



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

May 2018

tehccorg

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“Fringed
Polygala”
or
“Gaywings”
Wildflower



Paul Benfield Honored at ALDHA Event

Submitted by Jim Chambers

One of Tennessee Eastman’s long-time trail maintainers was honored during the ALDHA Care Spring Clean Up in Pearisburg, VA. Paul Benfield not only provides leadership on the trail with the Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club, he is also a valuable asset for the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association (ALDHA).

Paul has been particularly active during this annual event when the group thoroughly cleans and makes much needed repairs to one of the many donation-only hostels along the Appalachian Trail. Paul’s natural engineering skills were once again utilized as the “ALDHA Fence” was rebuilt at the Holy Family Hostel in Pearisburg, VA.

Paul’s dedication to the Appalachian Trail and the complete hiker experience is clearly apparent in all that he does, and everyone is grateful for his service.



2018 Roan Naturalist, Travis Bordley

Introduction by Vic Hasler

The Roan Naturalist role is to first foster the understanding, appreciation, and connection among day users and hikers to the area, and then cultivate stewardship of the Roan Highlands and Appalachian Trail. 2018 is the sixth year having this position as a collaborative effort between ATC, SAHC, TEHCC, and USFS. You will find Travis most weekends and some other days between May to August educating the public about the sensitive ecology and Leave No Trace outdoor ethics to minimize the recreational impact.

Travis hails from Durham, NC. After completing a degree in Environmental Studies at UNC Asheville, he became an Americorps Associate with SAHC to provide outreach for the Roan Highlands, including creating education programs, conservation monitoring, and promotion through their blog and videos.

Travis is also an incredible photographer. Check out the North Carolina gallery on his website (uncletreevisimaging.com).



TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Craig Burns

Brian Chadwell

Matthew Fourspring

Xiaodong Liu

Candace Tanner

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

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

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
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	William Werner	423-229-2253
May 19	3 rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Kim Peters	423-336-0128
May 19-20	APE's Beginner Whitewater Kayak Course	Ryan Shealy	423-963-6066
May 20	A.T.: Spivey Gap to High Rocks Overlook	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388
June 1-3	Bluestone River Trip	Terry Dougherty	423-502-5177
June 2	Lower Watauga, Class I-II	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
June 8-10	Hootenanny Hang & Paddling Trip Weekend	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
June 8-10	APE's Basic Swift Water Rescue Course	Scott Fisher	276-698-4644
June 12	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	William Werner	423-229-2253
June 14	Paddle to the Grill (first of the season)	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
June 16	3 rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Kim Peters	423-336-0128
June 16	Lower Watauga, Class I-II	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
June 23	APE Nolichucky River Cleanup		
June 30	Lower Watauga, Class I-II	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636

Details of Upcoming Events

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

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) for hike details, including meeting time and place.

Thursday evenings from June 14 through the Summer: Paddle to the Grill, 7 pm – 10:30 pm

Contact: Debbie Briscoe, 423-534-3636

Each week we will be alternating between Boone Lake Marina, 452 Sportsman Dock Rd, Piney Flats, TN and Davis Marina (Boonies Restaurant), 641 Buffalo Rd, Blountville, TN. Bring your touring kayak/canoe to meet with The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (www.riverapes.org) and TEHCC (www.tehcc.org). We will launch within 30 minutes of the meeting time 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

We will launch from Riverside Park in Elizabethton behind the Ballpark at 3 pm unless there is water elsewhere. Call first to check and see if it's on! We stop for a break about halfway down the river, so don't forget your snacks. We are usually off the water by 7:00 pm or so. After we get back to the park and transfer boats back to our vehicles, we can go to 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: <https://goo.gl/maps/HVXN7MAaDBw>

Scheduled Events

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

Contact: Jim Chambers, 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. For the latest details, check event information at "Roan Mountain AT Community" on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/events/1499584523414441/>.

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

Contact: Jim Chambers, 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 Carver's Gap, and just north of the peak of Roan Mountain. Participants will leave the Roan Mountain Town Park, 118 Carter Street, at 8 am. 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.

