



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

June 2017

tehcc.org

Co-Editors – [Koustubh Kulkarni](#) and [Terry Oldfield](#)

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*Wild Geranium—
Courtesy of
Vic Hasler*



TEHCC Receives the 2017 Pinnacle Volunteer Award

Submitted by Vic Hasler

On behalf of the TN Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club, Kayla Carter accepted the Pinnacle Volunteer Award (shown on right) from the Northeast Tennessee Tourism Association. The award was presented in appreciation for TEHCC's efforts to maintain the Appalachian Trail. The Trail is a natural resource that draws a significant number of visitors to the region each year, and the Trail must be properly cared for so that future generations can enjoy it as well. Several maintenance efforts were cited, including the July 2016 storm response, the Osborne Farm fence, and shelter repairs. The award is being temporarily displayed in the Carter County Tourism Association Office in Elizabethton until it can be formally presented to the club at our Fall dinner meeting.



ATC SORO Hires Trail Facilities Managers

The Southern Regional Office (SORO) of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is announcing the following new staff. Short biographies will be available in the next club newsletter.

Benjamin Barry, ATC SORO Trail Facilities Mgr. - Deep South, working primarily with TEHCC, CMC, NHC and GATC

Javier Salazar, ATC SORO Trail Facilities Mgr. - Smokies, working primarily with SMHC

Both will have region-wide responsibility for relevant training.

Saws Available to Maintainers

Submitted by Dan Firth

TEHCC received a \$500 grant through ATC's L.L. Bean Grants for the purchase of hand saws for use by trail maintainers. The hand saws facilitate removal of simple blowdowns encountered during routine maintenance. This grant is part of the \$23,273 awarded to 15 A.T. clubs in 2017 through the program. Through these grants, L.L. Bean helps fund necessary projects along the trail, such as trail, shelter, and bridge construction; recruiting and training new volunteers; purchasing tools and safety gear; developing educational materials; and community outreach. TEHCC has received several of these grants over the years.

With the proceeds of this grant, the club purchased two folding Silky Katanaboy saws with 19-inch blades, three folding Silky Bigboy saws with 14-inch blades, and one fixed blade AM Leonard arborist saw with a 26-inch blade. Included with each saw when borrowed are thin wedges which fit the narrow kerfs made by these saws. The saws are easy to carry and will enable maintainers to remove many blowdowns that they encounter without having to schedule a return trip. To borrow one of these saws for your next maintenance outing, contact Carl Fritz, atvolunteer@tehcc.org, 423-477-4669.



TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Ian Wilson

Michael Clark

Greg Cradic

Chris Chambers

Philip Geiger

Adrian Holt

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
June 3	Lower Watauga, Class I-II	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
June 10-11	Hootenanny Hang & Paddling Trip Weekend	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
June 15	Paddle to the Grill (every Thursday through August)	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
June 16-18	Basic Swift Water Rescue Course	Scott Fisher	276-698-4644
June 17	Lower Watauga, Class I-II	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
June 17	A.T.: 19E To Doll Flats - Joint Hike with MAHC	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388
June 17	3 rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Kim Peters	423-366-0128
July 1	Lower Watauga, Class I-II	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
July 14-16	Hiwassee River Camping Weekend (Class I-II)	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
July 15	Lower Watauga, Class I-II	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
July 15	3 rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Kim Peters	423-366-0128
July 20	FunFest Moonlight Hike	Kay Parker	423-963-8461
July 29	Lower Watauga, Class I-II	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636

Standard Hike Information

Hikes leaving from "Colonial Heights" gather at the parking lot below McDonalds, 4317 Fort Henry Drive, which is NW of I-81 Exit 59. The "Johnson City" meeting location is behind Parkway Discount Wine & Liquor just off I-26 Exit 24 at the intersection of University Parkway and South Roan Street. The "Gate City" spot is up on the hill above US 23 at Kane Street intersection (traffic light) by Food Lion. All hikes will leave promptly to stay on schedule. Carpooling is encouraged with passengers providing a few dollars each towards gas.

