

## Appalachian Trail Maintainers News

*Remote for detachment; Narrow for chosen company; Winding for leisure; Lonely for contemplation;  
It beckons not merely north and south, but upward to the body, mind and soul of man...Harold Allen*



Published by the Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club

Gay Bryant, Webmail Coordinator; Dianne Gruber, newsletter editor, 865 977-0807; Phyllis Henry, Treasurer, Special Projects, 865 577-2604; George Ritter, Recruiting, (865) 483-9758; Dick Ketelle, Committee Member, 865 483-9345; John Lankford, NP Division Leader, 865 774-1866; Jim Lowe, Nantahala National Forest Division Leader 828 479- 9271; Mac McNutt, Tools Manager, 865 983-3237; Randy Puckett, Consultant; Philip Royer, Shelter and Campsite coordinator 865 694- 0160; Mac McNutt and Philip Royer, Regional Representatives.

August/ 2008

### August Work Trip

**AUGUST 2. Meet at Alcoa Food Lion at 8 a.m.**

A crew is needed to cut brush and clear waterbars starting at Spruce Fir Nature trail and working 0.7 miles to the crest of the lead between Road Prong and Tomahawk Prong. Please call Dianne Gruber at 865 977-0807 or email grub9382@bellsouth.net if you can help.

### More National Trails Day Reports

#### June 7, 2008

Nancy Dunning, Don Dunning, Karen Brackett, and a dozen hardy Boy Scouts and adult Scout leaders from BSA Troop 213 backpacked 300 pounds of mulch to the Icewater Springs shelter to replenish the mulch bins for the privy. Troop 213 was ably represented by Scouts Trevor Arms, Mark Crum, Bobby McClure, Sojourner McClure, John McGill, Chris Muncey, Gabe Ross, Sam Stair, and Nathan Tolbert, and Scouters Michael Arms, Alan Muncey, and Jim Torbert. After refilling the mulch bins, replenishing the mulch buckets, and cleaning up around the privy, the crew then cleaned waterbars and cut back brush along approximately one mile of trail beyond the shelter toward

Masa Knob. At the end of this long day's work, the group visited the Jumpoff, and arrived to find it swallowed up in a cloud, with zero visibility - oh well, maybe next time. Special thanks to Troop 213 for making this an outstanding and productive trip.

*Don Dunning*

Betty Royer's all female group, Holly Burcham, Crystal Burnes, Regina Kinton, Leslie Reeves, and Robin Young started from Fork Ridge and soon found that they had time and energy for more than cutting and cleaning. They found ribbons tied to logs and ribbons describing needed projects. The whole crew felt like pros after installing several new logs for steps and waterbars plus building two new stone steps, as they climbed Mt. Collins. They called themselves the Hump Crew for unknown reasons. Typical of an all female crew, they took time out for photos of the beautiful Clinton lilies and for a fashion show by Holly, who sported her fashionable new hiking pants. Passing male hikers each were evaluated for their potential appeal to one of the crew, who remains eligible.

Philip Royer's crew, Gary & Sherri Dykes, Gary Perkins, Ben Royer, and Taylor Weatherbee, immediately found locust to install as steps and waterbars, including the large, venerable "bench" log that has hidden in the weeds at Collins Gap for two years. At a rough spot near "Dick's Pinky" steps, a large rock and a log were installed for new steps to encourage hikers to remain on the trail instead of short-cutting. After lunch, two sections of turnpike, which had been started last year, were lengthened by over 20 feet and extensively refilled with earth from nearby root balls. Passing herds of boy scouts were recruited to compact the fresh dirt by running back and forth over the turnpike chanting "Be Prepared." A thru-hiker who failed to thank the crew was summarily buried in the borrow pit. Shortly, Phillip's crew was overtaken by Lucinda's crew, and in a few more minutes, Betty's crew arrived from over the mountain.

*Philip Royer*

Twelve people spent Friday night and started work at 8:30 a.m. beginning to restore the AT thru Spence field that was rehabbed on the first trails day 12 years ago. Locust logs from last fall's helicopter drop were carried from up the trail. Six day workers carried up lunch and joined us mid morning. The crew worked until 3:30 pm. We rehabbed 400 feet of trail with 29 log steps and 9 new water bars installed. Much dirt was used to fill in the old rutted trail and to lessen the rocky grade. This is horse section and the repairs were completed to horse standards. Special thanks to Josh Rainey and his friend Josh for carrying most of the heavy logs to the work sites. On Sunday Amy Barker, Trena Paulus, and Randy Puckett refilled the installed steps to better allow the water to flow over the logs and not puddle up, The new tread was naturalized with grass and leaves...

