



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

March 2020

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

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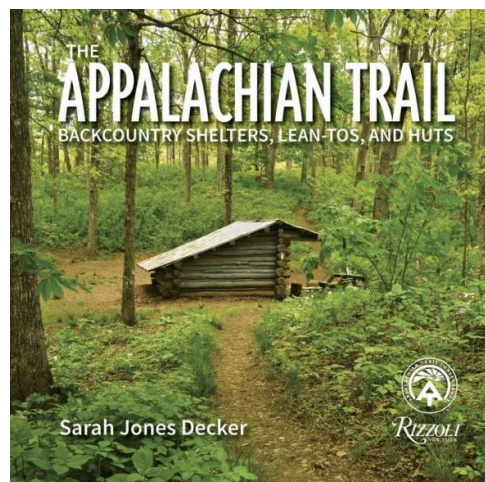
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## *The Appalachian Trail*

Sarah Jones Decker



## TEHCC Spring Dinner Meeting – Friday, April 17, 2020

Let's explore the history of some of the more than 250 shelters on the Appalachian Trail through the experience of photographer, writer, and 2008 thru-hiker Sarah Jones Decker (aka "Harvest"). For the evening, we will enjoy a visual montage learning the characteristics of these structures, while appreciating the many hours A.T. volunteers spend maintaining shelters to keep them in good condition. For more information, see the webpage: [sarahjonesdecker.com/appalachiantrailshelters](http://sarahjonesdecker.com/appalachiantrailshelters)

Dinner cost will be \$10/person with the Steering Committee providing beverages and dessert. Attending only the program is free, however we'll need a paid headcount to properly size the food order. Please let [Chantel Roberts](#) know who is coming by Monday April 13<sup>th</sup>. Checks payable to Chantel can be mailed to her attention via plant mail to Building 167 or to PO Box 511, Kingsport, TN 37662-5167.

Event	Time	Details
Spring Dinner Meeting	5:30pm	Location: Eastman Lodge, Main Banquet Hall <a href="#">404 Bays Mountain Road, Kingsport, TN</a>
Happy "Trails" Hour	5:30pm-6:30pm	Donations accepted for beer and wine, or BYOB
Dinner – Fajita bar plus tea/water, coffee and desserts	6:30pm-7:15pm	Moe's Southwest Grill Beverages and dessert by the Steering Committee (\$10.00 per person)
Club Business	7:15pm-7:30pm	- Update of club activities - Awards
<i>Program: The Appalachian Trail: Backcountry Shelters, Lean-tos, and Huts.</i>	7:30pm-9:00pm	Author Sarah Jones Decker (Marshall, NC)

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## Who Was Clyde Smith?

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*Submitted by Vic Hasler*

As a club, remembering our history is important to understand the contributions of those who established the outdoor experiences we now enjoy. TEHCC maintains a shelter named for Clyde Smith; but who was this gentleman? My primary information source was the 2016 book *Grandfather Mountain: The History and Guide to an Appalachian Icon* by Randy Johnson. The family photograph from the book is used with the author's permission in this article (no further reproduction is allowed).



*Clyde Smith, shown here on the Franconia Range in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, is pictured with one of his routed wood Appalachian Trail signs.*

Born in Gorham, New Hampshire, Clyde was a fire lookout on Mt. Cardigan in the state during the 1930s' summers. This work provided an opportunity for him to hone his skills building and maintaining remote hiking trails. He also began making trail signs for the White Mountain National Forest and N.H. state parks. His employment during the winters was in South Florida hotels and restaurants. Clyde became the first ranger in Cades Cove in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park where he constructed the large entrance signs. In the 1940s, he moved to become a wintertime ranger for the Blue Ridge Parkway and began building hiking trails on Grandfather Mountain leading the scouts of Blowing Rock Scout Troop 21.

His sign construction and trail efforts continued, with our hiking club benefiting from his handiwork as shown below. These signs were removed from the field when the trail distances significantly changed or features (such as White Rocks Mtn fire tower) were removed.

This article was prompted by an inquiry of a Carolina Mountain Club (CMC) trail maintainer who discovered a partial sign on a former Little Bald ridgeline section (before relocation) of the Appalachian Trail where Clyde suffered a fatal heart attack on April 1, 1976. The TEHCC shelter built by the US Forest Service in 1976 on Iron Mountain near Little Rock Knob was named soon thereafter to honor Clyde Smith.



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## Hazard Trees – Dead Ash

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*Submitted by Vic Hasler*

At the end of 2019, Bill Tindall messaged the hiking club about his observations regarding the dangerous failure of dead ash trees. These large stands of ash trees have been killed by the infestation of Emerald Ash Borer insects now proceeding through our region from the north and west. Once dead, these brittle giants are coming down as large branches and whole trees snapping – especially on windy days. This can be dangerous for the backpacker, hiker, or hunter wandering through the forests.