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

Contact: [Ryan Shealy](mailto:Ryan.Shealy@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](mailto:Vic.Hasler@mahc.org), 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.



Bluestone River Trip, June 1-3, 2018, 39th Year

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

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 14 . Rooms are \$ 112/night + taxes. We plan to paddle the scenic Bluestone River both Saturday and Sunday. The first day is a Class III trip and the second day is Class I. 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 if you are planning to attend.

Hootenanny Camp/Paddle/Weekend, June 8-10, 2018

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

The Hootenanny Hang weekend will be in Unicoi, Roan Mountain area, 20 minutes from the Nolichucky River and Watauga Lake. It was planned for just local folks, but the property owners got excited about the idea of us renting the whole place, so we are inviting everyone from the hammock camping group I belong to and the APEs. There are people coming to this event from all over the country to paddle/hike and hang out for an adventure camping weekend.

Now a Hootenanny means a "Music Happening!" So there will be picking on the porch, open to anyone with an instrument. On Saturday night, we'll have a pot luck dinner and a raffle of hammock camping gear to help pay for the use of the campground. Any money left over will go toward the deposit for next year or be donated to the farm for any needed projects. There are 98 acres of wooded property at Blackberry Blossom Farm with walk-in-only campsites. Backpackers will be right at home; but if you have heavy gear, they will gladly haul it 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 are 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 morning. You can choose between two kinds of kayaking, whitewater (Nolichucky Gorge Class III-IV or Lower Nolichucky River Class I-II) or lake (Watauga Lake with a picnic on the island). There will be hiking trips also. Hike Roan Mountain to the balds from Carvers Gap or drive up to the Rhododendron Gardens. The pot luck on Saturday night will be after the activities at the camp store where there is a communal fire-pit for dutch oven cooking etc. Tickets to the gear raffle will be 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. Any spare gear you have will help; it doesn't have to be a lot, just something camping related someone can use.

Camping Cost: We have a flat-rate agreement for the cost of the campground. I am asking each person who attends to please give a donation or buy raffle tickets. Between your donation and the raffle, it should cover our costs of the venue and other expenditures like firewood, deposit for next year, etc.

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>

APes and TEHCC Basic Swift Water Rescue Course, June 8, 7 pm – June 10, 5 pm, 2018

Contact: Scott Fisher, 276-698-4644

Location: Riverpark Campground, Jonesborough, TN

ACA Instructor: Scott Fisher

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 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 arrange ahead). Instructors reserve the right to exclude anyone if they feel safety will be compromised.

When: Friday, June 8, 7:00pm – 9:00pm; Saturday, June 9, 8:00am – 7:00pm (Saturday Evening Session TBD); Sunday, June 10, 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 6/1/2018.**

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>.

2. Mail: [Click Here to download the PDF Registration Form](#) and mail 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.

Questions: Feel free to contact Scott at 276-698-4644 or scottfisher00@gmail.com

APE Nolichucky River Cleanup, Saturday, June 23, 2018, 11 am

Registration starts at 11:00 am at USA Raft Nolichucky, 2 Jones Branch Rd, Erwin. Participants will be assigned to Clean Teams, provided maps of clean-up locations, and given trash bags and gloves. There are plenty of clean-up opportunities of key areas for non-boaters as well as areas designated for individuals with their own boats or rafts.

There will be free food and prizes for cleanup participants after the clean-up. Hickory Smoked Bar-B-Q and the fixins will be served-up by the APEs in the Pavilion while you enjoy some fun fellowship. During the Post Cleanup Celebration we will be drawing tickets for fantastic prizes. Prizes are being supplied by the following generous sponsors: Astral, Jackson Kayak, Shred Ready and others.

Check out complete event details at <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/2018/03/07/nolichucky-river-cleanup-and-celebration/>.

For the Record

See “A.T. Maintenance Reports” for reports of scheduled events, “Third Saturday, Hiking with Tools!” (April 21st) and “Invasive Species Removal” (April 28th).



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 3/21/2018

Purpose: Block shortcuts

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

People: Craig Haire

Summary: It was a little too rainy this day. I filled in erosion-causing shortcuts near the road, but had to cut it short before I was finished. I will try to finish on a nicer day.