Bring adequate water, snack/lunch, clothing appropriate for the weather, comfortable footwear, headgear/sun protection, bug spray, camera, and trekking poles as desired. At the discretion of the hike leader, the family dog can come, if friendly, and kept on leash. Walking speed is typically 2 mph including rest breaks. For more information, check the trail wiki (click on hike title if underlined for the link) or call the hike leader. It is appropriate to contact the hike leader to let them know that you are interested in

coming and provide a cell phone number in case plans change for either party. An activity release form is signed by everyone going on the hike – and it helps capture the names and spelling for the trip report. Good digital photos from the hike are appreciated for the newsletter and trail wiki.

Details of Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

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

Contact: [Kay Parker](#), 423-963-8461

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

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

Tuesday Evenings: Johnson City Roll Practice Discontinued

Discontinued for now... The Freedom Hall Pool is closed for summer renovations, May – August.

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 133.6-mile section each week, usually on Thursdays.

3rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!

Contact: [Kim Peters](#), 423-366-0128

Hiking with Tools! is an opportunity to enjoy a day hike on our beautiful section of the A.T. while helping out with some routine maintenance such as cleaning out waterbars and steps, lopping rhododendron, breaking up fire rings, and painting blazes. All tools will be furnished and no prior experience required! Last year we typically had four to five people on each trip. The more people who show up, the less work each individual has to do, and the trip becomes a nice hike - with tools! Contact [Kim Peters \(atmaint@tehcc.org\)](mailto:atmaint@tehcc.org) for hike details, including meeting time and place.

Thursday Evenings: Kayak Session, Kingsport Aquatic Center, 7 – 9 pm

Contact: [Ryan Shealy](#), 423-963-6066

Interested in kayaking but don't know where to start? Basic kayak training and practice is available in Kingsport on Thursdays at the [Kingsport Aquatic Center](#)! During the summer, we will be in the outdoor pool, but in case of rain, the center will partition off part of the indoor pool for us. 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 gate to the outdoor pool, or in case of rain, 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](#).

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

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

We will be alternating between Boone Lake Marina (Boonedocks Restaurant), 452 Sportsman Dock Rd, Piney Flats, TN and Davis Marina (Boonies Restaurant), 641 Buffalo Rd, Blountville, TN. We have boat ramps at both locations now. Bring your touring kayak/canoe to meet with The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (www.riverapes.org) 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: <http://goo.gl/maps/37X1>

Scheduled Events

Hootenanny Hang and Paddling Trip Weekend, Blackberry Blossom Farm, June 9-11, 2017

Leader: [Debbie Briscoe](#), 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 River Class I-II) or lake (Watauga Lake). 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. Everyone please bring a dish and put on the spreadsheet (link below) what you plan to bring and if you want to lead a trip or what activity you'd like to do. Tickets to the gear raffle 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 send a donation in advance of what you can afford. Between your donation and the raffle, it should cover our costs of the venue and other expenditures like firewood, deposit for next year, etc. I've set up my Paypal account to accept donations, so email me for my info. Please do this in advance. If you don't have a Paypal account, contact me and we will work something out.

Registration:

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

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

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

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

APEs and TEHCC Basic Swift Water Rescue Course, June 16-18, 2017

Contact: *Scott Fisher at 276-698-4644*

Location: Riverpark Campground, Jonesborough, TN

ACA Instructor: Scott Fisher

Assistant Instructors: Jeremy Gass and Wesley R. Bradley

Whitewater enthusiasts participate in hazardous activities in wilderness environments. Are you prepared to rescue yourself or your best paddling friend? Are they prepared to rescue you? Help in many cases may not be immediately available, and might be hours, not minutes away. Sign up and bring your favorite paddling crew to this clinic. It's like buying yourself, and them, the safety line that may save your lives. The Basic SWR Course, sponsored by Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) and 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 16, 7:00pm – 9:00pm; Saturday, June 17, 8:00am – 7:00pm (Saturday Evening Session TBD); Sunday, June 18, 8:00am – 5:00pm

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

Cost: \$95; \$85 if already an APEs member; ACA members can further deduct \$5. **Registration and payment deadline is 6/9/2017 (see cancellation policy in PDF application).**

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

Registration: There are two ways to register:

1. Online: Register online at <http://www.riverapes.org/registration.html>. After submitting your registration you will be directed to <http://www.riverapes.org/paypal-1.html> to pay for the course using PayPal. APEs (or TEHCC) membership is required to participate and can also be purchased online at <http://www.riverapes.org/paypal-1.html> for \$10. No need to fill out and send in a separate membership form. Your online registration will double for that purpose.

