People:** Vic Hasler

**Summary:** A fourth work day was needed to create the desired buffer on both sides of the main trail by trimming back the dog hobble and rhododendron. The morning was sunny, and chilly only until the real work began. A hoe was employed to clear the leaves and sticks from five waterbars to ensure proper drainage. The Katanaboy saw sliced through four blowdowns. The first set were passable 6-8" deadfalls, which were fully hauled away from the trail. A new blowdown appeared to be very fresh, fortunately just spreading its large crown across the narrow path. About an hour was required to cut each branch which was thrown into the forest versus piling right at the edge of the trail. The saw was also used to remove some rhododendron to create the desired 4' wide path.

The last section of dog hobble to heavily trim was roughly 100' south of the third bridge to 600' north of it. The dead and dying softwoods are dropping a significant number of limbs, which are typically just pulled to the trail's edge. These were first moved deeper into the forest to allow the swing blade and hand clippers to work on the growth. The A.T. now has some elbow-room to allow backpackers to pass through – even when the rhododendron droop in rainstorms. Only two north-bound section hikers (heading to Beauty Spot for tonight) were seen on this A.T. section today.

**Reporting:** Craig Haire

**Date:** 3/5/2018

**Purpose:** Rehab treadway

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

**People:** Craig Haire

**Summary:** I leveled the trail where it was too outsloped in four different locations. At least 4 thru-hikers came through while I was working.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/5/2018

**Purpose:** Fall hazard trees

**Location:** Section 12b, Walnut Mountain Road to Mountaineer Falls

**People:** Carl Fritz, Steve Wilson

**Summary:** We primarily went after some hazard trees at the tent site near Mountaineer Falls Shelter. We cut about fourteen trees of 12" or smaller. Most were hemlocks. We cut another six or more at the multiple tenting area just south of the falls. The water source, shelter, and trail all looked good, except for some loping and minor blowdowns. There is still some ice at the falls.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 3/5/2018

**Purpose:** Attend Appalachian Trail Kick-Off

**Location:** Amicalola Falls, Georgia

**People:** Jim Chambers, Connie Squires

**Summary:** TEHCC was represented at the 2018 Appalachian Trail Kick Off in Georgia. Direct Outreach for TEHCC was conducted at this two-day event to include networking with other southern trail maintaining clubs, training workshops with the ATC, and volunteer opportunities for 2018 northbound thru-hikers.

**Reporting:** Eric Middlemas

**Date:** 3/9/2018

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 18, Indian Grave Gap to Beauty Spot

**People:** Eric Middlemas

**Summary:** I removed six blowdowns (using a hand saw) from Indian Grave Gap to Beauty Spot. This section of the trail is now clear of blowdowns.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/9/2018

**Purpose:** Remove picnic table

**Location:** Section 8, Oliver Hollow Road to Watauga Lake Shelter

**People:** Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Ted Mowery, Kim Peters, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** We removed three blowdowns while hiking to Watauga Lake Shelter from Oliver Hollow Road. We saw the sun today, a section hiker, two north bounders and three day hikers. We took down the bear pole. With the aid of the cart from hell, we hauled out the picnic table and the steps to the shelter platform. We are attempting to discourage eating or staying at this site with it being under a bear closure.

**Reporting:** Steven T. Perri

**Date:** 3/9/2018

**Purpose:** Attend Southern Partnership Meeting



**Location:** Marion, VA

**People:** Steve Wilson, Steve Perri

**Summary:** Steve Wilson and I attended the Spring Partnership Meeting at Hungry Mother State Park. This meeting was attended by members of the ATC Southern Region (SORO), Virginia Region (VARO), ATC, Appalachian Trail Park Office (APPA), and numerous agency partners from the park service, USFS, and Smoky Mountains National Park. Suzanne Dickson was introduced as the new ATC President and CEO at ATC replacing retired Ron Tipton. She provided an inspiring perspective on the ATC partnership and how she plans to elevate ATC's leadership role and stewardship in protecting the A.T. She has a lot of experience and many ideas of what she plans to do to bring more funding to ATC.

We represented TEHCC during the regional partnership breakout meeting covering many policy, trail corridor and inter-agency issues. See separate report in this newsletter, [For the Record](#), for details.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 3/10/2018

**Purpose:** A.T. Community Summit

**Location:** Marion, VA

**People:** Jim Chambers, Kayla Carter

**Summary:** Kayla Carter and I represented TEHCC and Roan Mountain at the A.T. Community Summit portion of the Southern ATC Regional Partnership Meeting. Kayla and I presented Roan Mountain's 2018 agenda as an A.T. Community, as well as the long standing partner with TEHCC. Kayla Carter was instrumental in providing resources and contacts for proposed collaborative efforts among A.T. Communities, and for the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the National Trail Systems Act as it pertains to A.T. Communities.

**Reporting:** Vic Hasler

**Date:** 3/14/2018

**Purpose:** Spring 2018 A.T. Partnership

**Location:** Watauga Ranger District Office, Unicoi, TN

**People:** ATC: Morgan Sommerville, Ben Barry, Matt Drury; App RD: Richard Thornburgh, Cleve Fox; Unaka RD: Leslie Morgan, Cheryl Summers, Dennis Trentham; Watauga RD: Keith Kelley; TVA: Randy Short; TEHCC: Vic Hasler, Kim Peters, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Jim Chambers, Steve Perri, Eric Middlemas, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples; CMC: Tom Weaver, Paul Curtin

**Summary:** The Spring 2018 A.T. Partnership discussion had active participation by the listed representatives. This is a summary of a few topics to share with the general club.

