



March 2020

A.T. Maintenance Work Trip- Saturday March 7

The March 7th work trip is designated for clearing the 30 miles of trail between NOC and Fontana of any trees and limb debris that has fallen over the winter as well as prepping the trail for the upcoming thru hiker season.

We needs sawyers, and volunteers to assist the sawyers with removal of debris after it is cut, and repair any tread as needed where trees have fallen. Specific work locations will not be known until a walkthrough is completed in late February, and based on number of sawyers and volunteers signed up. Ideally, we would like to have 4 crews. Each crew would hike no more than 7 miles over moderate terrain. Alternate bad weather date is TBD.

Carpool from the Maryville Walmart Supercenter at 2410 Hwy 411 at 7 am. RT travel is approximately 110-130 miles, depending on actual start and end points.

Participants will need to wear sturdy footwear and bring work gloves, lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. If you have a hardhat, ear protection, and/or safety glasses, please bring those as well. Contact: Franklin LaFond 678-464-3380, ox97GaMe@aol.com

Training Session on Locust Log Splitting and Log Step Installation- Saturday February 22

Franklin LaFond will be leading a training session on locust log splitting and step installation on the A.T. near Fontana Marina. We will meet at the Fontana Marina at 10am to have the tailgate safety talk and then work on both sides of the marina. We will plan on installing 8-10 steps trail north of the marina and then as many trail south of the marina as we have time for the rest of the day. If you would like to participate, please contact Franklin LaFond, 678-464-3380 or ox97GaMe@aol.com. If you would like to carpool from Walmart Supercenter at 2410 US 411, Maryville, please contact Diane Petrilla at 931-224-5149 or petrillad@gmail.com. Please bring hard hat and safety glasses if you have them.

Clemson students working at Wright Gap Saturday February 29

We will welcome a group of student volunteers from Clemson University on Saturday February 29, to do general maintenance and vegetation trimming at Wright Gap. Franklin LaFond is providing leadership; other maintainers are encouraged to help and engage with the students if you are available. Meetup will be at Wright Gap, near Wesser NC, at 9am on February 29. Contact Franklin LaFond, 678-464-3380 or ox97GaMe@aol.com if you need more information.

If you shop at Kroger, your purchases could benefit work by the ATMC!

The Smoky Mountains Hiking Club is a participant in the Kroger Community Rewards program. The donations from Kroger are now being split evenly between the Club and the Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee to assist in our work.

If you shop at Kroger even occasionally, you likely have a Kroger Plus Card. If so, go online to www.Kroger.com/communityrewards and click "I'm a Customer" to log-in to your account or create a new account. 1. If you have not created an account for your Plus Card, do so first. 2. Under "Find an Organization" search "Smoky Mountains Hiking Club" and click Enroll. You can also search for the SMHC Non-Profit Organization (NPO) number MV194. Alternatively, you can visit the customer service counter at your store to enroll. That's all. It takes 7 - 10 days for your enrollment to become active. Your choice of SMHC will last as long as you choose. NOTE: The SMHC/ATMC maintains a strictly non-commercial status for the club and its activities. By providing information on the Community Rewards Program, SMHC in no way endorses or advertises the Kroger Company.



A. T. Work Trip From 1/16/2020 to 2/15/2020

1/19 - Jack Bray, Lillian Bray - Derrick Knob to Thunderhead - Cleared minor blowdowns and logged more severe blowdowns for future trip

1/25 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Sunaree Bullock - Fontana Dam to Yellow Creek Gap - Surveyed fallen trees needing chainsaw work, collected and packed out trash, removed small limbs and many larger trees from the trail by hand.

1/25 - Michael Roque - Cosby Knob Privy - Backpacked 80 lbs. (4 bags) of mulch to the Cosby privy, by hiking up Low Gap two times on this day. The new combination lock on the mulch bin could not be opened (code was correct)- mechanism frozen? So all mulch buckets were filled in the privy. Trash picked up and packed out. Privy cone needs knocked down soon (Michael is not trained on this).

1/29 - Adam Beal, Amanda Beal, Pete Berntsen, Steve Dunkin, Edward Fleming, Liz Guieu, Dick Ketelle, Kristi Knight, Franklin LaFond, Diane Petrilla, George Ritter, Philip Royer, Neil Snapp, Janet Snyder, Mark Snyder, Rick Waggener, Taylor Weatherbee - Club Mgt, Mtgs & Admin - ATMC meeting to discuss multiple issues, including locust log placement N and S of Spence, locust logs at Oconoluftee, use of logs for NTD, new recruitment, ATC report and much more. Appreciate everyone's patience with last minute change of venue.

1/29 - Keith Mertz, Pam Reddoch - Yellow Creek Gap to Cody Gap - Did a walk thru of our section to check for blowdowns. We were able to remove several blowdowns with our handsaw and many small blowdowns were able to be slide off the trail. Lots of small branches and larger limbs were removed.

2/2 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Sunaree Bullock - Cody Gap to Brown Fork Gap - Removed winter blowdowns across the trail, cut back overgrowth.

2/3 - Charlie McDonald - Mulch Operations - Cleaned out all emptied mulch bags from the maintenance shed. Counted 9 bags of mulch in existing inventory after Ernie picked up his mulch. Loaded 21 bags of mulch from the tent at Elkmont and delivered to the shed, current inventory now at 30 bags. While at the tent I turned over the mulch to aid in drying. We currently have an estimated 50-60 bags worth of mulch under tent.