Reporting: Scott Hunt

Date: 3/26/2018

Purpose: Check shelter

Location: Section 10, Laurel Fork Shelter

People: Scott Hunt

Summary: I met several hikers: 6 NoBo, 1 flip flop NoBo, 2 section, and 6 day. With all the snow melt, the falls were as full as I've ever seen, but the trail was passable without using the high water trail. The shelter is in good shape; no roof leaks. However, there was no broom, shovel, or log book. I cleaned out one fire pit and dismantled another. I picked up and carried out one bag of trash. The water source is good. It was a beautiful day to wander in the woods.

Reporting: Eric Middlemas

Date: 3/26/2018

Purpose: Routine spring maintenance

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to Little Bald Knob

People: Eric Middlemas, Michael Stanley, Alan Liggett, David Douthat, David Polon, Grover Byrd

Summary: We cleaned waterbars and removed one blowdown between Iron Mtn Gap and Little Bald Knob (about halfway to Cherry Gap shelter). Snow, cold, and strong winds prevented further trail work. Through hikers reported additional blowdowns between Unaka Mtn and Beauty Spot. We will remove these at a later date.

Reporting: Eric Middlemas

Date: 3/26/2018

Purpose: Routine spring maintenance

Location: Section 18, Indian Grave Gap to Beauty Spot

People: Mike Hupko, Andrew Cleland, Jim Booth, Rich Ritter, Wayne Jones, Jeannine Edwards, Bruce Darby, Eva Johnson, Lana Scott, Pat Kenney

Summary: This crew cleaned out numerous waterbars between Indian Grave Gap and Beauty Spot and cut back woody growth. It was a very cold and windy day on the trail. The gate to FS230 was locked, which prevented access to the trail up to Unaka Mtn and Low Gap.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/27/2018

Purpose: Remove hazard trees, repair bog bridge, and clarify A.T. path

Location: Section 12b, Walnut Mountain Road to Sugar Hollow Creek, north end of section

People: Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Teri Rutherford

Summary: Finally, the winter weather let us tackle several tasks near Mountaineer Falls Shelter. Teri made her inaugural trail maintenance trip prior to joining her granddaughter who starts her thru-hike in early April. We put new lathe on log bog bridge a half-mile south of the shelter. We reestablished the trail around the tenting site near the shelter. We felled another dozen dead hemlocks that were a hazard at the tenting area. Some of the tops were starting to get brittle. One was as large as 22 inches. We also neutralized a large dead leaning oak that was directed towards the tenting area. This makes about two dozen trees we have had to fell in this area in the last month. There should be plenty of firewood and benches for a long time.



Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 3/28/2018

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to Spivey Gap

People: Ken Murray, Lotta Murray, Jenny Eckenrode, Peggy Cantrell

Summary: We conducted a blowdown patrol of the entire section. We cleared waterbars and the stairs at Spivey Gap and the two bridges. We picked up trash at the shelter. There are two stepover blowdowns near the shelter that need a little more effort.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 3/28/2018

Purpose: Cutting back Rhodo

Location: Section 7, Wilbur Dam Rd to 3.5 miles trail North

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: I spent the day cutting back the rhododendron and greenbrier starting at the top of the switchbacks to 3.5 miles in from Wilbur Dam Road. Along the way, I removed 6 very small blowdowns. On the way out, I chatted with four thru-hikers, two section hikers and one day hiker. Everyone but the day hiker was planning on staying at Vandeventer Shelter. The spring at the 3.3-mile mark is flowing really well.