2. Mail: [Click Here to download the PDF Registration Form](#) and mail with *payment made out to APEs* to Scott Fisher: 109 Highland Gate Dr., Johnson City, TN 37615. Those mailing in their registration can add the \$10 annual APEs membership fee to their course payment. No need to fill out and send in a separate membership form. Your registration form will double for that purpose.

ONLINE NOTE: Courses not listed in Registration Course Menu are full. Please contact Scott at scottfisher00@gmail.com to be placed on waiting list.

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

A.T.: US 19E to Doll Flats - Joint Hike with Mid-Appalachian Highlands Club, June 17, 2017

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

We are joining up with the Mid-Appalachian Highlands Club to enjoy what is often one of the best places for wildflowers because of the significant elevation change. It is a moderate-rated, six-mile round-trip hike on the Appalachian Trail. In order to stay on MAHC's schedule, we'll leave the TEHCC meeting place (below McDonalds in Colonial Heights) at 7:30am to be at Arby's (I-26 Exit 24) to meet MAHC members by their 8am start time. The hike plan per MAHC: This in-and-out hike begins where the A.T. crosses 19E just west of Elk Park, NC. At 0.6 mile the trail passes Wilder iron ore mine which was abandoned in 1918 and now serves as a campsite. At 3.0 miles the trail reaches the open fields of Doll Flats with views and more good campsites. From 19E to this point, we will have climbed 1680 feet. Along the way, we'll look for Spring wildflowers such as showy Fringed Phacelia, Showy Orchids, Wood Anemones, Trilliums, and even Jack in the Pulpit, as well as many others.

TEHCC Leader: Vic Hasler (239-0388)

MAHC Leader: Rita Blankenbecler (765-0609)

Hiwassee River Camping Weekend (Class I-II), July 14-16,2017

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](mailto:Debbie.Briscoe@stateparks.com), 423-534-3636

A weekend on the Hiwassee River! We're planing to drive down on Friday afternoon and camp at Gee Creek Campground, 404 Spring Creek Rd, Delano, TN. It is a very nice facility with full amenities.

Saturday: Meet at the put-in at 12:00 noon. We'll load up and convoy from the campground. We'll find a place to eat that evening after hot showers back at the campground. A campfire will be great afterwards and I'm bringing Smores!!

Sunday: Either paddle another run or drive home, it's up to you!

Campground: <http://www.stateparks.com/hiwassee.html>

FunFest Moonlight Hike, Bays Mountain Park, July 20, 2017

Contact: Kay Parker, 423-963-8461

Rating: Easy 2.5 mile walk around the lake at night on Lakeside and Holly Trails

TEHCC has been co-sponsoring the Kingsport FunFest Moonlight Hike at Bays Mountain Park since before 1993. Over the years, this popular event has attracted larger and larger crowds. Parking space is tight at the visitors' center; therefore, to control the number of vehicles, the Moonlight Hike is a ticketed event with only 350 tickets being distributed. However, TEHCC volunteers helping with the event are not be required to have an entrance ticket. TEHCC volunteers will start the hike at the front of the walkers, and then be assigned specific intersections to direct traffic along the right path. Overall, TEHCC needs to cover roughly a dozen places with one or two people each. The event ends with a headcount back at the visitors' center by 10 pm. (Tradition is also a gift certificate to the park store for the volunteer guessing closest to the total number of people who took the hike per the official counter.) To minimize the number of TEHCC cars, we'll gather at the Eastman Lodge back parking lot at 7 pm to carpool. Otherwise, be at the back side of the visitors' center facing the lake by 7:30 pm for badges and to discuss any items relevant to the hike. The hike itself kicks off at 8 pm from the dam near the visitors' center. Bring your own flashlight/headlamp (and spare batteries), water, insect repellent, and charged cell phone. If you are interested in assisting with this event or have any questions, please contact me.

