



February 2024

**No Regular First Saturday Work Trip in February**

There are no regular first Saturday work trips for December, January and February. Regular monthly work trips will resume on March 2, 2024, with work planned in the Nantahala National Forest, so please save the date. As weather and Trail conditions allow for the rest of the winter, and of course as you desire, sections can always use work, no matter what time of year! **Stay safe, healthy and warm!**

**2024 A.T. Ridgerunners for GRSM**

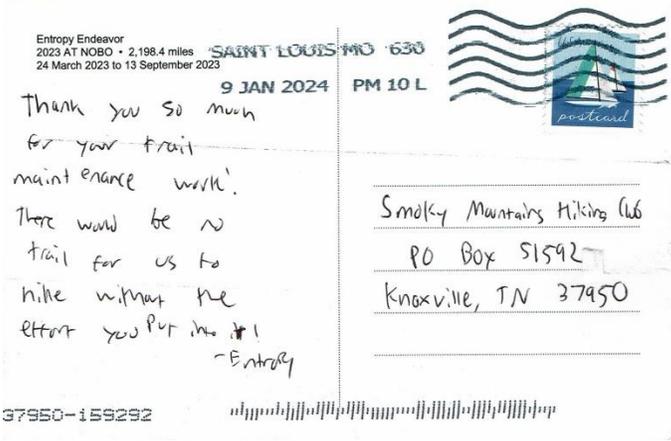
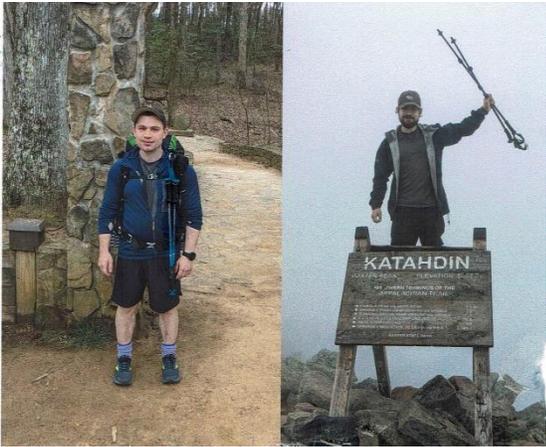
The 2024 Smokies A.T. Ridgerunner season begins in February, and we are excited to share that three Ridgerunners have been selected and will start their training in early February. Two Ridgerunners will work a short season, from February to June, and one Ridgerunner will work a long season, from February through October. Their names are Jamie Carson (short season – Fontana), Collin Chambers (long season), and Andy Petras (short season). More details about these individuals will be shared in next month’s newsletter. Any A.T. maintainers are welcome to join the Ridgerunner training; if interested, please contact Anne Sentz, Regional Manager, at [asentz@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:asentz@appalachiantrail.org)

Special thanks to Phyllis Henry and Taylor Weatherbee for being part of the Ridgerunner interview process and for their ongoing participation in program management in 2024.

**Note of thanks from an AT Thru Hiker!**

***Thank you notes like this are because of the hard work done by our trail maintainers. You are appreciated!***

**ENTROPY!**



### Introducing our new ATMC newsletter editor!

After 8 years, Diane Petrilla is retiring as newsletter editor and moving from the area. We all owe Diane a huge thank you for her many years of service and commitment to the ATMC. The new editor is Lynn Kszos, a member of the SMHC and avid hiker. She loves to hike in the GRSM, having completed "one map" and is also section hiking the Appalachian Trail. She met Diane by participating as a Mulch Mule! She looks forward to receiving your work trip reports, photos, and any newsworthy items that you would like to share. You can email Lynn at [lynnkszos@gmail.com](mailto:lynnkszos@gmail.com).

### A. T. Work Trips From 12/7/2023 to 1/14/2024

12/7 - Cindy Mease - **Cody Gap to Brown Fork Gap** - Cleared 2 trees.

12/12 - Mark Holmberg - **Wright Gap to Wesser** - Cleaned waterbars.

12/16 - Lisa Sumter - **Davenport Gap to Chestnut Br Trail** - Cleared leaves at waterbars & drainages. Removed rhodo from where a tree fell & sawed off the pointy end of a limb encroaching into the corridor at same area. Removed other downed branches along the trail. Checked shelter & cleared the pipe at the water source for better flow.

12/16 - Randy Bullock, Franklin LaFond - **Cheoah Bald to Swim Bald** - Removed 4 small trees, identified future site for Konnarock 1.5 miles north of the bald, added shavings to privy, leveled. Flagged area for privy relocation to allow for more bin depth. Flagged tent pad sites for NEPA and proposed future excavation to ease seasonal overcrowding.

12/20 - Randy Bullock, Randy Bullock - **Brown Fork Gap to Stekoah Gap** - Cleared water bars, looked in on the shelter and privy. Picked up a small amount of trash, cleared small blowdowns.

12/27 - Mike Harrington - **Spence Field Shelter** - I visited the shelter during a hike with a family friend, but thought I'd document a few minor observations in case someone might be interested: (1) the logbook was sitting on the hearth without the

ballpoint pen and apparently being used as paper to start fires so I found the pen, used it to make a current entry and left the logbook on the other side of the shelter, (2) the level of the bins at the privy...throne bin ~50%, middle bin about 80% and rightmost bin about 70%, (3) three mulch buckets are in the privy with each about 1/4 to 1/3 full of mulch, (4) the cone was building up so I knocked off part of the top.

12/28 - Randy Bullock, Sunaree Bullock, Cindy Mease - **High Pt E of Walker Gap to Yellow Creek Gap** - Hiked to Cable Cove Shelter to look at condition of tarp over shelter. No concerns, holding up well. Repaired wire screen on privy, topped off with cedar shavings. Cut 4 trees across the trail. Beautiful day, great hike.

1/2 - Cindy Mease, Randy Bullock, Sunaree Bullock - **Cody Gap to Brown Fork Gap** - Cleared 3 trees.

1/3 - Randy Bullock, Sunaree Bullock, Taylor Weatherbee - **Locust Cove Gap to Cheoah Bald** - Hiked this section to remove a large tree blocking the trail in an area with significant downslope. Once the tree was off the trail, we cut back rhodos to further open up the corridor in several places where it was narrowed. On the hike we also removed 5 smaller blowdowns that had fallen across the trail. Thanks to Taylor for spending time with us on this work trip!

1/11 - Randy Bullock - **Brown Fork Gap to Stekoah Gap** - Removed small blowdowns and one tree across the trail. Added cedar shavings to the privy. Packed out a small amount of trash.

1/14 - Cindy Mease - **Cody Gap to Brown Fork Gap** - Cleared storm debris.

Please send any items of interest, **photos**, and event notifications for the ATMC Newsletter to Lynn Kszos at [lynnkszos@gmail.com](mailto:lynnkszos@gmail.com). Thank you for **ALL** of the work you do!