Reporting: Bill Fuller

Date: 3/29/2018

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 10, Laurel Fork Shelter

People: Bill Fuller

Summary: I delivered a new broom and notebook to Laurel Fork Shelter, along with picking up trash around the shelter and under the sleeping platform.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/29/2018

Purpose: First Aid and CPR Certification

Location: American Red Cross

People: Carl Fritz

Summary: I was recertified in CPR and First Aid with the American Red Cross.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 3/31/2018

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 2b, Abingdon Gap shelter

People: Rolla Wade, Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: It was good we checked Abingdon Gap shelter yesterday. There was quite a bit to carry out: a tarp had been tied over the front; two books, a heavy PVC poncho, a duct-taped hiking pole, and various paper trash had been discarded there. Also the main fire ring had been dismantled and re-assembled under the eve of the shelter. We righted the wrongs, painted the graffiti board, left a new log book and headed back to Low Gap with heavier packs. (The wire netting below the platform of the shelter has been kicked loose on the left side (about 1 ft.) and needs to be re-attached.) On this gorgeous day we met about 9 hikers, all guys, some thru and some section, and two of them from England.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/31/2018

Purpose: Inspect Trail for rehab

Location: Section 15a, Carvers Gap to Cloudland Hotel

People: Carl Fritz, Steve Perry, Ted Mowery

Summary: Primarily, we were inspecting for trail rehab on both ends and on the blue-blaze at Roan High Knob Shelter. Lots of north-bounders and some south-bounders plus a number of day hikers were out today. We did clear some minor blowdowns. And hikers were reporting a double blowdown that was difficult to get over. So we located it on Hack Line Road. It was fairly easy to remove with a Katanaboy saw. Hikers had been cutting the switchback to avoid the blowdown. Parking at Carver's Gap was overloaded.



Double blowdown on Hack Line Rd

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 4/2/2018

Purpose: Blocking shortcuts

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

People: Craig Haire

Summary: I dragged a lot of dead saplings and small trees to fill in shortcuts in three different locations. I tried to wire some of it together and to existing trees to discourage removal of the blockage, as has been done before. Six thru-hikers came by in the short time I was there.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/2/2018

Purpose: Pick up paperwork and keys

Location: Asheville

People: Carl Fritz

Summary: I picked up some maps and keys from the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC).

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 4/3/2018

Purpose: Maintain section

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

People: Dan Firth

Summary: I removed several blowdowns and impinging branches, and cut briers. I saw many northbound hikers.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/3/2018

Purpose: Prepare locust logs for trail

Location: Section 15a, Grassy Ridge and Carver's Gap

People: Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Hale Nicholson, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Bettye Boone, Saylor Fox

Summary: We debarked more locust logs and transported probably 40 from Grassy Ridge to near Carver's Gap. On this beautiful day, a gust of wind ripped a clipboard out of hand, moving it a hundred feet and pulling out paper sheets to distribute 400 feet into the air. But 70 degrees and clear skies on Grassy Ridge are a pleasant change.



Reporting: John Beaudet

Date: 4/3/2018

Purpose: Brush and blaze trail

Location: Section 19a, Indian Grave Gap - Curley Maple Gap Shelter, the woods above Erwin TN

People: John Beaudet

Summary: I couldn't spend the whole day with the crew, so I spent the morning trimming back rhododendrons and re-painting blazes on the last part of my section. As I was approaching the road to the Ephram place, I detected something white in the woods ahead. When I got just about even with the forest service gate, above me I found a MAYTAG! Someone recently cleaned out their doublewide and dumped all the trash (a big pickup full) on the side of the road! The washing machine, along with pop's old recliner rolled down the hill past the A.T. into the holler. There was too much to fit in my little truck; probably 25 bags of trash, and I would need help to get the washing machine and recliner up the hill to the road. So I stopped by the forest service office in Unicoi to let them know. If there is mail among the trash, maybe the FS will track 'em down. I left my name and number with instructions to call me if the FS is not going to remove this garbage. If that happens I will need some help to do it myself. Stay tuned.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 4/5/2018

Purpose: Routine maintenance

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

People: Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

Summary: Bruce and I covered the entire section on a beautiful day. Everything is clean and all obstructions are removed. There were lots of hikers.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 4/5/2018

Purpose: Remove blowdown

Location: Section 7, 3.8 miles trail north of Wilbur Dam Road

People: Scotty Bowman, Silas Bowman

Summary: We hiked in to remove a troublesome blowdown about 0.5 mile north of the spring. The tree was a little complex with a trunk that was about 14-16" and two branches at least 8" each at a height of 4.5 feet off of the ground. It took a series of six cuts to remove the tree. Also, it was Silas' first time coming out and helping.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/5/2018