2/12 - Randy Mitchell, Ernie Wiles - Davenport Gap to Mt Cammerer Side Tr - During Smoky Mountains Hiking Club outing to Mt. Cammerer removed blowdowns from the trail.

Diane Petrilla had noticed several blow-downs in scouting the hike. Additional trees came afterwards. Ernie and I cut 10 trees with hand saws and removed more debris by rolling or sliding the downed trees off the trail. There is a 24" diameter hemlock very recently fallen about 100 ft. trail south of the other large blown reported by Diane. We did remove stubs and debris from around the tree so that hikers can crawl underneath but it is probably impassable by horse traffic. Diane has pictures if needed. In addition there is a large forked cherry down on the spur trail that I did not have time to remove. Foot traffic can get by it.



One of the 2 blowdowns on the A.T. between Davenport Gap and Mt. Cammerer side trail that winter and winds have left us!

2/14 - Charlie McDonald - Mulch Operations - Filled 15/40lb bags of mulch for airdrop to Mt. LeConte. Bags are stored at the Sugarlands Maintenance Shed, sitting inside door to the right. All 30/20lb bags are to the left. Added 30-40 bags of wet mulch to the tent and plan on turning over to aid in drying out over the next 3 weeks. As always, please keep me informed of your mulch needs as well as inventory taken from the shed. Thanks All!!



2/15 - Dean Dennison, Gene Desrosiers, Melanie Harmon, Tracy Kressler, Leon Lawson, Terry Martin, Randy Mitchell, Diane Petrilla, Joan Tomlinson, Elizabeth Weikert, Ernie Wiles, Michael Roque - **Icewater Springs Privy** - This strong and enthusiastic group of mulch haulers backpacked 310 lbs (15.5 bags) of mulch to Icewater Springs. Both mulch bins are 100% full, but will need replenished by the time the March Consortium students arrive in late March. All mulch buckets in privy filled, privy swept, 2 bags of trash removed from shelter and privy. There were 2 large blowdowns (see below). Obstructing branches from one removed by Terry Martin to allow people to pass under and stop creating side trail around.



Getting ready to haul mulch!



After Terry worked on limbs; hikers can at least go under now

2/15 - **Franklin LaFond - Other Work** - Split 4 large locust logs from Hwy 129 and hauled to Fontana Marina. These will be used for log splitting and step installation training that will occur 2/22. Took picture of Kiosk at marina. Picked up trash at Fontana Hilton and left new hiker register. Drove to NOC to get picture of information board there.



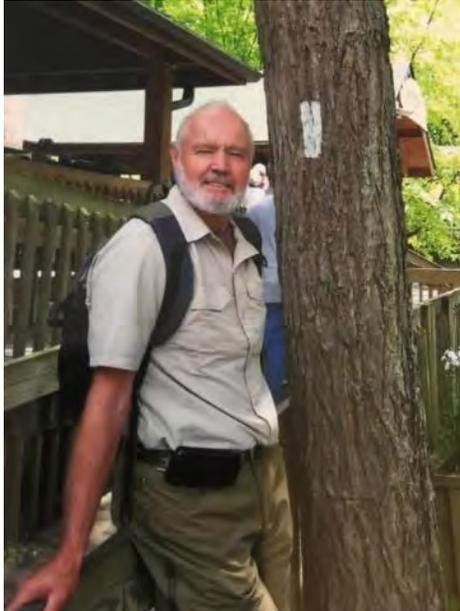
Hikers had created a path around this blowdown



Always good to have locust logs for installation!

Welcome 2020 Season Ridgerunners for GSMNP!

We extend a warm welcome to the 2020 season Ridgerunners for the GSMNP. Their work, education efforts for hikers, and reports to maintainers are invaluable. *If you see Carl, Rick or David on the Trail, please express our welcome and gratitude!*



Carl Goodman (pictured left) We're excited to welcome back Carl for his *sixteenth* season of Ridgerunning in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Carl is what you call a "living legend". Born in 1941 in Indianapolis, IN., Carl grew up in Louisville, KY before he married his wife, Shirley, in

1963 (they just celebrated 56 YEARS!) and worked in the Navy Civil Service until 1996. After he retired, he thru-hiked the A.T. in 1999 followed by his PCT thru-hike in 2008. Carl started his work as a Ridgerunner in 2004. He's a welcomed wealth of knowledge, even coming out to help train new Ridgerunners on the off-years he wasn't Ridgerunning himself. Don't let his tenure fool you—Carl can outpace and outwork almost anyone!



Rick Rozands (pictured right) was born and raised in south Louisiana. In 2015 he completed a thru hike of the Appalachian Trail and section hiked a large portion of the Pacific Crest Trail in 2017. He went on to volunteer with Americorps in southern Utah where he spent his time building trail, fencing, and rock climbing. He is looking forward to learning new skills and meeting new people on the Appalachian Trail. Rick was the long-season Ridgerunner last year and will serve as the short-season Ridgerunner in the GSMNP through June.



David Schafer (pictured left) was born and raised outside of Asheville, NC, where the beauty of western North Carolina helped his love for the outdoors blossom. He has hiked nearly 10,000 miles across North America, including thru-hikes of the Appalachian Trail, Pacific Crest Trail, and Continental Divide

Trail. Additionally, David is a graduate of the Creative Writing program at Warren Wilson College and loves to reflect on the natural environment through the written word. David served as the Fontana Ridgerunner in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in 2019 and will be the long-season Ridgerunner in the Park this coming season. David has also donated over 100 hours of his free time to volunteer with ATC's Hiker Education program.

