



April 2020

A.T. Maintenance Work Trip- Saturday April 4

In this month's "first Saturday" AT maintenance activity we will be starting blowdown removal from our AT sections in the National Park. Our plan is to deploy certified sawyers along with other volunteers to cover sections readily accessible as day trips in the high country with access from Newfound Gap and points along the Clingman's Dome access road. **We will need sawyers and swampers, to help clear debris.

Please contact the leaders by e-mail prior to this trip so we can pre-organize teams based on available sawyers. On the work day we will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Sugarlands Visitor Center parking area near the restrooms to organize our teams. Watch weather conditions during the week prior and judge the clothing (and possibly traction devices for icy trail) you may want to have, in addition to work gloves and appropriate footwear, lunch, and water.

Leaders: Dick Ketelle, rhketelle@comcast.net.
Diane Petrilla, petrillad@gmail.com.

**Appalachian Trail Maintainers meeting-
Wednesday April 29**

There will be a meeting of the ATMC on Wednesday April 29, 2020 at 6:30pm at TNBank, 1311 W Lamar Alexander Hgwy, Maryville, TN. Status of Spence project and log caches, National Trails Day, and several other issues will be discussed. If you have Agenda items, please send to petrillad@gmail.com. Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE!!

***National Trails Day, Saturday June 6,
2020!***

Come and help out on the Appalachian Trail for a day; T-shirts, picnic and door prizes!

More info and registration form to follow soon!

**Save the Date- Privy Training- Thursday
September 17, 2020**

Chloe DeCamara of the ATC, in conjunction with Christine Hoyer of the GSMNP, are planning an all-day privy training class on Thursday September 17, 2020. Please plan to attend if you have a shelter privy on your section, and even if you don't, if you are interested in learning. We manage privies in conjunction with the Ridgerunners and there are times when they are not here that we pitch in to help. For questions, contact Chloe DeCamara at cdecamara@appalachiantrail.org.



Craig Rightmire

Last October, we published an "In Memoriam" for Craig Rightmire, "Trail Wizard", who passed away on September 19, 2019. Following are words spoken about Craig by the Maine Appalachian Trail Club. Those of you who knew Craig might appreciate these words, made by one of their members.

"I'm here today to talk to you about Craig Rightmire, an MATC member that few of you have ever met unless you were involved with the Trail Crew. Though not a 'Mainer', he shared with you a passion for the A.T. and, especially, for the 281 miles in the Pine Tree State. Craig was a hydrogeologist based in Tennessee and a trail maintainer in the GSMNP. In 2001, he set out to thru hike the A.T. It took him 3 years to complete his journey. Like so many A.T. hikers, he was impressed by the Maine section of the trail and by the people of Maine who care for the footpath and its users. On completing his hike, he applied to come to Maine to volunteer with the Maine Trail Crew. He continued to build his summer schedule around a two week stint in Maine, heaving rocks and building stone staircases, until last season..... I first heard about Craig when I reported to base camp in about 2004. The crew members were all raving about how they missed Craig; how strong Craig was; what a worker; what a storyteller he was; how much fun he was to have out on the trail. I finally had an opportunity to work on a crew with Craig.....We were on the Hunt Trail, working on stone steps up near Oh Joy Brook. It was the beginning of July, and the crew was supposed to camp at Abol Narrows, the old Boy Scout campsite. The mosquitoes were so bad that the young crew staff cried. After one night, we moved to Katahdin Stream Campground for the rest of the hitch. That summer, Craig's wife Diane came to Maine after his volunteer service, to explore the sights in the state. They both loved the state we call home. I continued to hear from crew members over the years how impressed they were by Craig, the volunteer from Tennessee....."

Presented to MATC Members Meeting, 2020.