Purpose: Inspect Trail for rehab

Location: Section 15a, Roan High Knob to Cloudland

People: Haydn Borghetti-Metz, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples

Summary: We did an inspection of the blue-blaze trail to the shelter and the A.T. near Cloudland to estimate materials needed for trail rehab.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman (SAWS)

Date: 4/11 and 4/12/2018

Purpose: Repaint Blazes and remove blowdowns

Location: Section 6, Iron Mountain Shelter to 1.6 miles from Vandeventer Shelter

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: I hiked in from TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter on Tuesday April 10; it was a chilly morning. I set up camp 0.1 mile past the shelter and then headed back to the shelter to make hiker contacts. The next day, April 11, I broke camp and proceeded toward

Vandeventer shelter. I managed to repaint 3 miles of blazes (Iron Mtn Shelter to spring) when I started to run low on paint; and that was where there were quite a few blowdowns to deal with. I put the paint away and focused on blowdown removal; 17 in total between Iron Mtn Shelter in a 5-mile stretch. There are still some stepovers in the last two miles to Vandeventer Shelter. I was running out of daylight and it was time to make camp. April 12, I broke camp and hiked out to the car; picking up trash and talking to hikers along the way. It had warmed up quite nicely. Both shelters were clean and in good shape. No new graffiti to report. All springs are flowing.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 4/11/2018

Purpose: Roan Mountain Hard Core

Location: Section 12a, Bitter End to Walnut Mountain Road

People: Jim Chambers

Summary: I scouted alternative Hard Core work sites between Walnut Mountain Road and Bitter End.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 4/11/2018

Purpose: Construct steps

Location: Section 16b, Apple Orchard, Iron Mountain Gap

People: Joe Morris

Summary: I installed seven new locust steps leading into the Apple Orchard. I also cleaned water diversions. Several hikers were on the trail. After a surprisingly cold start, it turned into an awesome day.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/11/2018

Purpose: Cut and Inventory Locust Logs

Location: Section 15a, Near Carver's Gap

People: Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples

Summary: We inventoried the logs and stakes we hauled last week. Now we know how many more we need for future rehab of Roan High Knob to Cloudland.

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 4/12/2018

Purpose: Cut blowdowns and briars, and clean waterbars

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

People: Ted Malone, Steve Wilson

Summary: We cleared the waterbars, cut the briars, and removed the blowdowns with a folding saw. We left one blowdown that will require a chainsaw to remove and plan to remove it later. This section looks good for the thru hikers. We also hiked south from McQueen's Gap to the emergency shelter to remove a significant blowdown (with a chainsaw) reported by thru-hikers.



Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/12/2018

Purpose: Prepare locust logs for trail

Location: Birdhouse Cabin for Section 15a, Carvers Gap to Cloudland Hotel

People: Daryl Anderson, Paul Benfield, Haydn Borghetti-Metz, Ken Buchanan, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Mike Price

Summary: We continued to prepare locust logs for steps, water diversions and stakes for Cloudland and Roan High Knob area. It was an enjoyable day, but it included hard work. We transported the materials to a storage site near Carver's Gap.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 4/13/2018

Purpose: Check shelter, paint blazes, and trim dog hobble

Location: Section 19b, South of fourth bridge to Curley Maple Gap Shelter

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: With completion of a major work milestone and a sunny (although later hot 80F) Friday, I took vacation to invest another day on this trail section. The first task was to further open up the narrow trail path just south of the fourth bridge by tossing fallen softwood branches deeper into the rhododendron thicket, then attacking the dog hobble yet again with a swing blade and loppers. The swing blade was temporarily hidden, then the focus changed to painting blazes from the fourth bridge to the intersection just north of the shelter – a total of 27 on Section 19b and eight on Section 19a to use up the jar of paint. There are just a few places between the last bridge and shelter that really need markings; so several existing ones were skipped to avoid over-blazing.

