



January 2020

**No Regular First Saturday A.T. Work Trip in January**

We take a break now from our regular first Saturday work trips for December, January and February. As weather and Trail conditions allow, and of course as you desire, sections can always use work, no matter what time of year! Stay safe and warm!

**First Aid/ CPR Course offered by GSMNP, January 7, 2020**

We have recently been notified of the following course offering by the National Park:  
Nick Yarnell will be teaching an American Heart Association First Aid/CPR course on **Tuesday, January 7** at the Sugarlands Training Room (at Sugarlands Visitor Center). There are currently 8 slots open in the course. It will start at 9 am and be over by 4 pm that day.  
**To sign up for the course, email Nick Yarnell directly at [nicholas\\_yarnell@nps.gov](mailto:nicholas_yarnell@nps.gov). The deadline to sign up is December 31st and will be first come, first serve.** Please note that Nick will be out of the office between now and then (in the field and off) so he will respond to each person who emails to sign up on Wednesday, January 1.  
Note: CPR certification is good for 2 years, so if you were certified last year, you are still current.

**Do you need locust logs for your section?**

A supply of locust logs at Oconoluftee has been assessed and many are suitable for preparation (cleaning, cutting, splitting) for use on our A.T. sections. If you feel you can use logs this coming year (including with crews on National Trails Day, June 6, 2020), PLEASE estimate the number you would need for waterbars, steps or checkdams (lengths vary according to use) and whether you prefer split or whole. Please contact Taylor Weatherbee at [tweatherbe@aol.com](mailto:tweatherbe@aol.com) with info as soon as possible.

**CPR/ Wilderness First Aid Courses offered by ATC, February 11, 12, 13, 2020**

ATC is hosting CPR and Wilderness First Aid courses at Soak Ash Base Camp (just outside of Gatlinburg, TN) February 11-13th. They will have instructors from Landmark Learning teaching these courses since they are a leading source for education and training in the southeast! The courses will offered these at a discounted price for A.T. volunteers and partners.

**Tues., Feb. 11: 1/2 day CPR, \$50/participant.**

**Wed., Feb 12-Thurs. Feb 13: 2 full days of Wilderness First Aid, \$185 for ATC partners/ A.T.volunteers. \$215 for general public.**

To Apply: E-mail Chloe DeCamara directly at [cdecamara@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:cdecamara@appalachiantrail.org). Request that NOLS Agreement and Landmark Learning Release and Health Form be e-mailed to you.

Please specify which course (if not both) you want to sign up for (WFR recerts possible). Also, specify if you'd like to stay on-site at Soak Ash Base Camp through the course. There are limited sleeping accommodations at Base Camp for partners and volunteers.

Payments can be accepted via check or card. Checks can be mailed to Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Attn: Chloe DeCamara, 160 Zillicoa st., Asheville, NC, 28801. Credit card info can be taken over the phone by Chloe DeCamara, 828-357-6542 or 828-545-8764.

**Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee Meeting Wednesday January 29, 6:30pm**

An ATMC meeting will be held on 1-29-20 at 6:30pm at Tn Bank, 1311 West Lamar Alexander Hgwy, Maryville. Preparations for many Spring, Summer and Fall projects and activities will be discussed, so please make plans to attend. If you would like something included on the Agenda, please e-mail Diane Petrilla at [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com).



**Fontana Village Appalachian Trail Community  
Representatives**

We are pleased to announce that Mark Buckles and Bob Palermo have agreed to be SMHC representatives to Fontana Village, in its role as an Appalachian Trail Community. As such, they will serve as liaisons with a new Fontana Advisory Committee, to raise Fontana's visibility to hikers, as well as advise on Appalachian Trail stewardship issues. We look forward to hearing more about developments in this relationship! Thank you Mark and Bob!

Keith Mertz\*, "Hopeful" Powell\*, Bill Pyle, Pam Reddoch\*, Philip Royer\*, Brian Schloff\*, **Neil Snepp\***, Jerry Troxler\*, Wayne Williams\*, Mike Wood.\*

**Silver Pulaski (50 hours):** **Amanda Beal\***, **Jack Bray\***, Mark Buckles, Jeff Cooper, Kristi Knight, **Randy Mitchell\***, **Cindy Spangler\***, Ernie Wiles, **Bob Williams.\*** 41 other maintainers have previously earned this award.

**Bronze Pulaski (25 Hours):** **Barbara Allen\***, Adam Beal, **Karen Brackett\***, Joe Bray, Liz Ehr, **Patti Grady\***, Steve Hill, **Eric Keller\***, Scott McClure, Houston Phillips, **Randy Rainey\***, **Mark Shipley\***, **Keith Stayton\***, Kristi Weatherbee. 76 other maintainers have previously earned this award.