For the Record

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

Debbie Briscoe reporting

Friday morning, Barry Allison, Shelly Richard, Michael Crooks, Jamie Aiello and I met at Devils Fork State Park, SC. We packed our boats and paddled the 2-mile crossing to the Double Island boat-in camping area. It was a windy and choppy open crossing; we had to paddle nonstop to keep from being blown off course or tossed about in the waves. It was tough and we were glad to finally get into the cove where we found our campsites for the weekend.

The water was low on Saturday; so only the larger falls were running, which were no less than 6 miles away (12 both ways!). That might have been a bit far, especially in the windy conditions that we had half way there.

Two boaters turned back and three of us pressed on.

When we turned onto the Toxaway River arm of the lake, we were protected by the ridge and out of the wind. We arrived at Laurel Fork Falls, an 80' cascade, very near where the Foothills Trail comes down to the water.





Sunday, we packed up, then paddled to Wright Falls in the opposite direction from camp. It was still windy and choppy, but we covered and rested wherever we could get out of the wind. It was worth the effort, as the water was low enough that it left a nice beach where we could land. We got an up-close look and even walked behind the falls!



We hung out a while and ate our lunch then headed back.

For our paddle back, the wind had died down, making it very pleasant. We had a very leisurely last leg of the trip. If you ever get to go to Jocassee Lake, it's well worth it; not only for the waterfalls, but for the crystal clear water, wildlife and peaceful shores.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/28/2017

Purpose: Inspection for Konnarock

Location: Section 1, Backbone Rock Trail

People: Carl Fritz, Tim Stewart, Josh Kloehn, Jerry Kyle, Justin Farrell, Josh Reynolds, Brian Allgood

Summary: All Konnarock Crew leaders inspected the upper relocation on Backbone Rock Trail. They also inspected their campsite. They are ready to bring both crews in next week.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 4/29/2017

Purpose: Garlic Mustard Pull Challenge

Location: Section 20b, Devils Gap

People: Greg Kramer, Vic Hasler, Matt Druary, Josh Williamson

Summary: During the annual TEHCC Garlic Mustard Challenge, we pulled 257 pounds of Garlic Mustard, 100 pounds more than last year. We stopped when there was no more Garlic Mustard at the A.T. and forest service road. There was Garlic Mustard to pull farther down the road near the field clearing, along with Autumn Olive that needed spraying. It will be interesting to see how much Garlic Mustard there is next year.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 5/2/2017

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 3b, Spring to US 421

People: Greg Kramer

Summary: We tried different weed whacking tools to cut back the greenbriar, poison ivy, and blackberry before they take over the trail. The saw-toothed weed cutter was used most of the time, but did not work well on the very young stalks.

Reporting: Rick Lott

Date: 5/3/2017

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US 19E, Just north of Bear Branch Road

People: Rick Lott

Summary: Using a handsaw, I removed an 8-10" blowdown discovered by Kevin. It was just trail north of Bear Branch Road.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 5/4/2017

Purpose: Build trail relocation with Konnarock Crew

Location: Section 1, Backbone Rock Trail

People: Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters

Summary: We assisted the Konnarock Crew with the upper relocation on Backbone Rock Trail. Konnarock had five leaders and nine volunteers. Almost all the volunteers were from Cisco Systems. If weather provides some work windows over the next couple of days, they will finish this relocation.

Reporting: Rick Lott

Date: 5/4/2017

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 12c, Sugar Hollow Creek to Campbell Hollow Road, South end to Jones Falls

People: Rick Lott, Ken Chamness

Summary: The 10" reported blowdown had already been removed. But there were two 14-18" blowdowns that were laying flat and we removed them. All is clear on the southern end to Jones Falls.