Curley Maple Gap Shelter was in good shape, with broom and shovel. I replaced the log book, cleaned the fire pit, and picked up trash. The water source is flowing clear and strong. On the way back down, two fire pits from the five campsites were broken up. The afternoon heat was strong, so I finally just picked up the swing blade to walk steadily to the trailhead. A very late lunch was enjoyed for air conditioning and hydration. This trail section is in good shape until the next windstorm.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 4/14/2018

Purpose: Maintain section

Location: Section 15a, Carvers Gap to Cloudland

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: I cut a few blowdowns and clipped annual growth between Cloudland and Carvers Gap. No obstructions remain, but a couple of blowdowns near the shelter will be removed with a chainsaw. I placed a new shelter register and picked up trash around the shelter. I scattered one of several fire rings, each of which had sawn limbs placed nearby.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/14/2018

Purpose: PR with Watauga Residential College

Location: Appalachian State University

People: Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples

Summary: Watauga Residential College celebrated their 45th anniversary and we were invited to share TEHCC's experience with them over the seventeen events we have had since 2000. It also allowed us to better understand how they allow their students more freedom in following their own projects. For the fall student orientation, they will be working with Grandfather Mountain to pick up trash. They would really like to work with us again. Depending on how things work out, there may be an opportunity to move gravel in 2019.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 4/14/2018

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 1, McQueen's Gap to the TN/VA State Line and beyond

People: Mike "Lumpy" Price

Summary: Lumpy performed trail maintenance from McQueen's Gap to Damascus, VA. He removed trash, painted blazes, removed four small blowdowns, and cut green briar. He also identified a hazard tree one mile north of Abingdon Gap Shelter.

Reporting: Pat Loven

Date: 4/17/2018

Purpose: Trail maintenance

Location: Section 11a, Dennis Cove Road to Canute Place

People: Ken Buchanan, Pat Buchanan, Patrick Loven, Pat Loven

Summary: We trimmed back lots of sawbrier and rhododendron that was encroaching the trail. We also sawed a substantial number (lost count) of blowdowns and stepovers. A few were actually blocking the trail. We painted and/or repainted many trail markers. This section of trail, except for the short portion from Tower Road to Canute's, is now in excellent condition. We'll get the remainder soon. We saw a large number of thru-hikers; so many that we lost count. It was a very busy day on the trail and a beautiful day in the mountains!

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 4/19/2018

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Stan Murray

People: Lynn DiFiore, Robert Lamb, Eilidh (canine)

Summary: It was a blustery day to be out, but we still saw ten hikers out on the Trail. The recent high winds created many blowdowns. We cut out more than a half-dozen ranging from a 16" snag to a huge tangle of hawthorne. I removed a moderate amount of trash from Stan Murray and a large amount from the barn. I dispersed a new fire ring slightly trail south of Yellow Mtn Gap. This seems to be a banner year for ramps as they are everywhere; I saw quite a few people digging them. The gate is double locked with a short hasp lock - not sure why? All springs are running well.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/19/2018

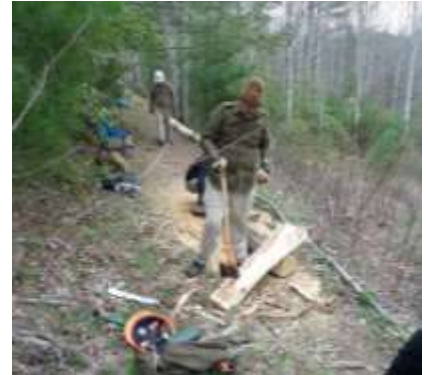
Purpose: Prepare for Hard Core

Location: Section 12a, Walnut Mtn Road to Laurel Fork

People: Paul Benfield, Haydn Borghetti-Metz, Richard Carter, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Blake Robinson "Deluxe"

Summary: We removed some minor blowdowns between Walnut Mtn Road and Laurel Fork. We designated the four worst areas to rehab with Hard Core. All will take either log cribbing or log steps. Much of the day was spent in preparing locust logs for those tasks

and to replace an iron and wood bench which is deteriorating. We were glad to have hiker, "Deluxe," with us today. And although Haydn Borghetti-Metz finished his third day of community service, we wish him well as he graduates from ETSU and endeavors to thru-hike starting about July 1.



Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 4/21/2018

Purpose: Lop and paint blazes

Location: Section 12a, Bitter End to Walnut Mountain Road

People: Lowell Toof, Amy Holcombe, Ocala Aerni, Jasmine Swirski, Rolla Wade, Vic Hasler, Hale Nickolson (ember), Kim Peters

Summary: The weather finally cooperated for this 3rd Saturday outing and it could not have been a nicer day to be out in the woods. Since we had such a large turnout, we split into two groups, with Vic, Rolla, and Hale starting at Walnut Mtn Rd and the remainder of the group starting at Bitter End. We slowly worked our way toward each other cutting back rhododendron and clearing a few blowdowns along the way. Ocala and Jasmine painted all the blazes between Bitter End and the bridge over the Upper Laurel Fork.

During the morning tailgate meeting before we split up, I mentioned that we most likely would meet up somewhere in the middle of the section, probably at the bridge. The group starting at Bitter End had a lovely lunch at the river right before the bridge. When we finished lunch and the guys hadn't shown up, we continued working up the hill until we reached the view spot with the soon-to-be replaced bench. I had queried some of the passing thru-hikers as to when and where they had passed the remainder of our group and was given various answers placing them either at the view spot or back at Walnut Mtn Road (which confirmed my opinion that you cannot trust information from thru-hikers). All our technology failed and we were unable to contact the remainder of the group. However, while contemplating what to do next, they showed up. They had taken their lunch at the last foot bridge before the view spot thinking that it was the bridge over the river that I had described in the morning, and were waiting for us there! Reunited, we all hiked back out to Bitter End and the waiting cars.

This section has been well lopped and all the blazes from Bitter End to the river refreshed. The steps and waterbars need cleaning, especially going down to the river from Bitter End; but otherwise this section is in pretty good shape and is sure to be practically perfect after Roan Mountain Hard Core makes some improvements in a couple of weeks.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 4/21/2018

Purpose: Roan Mountain Hard Core Sign-Ups

Location: Hot Springs Trail Festival, Hot Springs, NC

People: Bob Peoples, Jim Chambers

Summary: We set up Roan Mountain and TEHCC tents at the 2-day Hot Springs Trail Festival. Promotion of Roan Mountain and TEHCC was conducted throughout this event along with recruiting current-year hikers for Roan Mountain Hard Core.

Reporting: Gerald Scott

Date: 4/21/2018

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

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

People: Gerald Scott, Harold Wexler

Summary: Thanks to two previous trips by sawyer groups to clear blowdowns, lop rhodos, and remove hazard trees at the tent site near Mountaineer Falls Shelter, we only needed to work on the lower south portion of the trail. We drove in from Elk River Falls. We found the lock and pin missing from the gate and a group inside the gate with cars camping along the Elk River. We cleared waterbars and steps, lopped rhododendrons and other woody growth, cleared and dug out drainage ways, and removed a dozen small blowdowns. There's an area about one mile south of Mountaineer Falls Shelter that has a bad drainage problem. It's not possible to get through without walking through the mud. We were able to dig out a trench to help with the drainage, but additional work is needed to correct the problem.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 4/21/2018

Purpose: Trail Rehab with ASU

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

People: Joe Morris, Ted Mowery; Appalachian State University Trail Crew: Brian Everette, Sean Haley, Austin Babb, Jess McClelland, Alex O'Neill

Summary: We defined 87 feet of trail north of Round Bald with locust logs (brought from SAHC storage site) and rock. We removed geo-text fabric and moved the trail close to its original position. We also defined another 20 feet with rock and sod. The Appalachian State Trail Crew did an amazing job. A steady stream of hikers went strolling by throughout the day. It's unbelievable the amount of foot traffic that traverses Round Bald and Jane Bald on a beautiful April Saturday. In addition, a fire of unknown origin broke out right next to our work area. We quickly extinguished it with water and sections of sod. There were some tense moments as that took place; it was windy so the fire spread quickly. A day hiker named Jake jumped in to help us contain the fire. As we left the Carvers Gap parking area, fire and rescue crews from North Carolina were on patrol as smoke was still being reported in the area.