**ATC Awards- Hours since 10/1/2000 (Start of the Database)**

**ATC Vest (1000 cumulative hours):** **These maintainers have provided the greatest and longest commitments over the history of our A.T.**

**involvement and have our deep gratitude:** Pete Berntsen\*, Don Dunning\*, Ed Fleming\*, James Fondren\*, Dennis Fulcher\*, Jim Goddard\*, Doris Gove\*, Phyllis Henry\*, Steve Higdon\*, Tom Howard\*, Pete James\*, Bill Kerr\*, Dick Ketelle\*, Franklin LaFond\*, Mac McNutt\*, Lou Murray\*, Ed Peck\*, Randy Puckett\*, Steve Reagan\*, Philip Royer\*, Janet Snyder, Mark Snyder, Stew Taylor\*, Jerry Troxler\*, Wayne Williams\*.

**ATC Cap (500 cumulative hours):** Jack Bray\*, Alan Duff\*, Nancy Dunning\*, Steve Dunkin, Ann Farrar\*, Mike Harrington, Keith Mertz\*, Diane Petrilla, "Hopeful" Powell\*, Jim Quick\*, Randy Rainey\*, Pam Reddoch\*, Paul Ruble\*, Janet Snyder\*, Mark Snyder\*, Bob Williams\*, Mike Wood\*.

**ATC Patch (100 cumulative hours):** Mark Buckles, Bill Gooch, Kristi Knight, Terry Martin, Scott McClure, Bill Pyle, Keith Stayton, Ernie Wiles. 121 maintainers have previously earned this award.

**ATPO Awards- 250 hours since last eligibility date to earn National Parks Pass for 1 year**

Maintainers who have become eligible are contacted individually to choose whether they want the Pass. 38 maintainers are eligible this year; many have earned this Pass more than once.

**2019 SMHC/ATMC Recognition of Appalachian Trail  
Maintainers**

*(as presented at the SMHC Installation Banquet,  
December 14, 2019)*

*Submitted by Diane Petrilla and George Ritter, ATMC  
representatives*

SMHC Appalachian Trail maintainers worked tirelessly again this year to maintain their sections, take care of blowdowns, supply mulch to privies, and work on large projects, all with the desire to "give back" and with a deep sense of stewardship for the Trail. As the Appalachian Trail Conservancy notes in their recognition program, "...some very dedicated volunteers reject the thought of formal recognition for their efforts." But the number of volunteers and their total hours are so impressive as to warrant special recognition by those who hike the trail and use the shelters.

Here is a list of our SMHC maintainers who achieved special levels of performance.

**SMHC Awards- Hours for One Year Ending 9/30/2019**

<New awards are underlined; \*asterisks indicate awards in prior years>

<**Bold** indicates they did it again this year>

<Platinum and Gold repeaters receive an ATC pin for their cap>

**Platinum Pulaski (200 hours):** **Pete Berntsen\***, Don Dunning\*, Ed Fleming\*, Phyllis Henry\*, Tom Howard\*, **Franklin LaFond\***, Ed Peck\*, Diane Petrilla, Steve Reagan\*, Janet Snyder\*, Mark Snyder\*, Stewart Taylor\*, Taylor Weatherbee.

**Gold Pulaski (100 hours):** Tony Bolt\*, Greg Crandall\*, **Steve Dunkin\***, Nancy Dunning\*, Steven Epps\*, Pamela Fleming\*, James Fondren\*, **Dick Ketelle\***, Terry Martin,

## SMHC Appalachian Trail Maintainer Accomplishments in 2019

For the year ending 9/30/19, 279 maintainers worked a total of 9014 hours (work and travel combined), to care for the 101.9 miles of A.T. between Davenport Gap, TN and Wesser, NC. This represented an increase over last year's hours of 7656. We had 4 college group visits, as well as other types of groups, contributing a total of 689 hours included in the total above. One of our proudest accomplishments this year, was the completion of the last "major" privy/ shelter rebuild/ remodeling project, with the re-build of the Spence Privy. Over the last 23 years, our Club has rebuilt or remodeled 15 shelters and 7 privies along the A.T., and this represented the last of those "big" projects. Led by Ed Fleming, Philip Royer, George Minnigh, Keith Stayton, Don Dunning, Jack Bray, Phyllis Henry, Terry Martin, Taylor Weatherbee, Mike Harrington, Pete Berntsen, and many others, from design to pre-assembly to old privy take-down to helicopter lift and building, the project was completed from March 15- April 7, 2019. The ATMC greatly appreciates the assistance of the ATC and Christine Hoyer of the NPS in this project. Locust logs dropped in caches during the helicopter lift on the A.T. north and south of Spence will be used for Trail rehab in 2020. We had a very successful and fun National Trails Day on June 1 (our 24<sup>th</sup>), and by going to a sponsorship model rather than fee-based registration, increased our volunteer participation significantly. Immense appreciation goes to all who helped plan this event, all of our great crew leaders and participants! We had successful equestrian delivery of mulch to Cosby and Tricorner this year, and continue to work through an MOU between the Park, Horsemen/women and our Club. Maintainers attend Appalachian Trail Conservancy meetings to further our partnerships, and Franklin LaFond has assumed an important leadership role within the ATC as the Southern Regional Partnership Chair and Stewardship Council Representative. Our future challenge remains in recruiting young and diverse volunteers, to mentor and engage with the beautiful Appalachian Trail miles that we care for. And as always, if you are interested in maintaining, we welcome you!