Overmountain Shelter Structural Stabilization - We covered the benefits and challenges of the barn. Being an existing structure, USFS will need to follow a defined workflow to obtain comments for a specific proposal. Path forward may be to discuss options for stabilization and removal/replacement, then decide which to submit.

Volunteer Service Agreements - ATC has coordinated development of a five-year template. Most of the discussion was around trip rosters and emergency contact information.

US 321 Road Crossing - USFS Watauga District office will arrange for a field meeting with TDOT and all partners at the highway site.

Cherry Gap Shelter - This project is on hold for Elizabethton HS STEM group, thus allowing time to explore alternative site options.

Watauga Lake Shelter - The club has removed the bear pole, table, and steps to discourage use of the closed shelter. A question is whether the bear problem will be an ongoing issue; thus should the shelter be dismantled.

The next partnership meeting will be October 3rd at the Appalachian Ranger Station in Mars Hill, NC.

**Reporting:** Scott Hunt

**Date:** 3/15/2018

**Purpose:** Check Shelter

**Location:** Section 17, Cherry Gap Shelter

**People:** Scott Hunt

**Summary:** I hiked in shin-deep snow, with drifts above the knees and in high winds. I met two kind gentlemen who had cleared several blowdowns and replaced the log book at the shelter (see following report). Overall the trail was nice. The shelter is now clean of the visible trash. The gutters appeared to be in a state of disrepair, but it was hard to gauge with the weight of the snow.

**Reporting:** Eric Middlemas

**Date:** 3/15/2018

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

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

**People:** Eric Middlemas, Rich Ritter

**Summary:** We removed five good-sized blowdowns between Iron Mtn Gap and Cherry Gap Shelter using the amazing Silky Katanaboy 500 mm saw that was borrowed from TEHCC. One of the blowdowns, a 10 incher, had discourteously fallen across our newly rehabilitated trail, squashing an unfortunate rhododendron underneath. The saw worked great, but the walking was slow

going because of 6-8 inches of slippery snow on the trail with two-foot drifts in places and a delightful 20 mph cold wind. Since the amount of snow was unexpected, we had no gaiters and our boots, socks, and feet quickly became soggy wet. We also checked the shelter, which appeared to be in good shape, and replaced the log book. Even with cold, wet feet, it was fine day with beautiful vistas and scenery.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/16/2018

**Purpose:** Lop and clear debris

**Location:** Section 10, Dennis Cove to Laurel Falls

**People:** Alice Feinald "Kozi" and Jacob Bison

**Summary:** Alice and Jacob came to visit Bob Peoples and brought snowshoes from the north. They took tools and cleared the trail from Dennis Cove to Laurel Falls.

**Reporting:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:** 3/16/2018

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US 19E, lower half of section

**People:** Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

**Summary:** We finally got out to remove a large blowdown tangle that fell across an upper and lower switch back. We also found several more blowdowns the winter has given us. The lower end has a lot of dying and dead hemlocks and pines. We lost count of the number of cuts; at least 8 cuts of 6" to 10" diameter trees. The main project required many cuts. We lucked out when cutting the root ball; as we were able to roll it away from the trail. Tree sizes were 12" to 22" diameter. At the southern end of Bishop Hollow, we ran into an ATC crew and contractor cutting trees and bush sawing for the warbler project.

**Reporting:** Gayle Riddervold

**Date:** 3/18/2018

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

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

**People:** Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

**Summary:** We hiked to the shelter from the Shook Branch parking lot, cleaning up trash at the trail head and along the trail. Several small blowdowns were removed, and weeds and vegetation were cut back. Beyond the metal gate, there is a family illegally camping. Two tents are pitched and a bicycle. We did not see the family, but ran into a former retired ranger that said they have been camping there for two weeks and are homeless. Upon our return trip, we noticed a fire in a fire ring but still failed to see the family. I'm reporting this because someone needs to alert the Forest Service.

**Reporting:** Greg Kramer

**Date:** 3/19/2018

**Purpose:** Repair trail damage

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

**People:** Greg Kramer, Kayla Carter, Michelle Black, Reagan Streetman, Mitch Miller, Roslyn Cordell, Bryan Clayton, Jon Hartman Braun

**Summary:** A large tree had fallen and the root ball removed the trail. Two locust logs were placed next to the trail for a temporary path. This crew went in to fix the trail. We cut into the hillside and made trail along the gap made by the fallen tree.

**Reporting:** Scott Hunt

**Date:** 3/20/2018

**Purpose:** Check shelter

**Location:** Section 16a, Clyde Smith Shelter

**People:** Scott Hunt

**Summary:** I hiked with a NOBO thru-hiker, met 8 section hikers and another NOBO. Two hikers had missed the cut off to Greasy Creek. At the shelter I removed advertisements and 3 bags of trash, and cleaned out the fire pit. The water source is running well. A blowdown was noted about 0.1 mile north of the tent spot between Greasy Creek Gap and the shelter.

**Reporting:** Scotty Bowman

**Date:** 3/20/2018

**Purpose:** Check shelter

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

**People:** Scotty Bowman

**Summary:** I hiked up to Vandeventer Shelter for clean up, to replace shelter log and to paint the graffiti board. All three tasks went off without a hitch. I removed about 1.5 lbs of trash and rebuilt the fire ring. There are no issues to report for shelter, everything is solid. Signage is good, also. Water is flowing at the shelter spring and at the spring at the beginning of the section. I removed one small blowdown. I met two section hikers, one going South and the other North. I also met up with 2 NOBOs who were planning on hiking all the way to Damascus tonight to avoid as much of the snow as possible.