Reporting: Rick Lott

Date: 5/4/2017

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

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

People: Rick Lott, Ken Chamness

Summary: We removed some smaller blowdowns. Then about a quarter mile south of the cemetery, we found an extremely large, unstable, broken fork across the trail with about three 12-18" branches. It is possible to duck under this on the low side of the trail. It will require cutting from the crown backwards. This 30+ inch blowdown is a problem and more tools will be needed. We will have to come back with another bar/chain and a sledge hammer. Next we found two 15-18" trees across the trail about an hour from 19E. These are pretty hard for hikers to get around. More tools will be needed to remove these.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 5/4/2017

Purpose: Prepare trail for work trip

Location: Section 12d, North of US 19E

People: Jim Chambers, Mike "Lumpy" Price

Summary: We prepared the trail for the Roan Mountain Trail Festival work trip.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 5/6/2017

Location: Roan Mountain

People: Dan Firth, Ed Oliver

Summary: We manned the club booth at the inaugural Roan Mountain Trail Festival in Roan Mountain, TN.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 5/6/2017

Purpose: Transport hikers

Location: Roan Mountain

People: Ted Mowery, Paul Benfield

Summary: We transported hikers from the US 19E trailhead and Carver Gap trailhead to Roan Mountain for the Roan Mountain Trail Festival.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 5/6/2017

Purpose: Rehab trail and clear blowdown

Location: Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US 19E, Mostly just north of 19E

People: Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Karen Loven, Pat Loven, Bob Peoples, Connie Squires, George Thorpe; Hikers: Kristy Ball, Rhesia Baron, Bogan Cate, Danyell Dahn, Lauren Grah, James Maher

Summary: With the help of hikers, as part of the Roan Mountain Trail Festival, we rehabbed trail just north of US 19E by redigging and adding log and rock cribbing, and log and rock steps. Thanks goes to Jim Chambers and Lumpy who did the prep work to allow this to happen. Several of us removed two large blowdowns on top of each other south of Bishop Hollow.

Reporting: Kenneth Buchanan

Date: 5/6/2017

Purpose: Clip weeds and inspect trail

Location: Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter to TN 91

People: Ken Buchanan, Andrew Colson, Cole Stovall

Summary: I conscripted two, more or less willing, workers (a grandson and his friend) to walk the section. We carried an axe, loppers, and a string trimmer; all were put to good use. At the shelter we caught up with a group of "hikers and bikers" from Chicago. They were very interested in what we were doing and why we were doing it. This was the third time I have had hikers comment on the log with the steps. All like it and had their picture taken there. The boys walked on through to Low Gap where they found a group from Louisiana who had free food for hikers (and maintainers). A fun day.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 5/8/2017

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 2a, Abingdon Gap Shelter

People: Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: I did routine shelter maintenance: shoveled out the fire ring, cleaned the gutter, picked up trash, replaced the old broom, and replaced the shelter journal. The water source was running well. There are still no marks on the clean walls. The graffiti board was half full of drawings. As expected, the trail was an interstate of hikers. I talked to ones from IA, IN, ME, MA, OH, TN and England. Again, I pass on compliments from at least 2 or 3 about the excellent trail maintenance on the TEHCC section. It was a gorgeous day to be hiking.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 5/8/2017

Purpose: Mow grass

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed and cut weeds at the camping area at Overmountain Shelter and along the trails as needed. We cleaned out all the ditches diverting the water from the walkway to the shelter and from the well at the rear of the shelter. The lower spring pipe still isn't running, but the upper spring has plenty of water. We also picked up all the trash.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 5/8/2017

Purpose: Mow along trail

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed and cut weeds along the trail across Osborne Farm as needed. Thanks goes to Reuben for his spraying, which appeared to be very effective. The cattle are back in the pasture. At this time, they are in the back three fields.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 5/8/2017

Purpose: Perform routine maintenance and check for blowdowns

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap to 1/2 mile south of Clyde Smith Shelter

People: Jim Foster

Summary: I removed several small blowdowns and one large one with the help of a hiker (Bananas). There are at least four blowdowns that will need a chainsaw to remove, including a new one just south of the shelter that completely blocks the existing trail. Fortunately it can be walked around. It was a beautiful day with lots of hikers on the trail.