*Thank you to all maintainers for this amazing work this year! If you were not at the banquet to receive your award, I will be mailing it or contacting you about how to get it to you.*  
-Diane

## A. T. Work Trips from 10/1/2019 to 12/15/2019

11/7 - Kristi Knight - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap - Cleaned water bars along the trail.

11/10 - Dick Ketelle, Franklin LaFond - Wright Gap to Wesser - Cut numerous standing dead pine trees that were close to the trail and the road at Wright Gap to reduce hazards of tree-fall and minimize future blowdown removal needs in the area.

11/15 - Charlie McDonald - Mulch Operations - Added 6 wheelbarrow loads of mulch to the existing pile under cover. Currently have 30-40 bags worth drying out in the tent. Sugarland supply shed should have 30 bags ready for use where needed. Delivered 30lbs mulch to Double Springs Shelter. Filled the three 5 gallon buckets at the privy, swept and picked up litter at shelter. Met 2 section hikers from New Zealand, they started at Springer Mt. will end Hot Springs NC.

11/16 - Gene Desrosiers, Tracy Kressler, Randy Mitchell, Gavin Morrisett, Diane Petrilla, Michael Roque, Neil Snepp, Elizabeth Weikert, Ernie Wiles - Mulch Operations - We had wonderful weather for this time of year, and 9 strong and cheerful hikers who carried 260lbs. of mulch to the Double Springs mulch bins. With this trip, the bins are 100 % full for the end of the season when CD Rd. closes on Dec. 1. Mt. Collins is also near 100% full, by last reports. A mulch trip to Icewater is planned for Saturday December 7, led by Ernie Wiles.

11/17 - Bill Pyle, Taylor Weatherbee - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap - Crosscut 14 inch tree off trail that had been reported by Pete Berntsen last week. Also removed a couple of small leaning trees.

11/17 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap - Improved three steps that were carved into rock last year and added three additional steps today. Steps were made wider and deeper to make them more user-friendly.

11/18 - Cindy Spangler - Collins Gap to Clingmans Dome - Cleaned all water bars on my section (Clingmans Dome to Mt Love) and then tackled 9 water bars on the next section...Dick Ketelle cleaned the remaining water bars on this section in early Nov. Added cover to two social trails. Picked up 2 pieces of trash. Removed one tree limb from trail.

11/18 - Patti Grady, Diane Petrilla - Indian Gap/Rd Pr Tr to Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead - Cleared most of the waterbars on our section, which are numerous, as well as limbs and other debris from Trail. Remainder of water bars will be cleared before December 1.

11/21 - Eric Keller, Diane Petrilla - Newfound Gap to Indian Gap/Rd Pr Tr - Finished clearing all waterbars on this section before winter.

11/24 - Bob Williams - Wright Gap to Wesser - Cleaned bushels of leaves from waterbars, cleared downed branches from trail, cleared on small tree from trail corridor.

**11/26 - Janet Snyder, Mark Snyder - Mulch Operations -**

Stopped at the Maintainers' Tool Shed, Sugarlands for 4 bags of mulch for Icewater Spring and Mt Collins Shelters. Returned empty bags at end of day (this trip & bags from previous trips). Can't attend Ernie W.'s mulch packing to Icewater Spring on Dec. 7, so we backpacked ours today. Bin 1 is 5% and bin 2 60% full, so Ernie could use a lot of help. Swept privy and gathered a small amount of trash from privy & shelter, then packed out. Three buckets were full, but didn't fill the empty one, as the privy will soon be unusable (privy bin at capacity). Packed 2 bags of mulch to Mt. Collins Shelter. Swept privy and filled buckets. Mulch bin is 80% full. Gathered a small amount of trash, then packed out. Backpacker at shelter stated that he had met 5 SOBOers. Trimmed branches from small tree leaning into trail.