Reporting: Michael Watts

Date: 4/21/2018

Purpose: Annual section maintenance

Location: Sections 3a and 3b, McQueen's Gap to Low Gap

People: Rick Lott, Susan Rook, Missy Wright, Ken Chamness, Michael Watts

Summary: It was a beautiful day. We pruned, cut back early briars, painted blazes, cleaned water bars, and removed blowdowns. A large dead tree had come down since the last report; we will need to return with a chainsaw to remove it. It is a high step-over; we cleared a path around the end as an optional detour. There was a big hiker-feed at Low Gap, organized by a group of 2014 thru-hikers. They said they do this annually and had fed more than 70 hikers over the last 2 days.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 4/22/2018

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Bradley Gap

People: Lynn DiFiore, Lyndsey Smith

Summary: Happy Earth Day! We celebrated with a misty hike "with tools" to clear out the remaining blowdowns on this section. There were surprisingly few - mostly tangled limbs that were easily removed. We picked up a small amount of trash from the Bradley Gap campsites and rocks at Little Hump. Only one new fire ring was dispersed, but there are an increasing number of smaller ones showing up at the rocks on Little Hump. We placed new register at the barn and removed additional trash, including a shredded tent and pillow.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 4/24/2018

Purpose: Mow Osborne Farm

Location: Section 4b, TN 91 Osborne Farm

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed and cut weeds along the trail and the Accessible Trail on the Osborne Farm as needed.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman (SAWS)

Date: 4/25 and 4/26/2018

Purpose: Check shelter and remove blowdown

Location: Section 7, Vandeventer Shelter to Wilbur Dam Rd

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: As I hiked in on the 25th, I cleared a total of 5 blowdowns, 3 in the first 3.3 miles and the other 2 between the spring and Vandeventer Shelter. The biggest blowdown was a hemlock at the top of the switchbacks that came down sometime within the last 2 weeks. The rest were smaller trees, 10" or less, and tree tops. When I arrived at Vandeventer, it was a full house in the shelter. I

chatted with them for a while and then headed down to spend the night at a spot on the spring trail.

The next morning after breaking camp I headed back up to the shelter where I picked up what little trash there was. I spent about 1½ hours there talking with the thru-hikers who passed by or stopped for lunch. On the way out, I cut back rhodo and green brier between the shelter and spring. About 0.1 mile from Wilbur Dam Road, I found an abandoned tent (brand new), tarp, and trash scattered everywhere. Someone didn't have a very good backpacking experience. All springs were flowing like mad.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/26/2018

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 12b, Between Slide Hollow and Mountaineer Falls

People: Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, "Two Can"

Summary: Hikers had reported a couple of troublesome blowdowns to Bob at Kincora. This is the third trip this year on this section to remove trees. It looks like it will be the troublesome trail section this year. The first blowdown was just a combination of three five-inch trees snagged in the rhodos. The second blowdown was a small hickory and a couple of other trees with a nest of grapevine. Hikers were having to fight their way around the blockage. We also added some rock steps to a currently running stream and blocked it from running down the trail. A hiker, "Two Can," immediately stopped and helped. We saw about 15 northbounders.



Before, and...



After

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 4/28/2018

Purpose: Garlic Mustard Challenge and Invasive Species Removal

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

People: Dan Firth, Vic Hasler, Greg Kramer, plus Matt Drury (ATC)

Summary: TEHCC has been pulling Garlic Mustard from around Devils Creek Gap, north of Spivey Gap, for the past four years, which is finally depleting the seed bank. The amounts removed each year, typically by four participants, have been 129, 163, 257, and... 34 pounds. All paths from the gap were checked, plus the forest road hillside and around the clearing. With the first phase completed by lunch, the group turned its attention to the Autumn or Russian Olive around the two-acre open space. The invasive was first cut with loppers or folding saw, and then the stump was coated with herbicide from a shoe polish applicator. The group removed about 80% of the bushes, finishing at 2pm. It was a very nice day to be outside, improving the environment around the Appalachian Trail.