The warning is twofold. First, consider whether it is safe to be in the woods on very windy days. Second, as maintainers along the A.T., watch for hazard trees near potential campsites. A dead ash will not take years to come down, but can snap in an instant.

Matt Drury (Appalachian Trail Conservancy) has completed treatment of three ash tree groves along TEHCC's A.T. section (and 11 total clusters across SORO for over 850 trees) to hopefully preserve some stock for rejuvenation after the infestation passes.



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## New TEHCC Rental Equipment – HA – 10 – Portable Solar Charger

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Submitted by [Chris Chambers](#) – Rental Equipment Coordinator

The Nekteck 21W Portable Solar Panel Charger is a unique addition to the rental fleet. This charger is waterproof, lightweight, and highly packable. It includes multiple USB ports for charging electronic devices such as phones and iPads. Rental rate “D” (\$4 weekend, \$6 week-long) will be set for this charger.



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## TEHCC Welcomes New Members

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Russ Davis

Gabrielle Waters

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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 additional information on APES/TEHCC paddling events, see <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/category/regional-events/> or <http://www.riverapes.org/calendar.html>

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
March 7	Bill Beazell Watauga River Cleanup	<a href="#">Bill Watkins</a>	
March 19	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	<a href="#">Jonathan Shumaker</a>	417-389-6987
March 21	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-336-0128
April 16	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	<a href="#">Jonathan Shumaker</a>	417-389-6987
April 17	Spring Dinner Meeting	<a href="#">Chantel Roberts</a>	423-224-0199
April 18	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-336-0128
April 25	Invasive Plants Removal, Devils Creek Gap, 8:30 am	Greg Kramer	423-349-6125

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## Details of Upcoming Events

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### Recurring Events

#### **TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting - Now on the Third Thursday of the Month, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm**

Contact: [Jonathan Shumaker](#) 423-389-6987

*Location: Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, TN; Bldg 75 Room 402*

The Steering Committee guides the general program for the club. The Committee normally meets at lunchtime on the third Thursday of each month. Meetings are open to all TEHCC members. Bring your lunch or grab a bite at the B-75 cafeteria. 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.

#### **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, 6:45 – 7:45 pm**

Contact: [Shelly Richards](#), 423-534-1188

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](#)! During the winter months (October – April), the indoor pool is sectioned off specifically for kayakers to practice basic paddling techniques. Admission is \$3; 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 Shelly.

### **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**

### **6th Annual Bill Beazell Watauga River Cleanup, Saturday, March 7, 2020, 7:30 am – 2:00 pm**

*Contact: [Bill Watkins](#)*

We will meet in the Ingles parking lot at 768 W Elk Ave, Elizabethton, TN 37643. Groups will be formed. Breakfast will be provided and work groups will disperse after breakfast. A cleanup celebration will be held from 3:30 - 7:30 pm. Contact Bill Watkins for additional information.

### **Invasive Plants Removal, Devils Creek Gap, Saturday, April 25, 2020, 8:30 am – 2:00 pm**

*Contact: Greg Kramer, 423-349-6125*

TEHCC has been working in this location for the past five years to eradicate invasive plants which were imported to the U.S. but can out-compete native species. Two species have been targeted for this trip. First is Garlic Mustard, imported to be a salad green, that readily spreads as the seeds attach to clothes and animal fur, and thus are dropped in new locations. The plants are easily pulled; however, the seed bed requires multiple annual treatments to exhaust. We'll remove any new plants that have emerged or were overlooked. The second is chemical treatment of Autumn or Russian Olive, which is a large shrub imported to provide food and cover for birds. However, it crowds out native foliage. We will be cutting Autumn Olive and painting their stems with herbicide to keep the plants from growing back from their roots. Let's leave from Colonial Heights at 8:30 am to arrive at Devils Creek Gap by 9:30 am. Current plans are to work until 1 pm. Matt Drury (ATC) will be joining us with supplies. The event will be rescheduled in case of inclement weather.

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## **For the Record**

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Nothing to report this month. See Maintenance Reports below.



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

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**Reporting:** Vic Hasler

**Date:** 1/27/2020

**Purpose:** Discuss Roan Mountain 2020 Appalachian Trail Festival (HIKERPALOOZA)

**Location:** BSA Sequoyah Council Office, Boones Creek, TN

**People:** TEHCC: Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Steve Wilson, Vic Hasler; Roan Mtn: Erik Anderson, Mike Hill, Dave Hill

**Summary:** The purpose of the meeting was to discuss TEHCC's involvement with this year's Roan Mountain HIKERPALOOZA. The date has been moved to May 7-10 allowing for a progression of A.T. Community events through Hot Springs, Erwin, Roan Mountain, and Damascus on sequential weekends.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/30/2020

**Purpose:** Rehab Trail

**Location:** Section 8, Between US 321 and Swimming Area

**People:** Tyler Edwards, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Tony Messina

**Summary:** We added two locust steps close to US 321.



**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 1/30/2020

**Purpose:** Debark Locust Logs

**Location:** Watauga Work Center

**People:** Daryel Anderson, Paul Benfield, Tyler Edwards, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** We debarked all the locust logs that we harvested near Watauga Dam last year.