A. T. Work Trips From 2/16/2020 to 3/7/2020

2/18 - Ed Peck, Bill Pyle, Taylor Weatherbee - Other Work - Sorted through Oconoluftee locust logs, discovering around 128 logs of around 16 feet, and several shorter ones. We were surprised that all but a handful were in good shape. We split a couple which was easily accomplished (the 8 foot logs, not the 16 foot logs), and found confirmation that the logs are still usable. The next step will be cutting the 16 foot logs into 8 foot logs, and probably cutting a few into 4 foot logs for steps), then later transporting these to trailheads.



Locust log treasure trove at Oconoluftee! (photos courtesy of Taylor Weatherbee)

2/21 - Scott McClure, Bert Emmerson, Dwight Norris - Cosby Knob Shelter - Cleaned Shelter fire pit removed ashes, swept out bunks. When we got to the shelter the tarp was down and was folded up and in the shelter. We put it back up as best we could the lock box was frozen and we weren't able to thaw it out to get tools. The privy is in dire need of maintenance the cone is very high. We knocked it down as best we could but it

definitely needs further attention . We cleaned out some of the water breaks on the access trail and did a basic cleanup around the shelter .

2/22 - Bob Williams - Wright Gap to Wesser - Cleared waterbars of leaves, obstructions; cleared 4 downed trees from trail corridor; cleared numerous downed branches.

2/22 - Franklin LaFond, Adam Beal, Amanda Beal, Diane Petrilla, Keith Mertz, "Hopeful" Powell, Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Sunaree Bullock - Fontana Dam to Route 28 - Training on log splitting and wood step installation. Installed 15 new log steps, added 5 ft of log cribbing. Improved treadway at switchback where rotted stump roots were exposed. Staged remaining logs and stakes trail south of Hwy 28.

2/22 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Newfound Gap - Removed minor branches from trail. Removed four small blowdowns of about four-inches each. Cut two more blowdowns of about same diameter. Removed one trip-root. Cut two foot-hold notches in large blowdown previously reported between Sweat Heifer trail and The Boulevard. Checked privy at Icewater and all three mulch buckets are full.



*Before and after Pete's work. A beautiful winter day!
(photos courtesy of Pete Berntsen)*

2/23 - Brandi Hodges, Diane Petrilla - Chestnut Br Trail to Lower Mt Cammerer Tr - Removed minor branches from trail. Cleared out 50+ water bars for drainage. Found an illegal campsite about 0.1 mi north of Lower Mt Cammerer trail. Removed the "fire pit" rocks that were used.

2/25 - Taylor Weatherbee - Cosby Knob Privy - Privy training by Chloe DeCamara.

2/28 - Taylor Weatherbee - Club Mgt, Mtgs & Admin - Meeting with Christine Hoyer to make plans to use the locust logs at Oconaluftee.

2/29 - Franklin LaFond, Clemson Group - Wright Gap to Wesser - Worked with group from Clemson University that braved the cold and snowy weather. Pruned woody vegetation for half mile S. of Wright Gap. Installed 3 new log steps and 4ft of log cribbing at an area where large tree roots were causing dangerous hiking conditions in wet weather. Rehabbed 10 ft of side hill to provide backfill for the new steps. Installed 3 new log steps on south sides and 2 new steps on north side of Wright Gap. Replaced 2 rotted logs and lowered done high log step on stairs south of Wright Gap.

3/1 - Bill Pyle, Kelly Conway, Taylor Weatherbee - Boulevard Tr to Newfound Gap - Removed a 24 inch blowdown and an 18 inch blowdown from the AT between Sweat Hiefer and Boulevard. Also took care of a small leaner about 0.5 mile north of NFG. Steve and Adrian, 2 day hikers, helped move the 24 inch log off the trail.

3/6 - Charlie McDonald - Mulch Operations - Picked up empty bags for mulch and delivered to the Elkmont Tent. While there bagged 10/15lb bags for upcoming event. Also added mulch to the tent for drying out, turned over the existing mulch as well. Estimated 50-60 bags worth of mulch under cover.

Please send any items of interest, **photos**, and event notifications for the ATMC Newsletter to Diane Petrilla at petrillad@gmail.com. Thank you for **ALL** of the work you do!