**11/27 - Kristi Knight - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap -**

Cleared out water bars, fixed loose step.

**11/29 - Charlie McDonald - Mulch Operations -** Picked up emptied mulch bags at the maintenance shed and delivered to the mulch tent. While at the tent I turned over the mulch to help with drying out. We currently have 12 bags of inventory at the shed. I plan on bagging over the next two weeks and would ask that if anyone needs mulch please communicate those needs to me. Happy Holidays to All!!

**11/30 - Don Dunning - Mulch Operations -** Packed 100 lbs mulch to Mt. Collins shelter privy to complete restocking of mulch supply before winter road closure. Mulch supply now at 100% and mulch buckets are filled. My other primary objective was to move the privy seat to an empty bin, as noted in Mark & Janet's work report of 11/26; however, some other industrious maintainer had beat me to this task - I wasn't overly disappointed about that! I also picked up micro-trash around shelter, checked cables, and cleaned all waterbars and drains from Mt. Collins shelter to Fork Ridge trailhead as needed (drains from AT/Sugarland Mtn intersection needed extensive cleaning, while the AT section was already in good shape and needed only minor leaf/sediment clearing in a few places).

**11/30 - Randy Mitchell, Russell Redden - Low Gap to Cosby Knob Top-** Cleared all water bars on section. Opened up drainage for the springs that drain onto the trail in the section. Cut limbs from fallen oak tree encroaching on trail near southern end of section. Checked Cosby Knob shelter. Added a couple of rocks to hold bottom of tarp. Packed out the small amount of trash. Swept out privy, knocked down fecal cone and filled mulch buckets. Mulch supply is at about 50%. On the way out cut several limbs from a multiple limbed blowdown on Low Gap trail. Rain drove us away before we could completely remove the tree but the remaining two 5 inch trunks are on the ground.

**12/1 - Pete Berntsen - Gap W of Masa Knob to Newfound Gap -** Cut 10 each, 1 - 1.5-inch limbs from blowdown parallel to trail and its limbs were in the trail. Blowdown located 1.1 mile NE of Newfound Gap. Carried mulch to Icewater Shelter privy.

**12/5 - Judy Wade - Fontana Dam to Route 28 -** Cut back briars and rhododendron. Removed limbs from the trail.

**12/6 - Dick Ketelle, Taylor Weatherbee - Other Work -** Inspected remaining locust log piles at NPS Oconoluftee Maintenance Center with Christine Hoyer to determine their usability and discuss plans for SMHC AT maintainers to use them starting in 2020.

**12/7 - Ernie Wiles, Gene Desrosiers, John Davison, Elizabeth Weikert, Ronda Marchand, Liz Ehr, Neil Snepp, Cindy Spangler, Kristi Knight, Taylor Weatherbee - Mulch Operations -** Backpacked 220 lbs of mulch to Icewater Springs Privy GSMNP

**12/7 - Keith Mertz - Yellow Creek Gap to Cody Gap -** Cut blackberry and greenbrier canes. Tossed sticks and limbs off trail. Hand sawed a 10" blowdown that was hanging across trail at waist level.

**12/8 - Franklin LaFond, Fruit Loops Hiker, Dan Hiker - Fontana Dam to Route 28 -** Removed 4 blowdowns reported by Judy Wade on 12/6. Split 43 locust stakes and staged near piles of existing step and waterbar logs. Removed 2 pair of worn shoes hanging at kiosk at trailhead to Shuckstack.

**12/11 - Diane Petrilla, Taylor Weatherbee - Club Mgt, Mtgs & Admin -** Met with Chloe DeCamara and Stephen Eren of ATC, as well as Taylor, to discuss volunteer recruitment for SMHC maintainer needs and ATC volunteer opportunity needs (i.e S.W.E.A.T. and Rocky Top) and ways to "combine forces" to offer a "menu" of opportunities to some local colleges and hiking groups.

**12/12 - Charlie McDonald - Mulch Operations -** Bagged and delivered 18 bags of mulch to the Sugarland Maintenance Shed. This will give our current shed inventory at 30 bags. I was unable to add mulch to the tent due to the Forest Service working in the area of the mulch pile. They were unloading dirt and rock from the land slide on Little River Road, between Metcalf Bottoms and the Y. I will return to the tent within the next two weeks to add mulch for drying out. Merry Christmas to All!

Please send any items of interest, photos, and event notifications for the ATMC Newsletter to Diane Petrilla at petrillad@gmail.com. I wish everyone a beautiful Holiday Season and look forward to seeing you in 2020!