**Reporting:** Ken Murray

**Date:** 1/30/2020

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to No Business Knob Shelter

**People:** Ken Murray, Van Hovey

**Summary:** We removed blowdowns and cleaned the shelter and fire ring.

**Reporting:** Tony Messina

**Date:** 1/31/2020

**Purpose:** Maintenance Patrol

**Location:** Section 3a and 3b, McQueens Gap to Low Gap

**People:** Tony Messina, Renee Messina

**Summary:** Renee and I did an initial patrol of our new maintenance section, McQueens Gap to US 421. There was an inch or two of snow in some places and we were even snowed on a little bit, though the temperature was near 40F. We encountered a number of blowdowns, several of which we cleared by hand and handsaw. Four remain that will require us to go back with a chainsaw. All four are either simple step-overs or easy duck-under. Water diversions are needed on the steep sections at both ends of the section, more so on the north end.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 2/3/2020

**Purpose:** Cherry Gap Shelter Design

**Location:** Section 17, Low Gap to Cherry Gap

**People:** Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Tony Messina

**Summary:** We obtained some critical Cherry Gap Shelter measurements for a redesign. We considered a possible trail relocation to get the trail farther from the shelter. We removed several blowdowns with handsaws. Two of the blowdowns were 12 inches.

**Reporting:** Gayle Riddervold

**Date:** 2/3/2020

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

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

**People:** Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

**Summary:** We hiked from the iron gate to Wilbur Dam sawing and removing two small trees from the trail. We also cut back thorny weeds and rhododendron bushes.

**Reporting:** Ken Murray

**Date:** 2/9/2020

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 20b, Spivey Gap to Devils Creek Gap

**People:** Ken Murray, Van Hovey

**Summary:** The first bridge coming up from Spivey Gap has been damaged by a blowdown. We cleared the blowdown and made a list of materials for repairs to the bridge. We cleared other minor blowdowns.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 2/12/2020

**Purpose:** Check Trail

**Location:** Section 10, Dennis Cove to Lauryl Fork Falls

**People:** Bob Peoples

**Summary:** The Trail is in good shape. Bob lopped some rhodos. The water is too high below the falls, so he posted signs to close that section of the A.T. and direct hikers to the high water trail.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 2/15/2020

**Purpose:** Repair bridge, remove blowdowns, and rehab trail

**Location:** Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to Spivey Gap, southern 3.5 miles of section

**People:** Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Tony Messina, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** We removed all blowdowns (about 15), including many inconvenient step-overs, for about the first 3.5 miles north of

Spivey Gap. The largest problem was a mass of blowdown with grape vine that blocked the trail for 25 feet. We replaced the entire handrail and posts on the lowest bridge on Oglesby Branch. The previous handrail had many of the boards broken by a blowdown. We also added new lathe to the deck. We rehabbed several areas and added some rock platform steps. We also straightened the slightly-listing upper bridge. (See photos: Before and After Bridge Repair)



**Reporting:** Dan Firth

**Date:** 2/17/2020

**Purpose:** Cut blowdowns and clean water diversions

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

**People:** Dan Firth

**Summary:** I cut numerous blowdowns on the way up and cleaned water diversions on the way back.

**Reporting:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:** 2/22/2020

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

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

**People:** Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

**Summary:** It was an absolutely beautiful day with snow on the ground at the northern end and in the shady lower areas. Gloria shuttled and walked with me for a short time. I found about 8 small blowdowns that I cut by hand or was able to push off the trail. I will have to come back with a chainsaw to cut two larger blowdowns, one very large across the trail. The trail was surprisingly clear compared to in the past. I checked the signage; 3 of 4 signs are missing. I found that the ATC crew had come in to clear and cut trees for golden-winged warbler management. Unfortunately, this opened the area to more ATV usage. I reset the new sign post that was run over and cleaned some dead fall. I also cut back rhododendron and invasive rose. The rose was already starting to leaf out in the sunny areas. I reset two waterbars and cleared out the ones that were not frozen. I also moved the wooden post in Bishop Hollow, securing it with as many rocks as I could pile around the post.

**Reporting:** Richard Carter

**Date:** 2/22/2020

**Purpose:** Check section

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

**People:** Richard Carter

**Summary:** I walked the section to check for blowdowns. I cut three blowdowns of about 3-4 inches in diameter, and one 10 inches. I checked the shelter and spring, which was running very well, and left a new register. I removed two like-new items of clothing and one expensive-looking, adjustable hiking stick which had been abandoned or mislaid in the shelter. Surprisingly, there were scads of day hikers by mid-afternoon, with the parking area full to overflowing.