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 5/9/2017

Purpose: Remove blowdown

Location: Section 20b, Forest Service Rd 278 to Spivey Gap

People: Ken Murray

Summary: I had a report of a bad blowdown from a local hostel. I checked from the forest service road to Spivey Gap (where the blowdown was reported), but did not find one. There was a new upturned rhododendron that someone else had cut up. I saw many hikers; the bubble is still upon us.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 5/10/2017

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: The first mile and a quarter of trail looks fine, with the exception of two blowdowns. There is one new tree that fell about 3/4 of a mile up the trail and the other one is just beyond the power lines. Both will require a chain saw, but in the meantime, hikers are able to walk over both trees.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 5/10/2017

Purpose: Open Areas Meeting

Location: Appalachian Ranger District Office, Mars Hill

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: We have an annual meeting to match priorities with available funds for management of open areas along the A.T. north of the Smokies. Led by Matt Drury from ATC, the meeting this year included biologists Joe McGuinness from the Cherokee NF and Susan Fruchey from the Pisgah NF, Acting District Ranger Kevin Knesek and Cleve Fox from the Appalachian RD, Marquette Crockett and Travis Bordley from the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, and Ron Navik from the Carolina Mountain Club. Funding for 2017 looks good. Matt presented a list of last year's treatments and proposed to treat all again in 2017. We pointed out that some of our smaller open areas are best considered on a rotation that does not require annual treatment. Decisions for areas along the TEHCC section, managed with A.T. Park Office funding, included keeping the two cuttings per year at Elk River, at Osborne Tract along with herbicide treatment, and concentrating on the margins on Hump Mtn and Beauty Spot. Also included was treating the Canute Place on White Rocks Mtn and the Senter Tract near Dennis Cove for invasives; and continuing with Round Bald, while monitoring possibilities for Jane Bald once a biological survey is completed there. Matt will check with the NC Wildlife Resource Commission for their plans at the Buchanan Tract north of Beauty Spot, Yellow Mtn Gap, and Little Hump. The Cherokee NF will continue to treat areas between Bishop Hollow and Upper Laurel, in a maintenance mode rather than expansion. The Cherokee NF are also looking for the best way to haul equipment to Weedy Gap. The Appalachian RD is looking into the possibility of getting equipment to Grassy Ridge up the old Peake Road. The fairly remote Elk Hollow Knob, near Stan Murray Shelter, was discussed as a possible area for a crew to work. The biggest needs are at Max Patch; funding will be used there for areas not treated in several years.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 5/10/2017

Purpose: Cut blowdowns

Location: Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US 19E, North end of section

People: Kevin Sedgwick, Rick Lott

Summary: Rick and Kevin finally linked up on an awesome day. We hiked in to take care of the very large blowdown Rick started. Rick said more trees have come down in the last week. We cut a few small ones by hand. We cut a bigger one on Roby Miller dirt path and another leaner by Isaac Cemetery. The problem of the day was a large split tree crossing over the trail with many forks 18-24" in size, with a much bigger (36") trunk, north of the cemetery in the open view area. We cut it back as far as we felt was safe. Hikers can hike around it. We blocked the trail and lined the path to push hikers around it. To remove the rest of the split will require block and tackle etc to pull it down and around, if possible. The split is still wedged in the tree up high. We cut some rose, rhodys, etc where needed. Thanks to Rick for a hard day. We saw many friendly thru-hikers.

Reporting: Brian Paley

Date: 5/10/2017

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 8, US 321 to Forest Service Gate

People: Brian People

Summary: I cut three leaning trees and one 12" step-over. I also cut back multiflora roses. The trail looks good, but is still a little wet and muddy in sections.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 5/11/2017

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to FS 230 Switchback, 2 miles of north end

People: Daryl Anderson, Paul Benfield, Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters; Hiker: Smiles

Summary: Mostly we worked with rocks for cribbing and steps to cover rooty areas and added steps where old steps had become too high. "Smiles" stopped and helped us retrieve some rocks for cribbing. It was a beautiful day with winds most of the time to keep gnats away. A very low flying Air Force plane suddenly got our attention.