*Randy Puckett*

## July Scheduled Work Trip Report

July 5, 2008 twelve volunteers arrived early at Maryville, willing to drive the Dragon to Fontana in order to assist the Konnarock Crew in Week One of their work on the SMHC section of trail in Nantahala National Forest. This year's project was not a technically difficult repair or an extensive relocation, but the rehabilitation of a steep, eroded stretch of trail near Walker Gap, approximately 2 ½ miles south of NC 28. Mac McNutt and Stewart Taylor cut 16 "blowdowns" between the dam and NC 28 while the rest of the SMHC volunteers hiked in a steady rain to meet the Konnarock Crew. About the time the rain stopped, the SMHC volunteers arrived at the work site, and after introductions, blended with the crew of 11 led by crew chief Christine Boyer. Jim Lowe of SMHC had worked with the crew for several days prior to our trip, so he was already busy helping cut material for steps and waterbars when the rest arrived.

The combined efforts of Konnarock and SMHC installed 5 waterbars and 16 steps during the day. There was much interaction between the groups, and chances to meet new folks. Several of the Konnarock crew were new to AT maintenance, and their ages ranged from early 20's to 60's. At the end of the afternoon, we hiked back to Fontana and hosted the crew for a picnic dinner. Thankfully the afternoon weather was beautiful, and by the end of the meal, all were satisfied with the day, and the Konnarock crew thanked SMHC repeatedly for our assistance. They stated emphatically that it is a real treat for them to have help from the clubs which maintain the trail where they work.

In addition to Jim Lowe, SMHC volunteers included Ron Beatty, Elinor Benami, Holly Burcham, Don Dunning, Ed Peck, Mac McNutt, Betty Royer, Philip Royer, Paul Ruble and Stewart Taylor. Julie Crow and Shannon May made the effort to travel to Fontana and back, but decided not to hike with the group due to heavy rain at the beginning of the hike.

### A.T. Work

**6/10 08 Randy Puckett, Amy Barker,** and 3 high school students from William Blount High and 2 students from West HS in the Pre-college Upward Bound enrichment program from UT along with PCUB staff member Brian carried mulch to Mt Collins. Total time 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (drive, get mulch, carry in and drive back) times the 8 workers. For three of the students it was the first time they had hiked and their first time in the Smokies.

**6/17/08 Steve Higdon** cut weeds, briars, and brush, and cleared a blow down between Newfound and Indian Gaps.

**6/19/08 Art Barker** cleaned water bars, filled in steps, and cut brush starting at Road Prong trail and working SE.

**6/21/08 Mac McNutt, Stew Taylor, Wayne Williams, Ed Peck, John Gassler, and Jim Cunningham** cleaned waterbars and did some cutting back of vegetation from Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong.

**6/21/08 Jim Lowe, Jimmy Smith, Bob Husted, Bob Williams, Alan Duff, Ray Payne and George Ritter** cleared about ten blowdowns from Cheoah Bald to Wright Gap, and brushed part of the section from Wright Gap going north.

**6/27/08 Dick Ketelle and Jim Russell** hiked in with a crosscut saw and related tools to remove a fallen 20-inch spruce tree that was completely blocking the A.T. near the base of the western slope of Mt. Chapman. The tree was dispatched within 30 minutes in the mid-point of a 20 mile, 12-hour hike.

**6/28/08 Rob Carter** cleaned out Cosby Knob shelter and cleared the path to the spring and privy, refilled mulch buckets, whacked weeds on the south side of trail to Low Gap, and on the north side of trail to Sun Up, re-rocked triangular pits and cleaned water bars.

**6/29/08 Dick Ketelle** downloaded privy logger data from Cosby Knob shelter.

**7/1/08 Keith Mertz and Pam Reddoch** trimmed brush and greenbrier and removed two small blowdowns between NC-28 and Fontana Dam.

**7/3/08 Mark Shipley** removed weeds from Camel Gap to the Cosby Knob Shelter.

**7/6/08 Dick Ketelle** cut weeds toward Charlies Bunion before getting turned back by rain and thunder. Saw SWEAT Crew at Icewater as they were heading to False Gap, and worked on the malfunctioning privy data logger.

**7/7/08 Ed Peck** cut vegetation from Goshen Prong Trail to SW of Jenkins Knob, carried out trash from the shelter as well as three empty plastic mulch bags we had taken in on NTD.

**7/11/08 Dick Ketelle** finished cutting back woody growth and cutting weeds between Masa Knob and Dry Sluice Trail junction.