Reporting: Michael Watts

Date: 5/13/2017

Purpose: Spring Maintenance

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel to Hughes Gap

People: Rick Lott, Kevin Sedgewick, Mike Watts

Summary: We were happy to get a dry day after all the rain. There were over a half-dozen blowdowns from the storms, which we cleared with handsaws. We also did a lot of pruning. We saw a number of thru-hikers who were consistently appreciative of maintenance efforts and trail conditions.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 5/14/2017

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Bradley Gap

People: Lynn DiFiore, Vern Maddux

Summary: This was my annual assault on the weeds. We cut from the barn to Bradley Gap, removed the recurring fire ring at Little Hump, and removed a large amount of trash from the barn. We also replaced the register. The trail was very wet in the relo section towards Bradley Gap; hikers are creating braided sections of trail to avoid the mud and water. It was a great day to be out; lots of day hikers and NOBOs.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 5/15/2017

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

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

People: Dan Firth

Summary: After the recent strong storms and a tornado in Shady Valley, the trail looked good with no significant blowdowns. I spent the day mostly cutting back briars. Also, I identified several phenology (study of cyclic and seasonal natural phenomena) monitoring sites to support the A.T. Seasons program. Many thru-hikers were passing through.

Reporting: Brian Paley

Date: 5/15/2017

Purpose: Spring Maintenance

Location: Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road to below Watauga Dam

People: Brian Paley

Summary: I lopped the trail from Wilbur Dam Road to below Watauga Dam and cleared one blowdown.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 5/16/2017

Purpose: Invasive Species Survey and Rare Plant Monitoring

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

People: Dan Firth

Summary: Multiflora rose is an invasive plant common along the trail and occurring in several locations along this section. I surveyed the occurrences and determined the area covered. I also monitored a Tennessee threatened species found along the section.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 5/16/2017

Purpose: Cut blowdowns

Location: Section 16a, Greasy Creek Gap to about one mile north of Clyde Smith Shelter

People: Carl Fritz, Jim Foster

Summary: Carl cut six blowdowns and one dead standing tree. We also repaired the spring box that someone had uncovered. It was a great day and Carl did a great job with the chainsaw. We saw 20+ hikers including two we had to step over sleeping at Greasy Creek Gap.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 5/16/2017

Purpose: Mow grass

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed and cut weeds along the Trail across Osborne Farm. Prisoners are working on the fences. The fence building that has been completed looks great. The fence has been completed and the fence row has been cleared between the gate and Highway TN 91.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 5/17/2017

Purpose: Take care of blowdown

Location: Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US19E, North end of section

People: Carl Fritz, Richard Lott, Bob Peoples, George Thorpe, Gloria Sedgwick, Kevin Sedgwick.

Summary: I gathered reinforcements to tackle the large split-tree blowdown that Lott and Sedgwick started last week. We used all of our tools on this one. We used a pole saw to remove the overhead branches and a come-a-long, straps and lines to secure the large branches as many cuts were made. Carl and Richard carved up the tree. It was a warm day to be out. Thru-hikers were still passing through.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 5/18/2017

Purpose: A.T. Cooperative Management Call

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: This teleconference is a forum for discussion among ATC, APPA, and the trail-maintaining clubs. Wendy Janssen and Ron Tipton fielded most of the topics. There were a few takeaways I would like to relay to TEHCC. (1) While comments can still be registered regarding the Mountain Valley Pipeline (Virginia), we're waiting on direction from ATC on the next phase for the review process. (2) Ron has announced his retirement at the end of 2017. He outlined the approach being taken by ATC to hire a search firm with experience in outdoor non-profits. (3) Trail Assessment GIS Reports will not be available to the clubs until Q3, 2018; thus I recommend that TEHCC take no further action until then to ensure the update method is fully functional.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 5/18/2017

Purpose: Roan Naturalist Orientation and Maintenance

Location: Section 14c, Carvers Gap to Grassy Ridge

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: Jessica (Jess) Schaner is the Roan Naturalist for 2017, the fifth year this program has been in existence. SAHC Roan Stewardship Director Marquette Crockett, Matt Drury from ATC, and Lynn DiFiore from the Forest Service, and I conducted field orientation for Jess between Carvers Gap and the Grassy Ridge trail junction, describing policies and issues she is likely to encounter. Two of those issues are trash and fire rings; we picked up trash and dismantled several fire rings. I went on to Grassy Ridge and clipped the trail leading to it. The signpost at the junction was almost all the way out of the ground; I reset it. Also, the sign which mysteriously appeared at Jane Bald several years ago was mostly out of the ground and turned, and the sign board was cracked in half. I reset that post. Since neither TEHCC nor the USFS installed that sign, whether to fix and keep it or remove it should be considered. The high steps on Round Bald continue to encourage people to walk off the Trail.

Reporting: Pat Loven

Date: 5/18/2017

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

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

People: Pat Loven, Dennis Dugan

Summary: We drove to the top of White Rock Mountain and performed routine maintenance on the southern portion of this section. We clipped the usual rhododendron and briers. We also used a handsaw to remove overhanging branches and one leaner tree section that had planted itself in the middle of the trail. Ten hikers came through and all were grateful for our work. One spoke of his encounter with Kevin's work crew on Wednesday and was very impressed with their tree removal skills. Overall, a good day.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 5/18/2017

Purpose: Scout trail

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter

People: Kim Peters

Summary: After the reported high winds in the Shady Valley area last week, I thought it would be a good idea to check the trail condition. Surprisingly, I saw no evidence of high winds in the area; so thankfully, that must have been on another ridge.

I cleared a few small blowdowns, dispersed a few fire rings, cut back a few encroaching branches and cleaned out waterbars. This section of trail is in good shape for now; although the weeds will need to be cut in a few weeks. At the shelter, I picked up a surprisingly small amount of trash, just one small bag, and placed a new log book. Someone has repaired at least part of the Grindstaff Monument. The engraved stone has been put back into place with what looks like epoxy grout. However the rest of the monument is still crumbling, so not sure if this is any kind of a fix. I saw more hikers than I could count, most heading to Damascus for Trail Days. I was thanked a lot for my efforts today.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 5/19/2017

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Stan Murray

People: Lynn DiFiore, Lyndsey Smith, Steve Tipton

Summary: We finished cutting the weeds, cut out one blowdown, and obliterated the new trail around the blowdown. We also removed a small amount of trash from Stan Murray Shelter. We saw only a few hikers, possibly due to the significant thunderstorms that passed through!

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 5/24/2017

Purpose: Mow grass

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed the grass and cut weeds along the trails at Overmountain Shelter. We also removed trash from the firepit and shelter.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 5/24/2017

Purpose: Ash Survey Training

Location: Spivey Gap South

People: Dan Firth, Bill Tindall

Summary: Bill Tindall and Dan Firth met with Matt Drury (ATC) for training on identifying and surveying ash stands. As opportunity allows, sections of the A.T. will be surveyed to identify and quantify ash stands. Information from these surveys will then be used to seek funding for treatment next year to thwart the emerald ash borer. Information available indicates there may be significant stands on Iron Mountain. There were a few hikers out; we shuttled one thru-hiker to John's Hostel before severe weather struck.

Reporting: Richard Carter

Date: 5/26/2017

Purpose: Check section and cut weeds

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

People: Richard Carter

Summary: I checked the section, suspecting blowdowns from recent windy weather. There are two large blowdowns, about 20-22 inches in diameter; one is about a quarter mile north of the Grassy Ridge trail junction, the other about a half mile south of Stan Murray Shelter. There is another smaller blowdown about a mile south of the shelter. I cut and removed one four-inch blowdown. There is also a "hung" blowdown/hazard about a mile south of the shelter. Weeds are already copious, and I cut them from the first 2/3 mile south of the shelter. I replaced the shelter register. There were many hikers out.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 5/26/2017

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 12b, Walnut Mountain Road to Sugar Hollow Creek, Northern 2 miles

People: Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Brian Paley, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart

Summary: We mostly worked on wet areas by adding a long turnpike or rock steps. Mountaineer Falls was flowing heavily and hikers were having to wade the stream; additional rock steps were added. We removed some minor blowdowns and about a 14" poplar with handsaws. We encountered about 35 hikers. The hikers probably got stacked up with the recent rains. A couple of them stopped to tell us that our trail condition was generally the best they had seen. And one of those was from New England.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 5/27/2017

Purpose: Scout for rehab entry points

Location: Section 17, Iron Mtn Gap to 1 mile trail south of Cherry Gap Shelter

People: Jim Foster

Summary: I scouted for the best entry points to do trail rehab on this section. I also cleared a couple of blowdowns. There are about 6 blowdowns (all step-overs) both trail north and south of the shelter. Chainsaw required.