



September 2024



CMC Quarterly Crew 17 August at John Rock Trail

by Donna Bange

On a hot, humid August Saturday 53 CMC volunteers came out to work on the John Rock trail. Volunteers came from all across the tri-state area: Charleston, SC; Johnson City, TN; Charlotte and of course the greater Asheville area. Quarterly crew is led by Joe Bange and Chris Werbylo; they had support from the weekday crew leaders of Ken

Hummel, Paul Curtin, Madison Evans and Don Cooper along with Les Love, CMC President. Trail maintainers ranged in age from their 20s to a volunteer in his 90s - Carroll Koeplinger. Each volunteer was assigned to a work group that met his/her interest along with their physical capabilities.

The John Rock/Cat Gap Loop is located in the heart of the Pisgah Forest, between Brevard and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The trail was originally established as a multi-use trail for both hikers and mountain biking. CMC's policy is to solely focus on hiking trails and not multi-use trails, which also include trails shared with horses. About a year ago the Pisgah Ranger District (PRD) and The Pisgah Conservancy made a dedicated new mountain biking trail and the older trail was converted to exclusively hiking. PRD approached CMC about assuming trail maintenance responsibility for the hiking-only trail. In 2024 CMC added the John Rock/Cat Gap Loop to the official list of WNC hiking trails maintenance. Jan and Kevin Onan along with Daphne Cohan are the CMC maintainers.

There were huge challenges in the trail condition; from a hiker viewpoint, the trail had been neglected for years. The first quarterly crew in April focused on the clockwise side of the trail just off the Fish Hatchery parking lot. Joe Bange commented how the footpath was so overgrown with vines it was difficult to find the original trail. Since Spring 2024, CMC has made significant progress on the clockwise side of the first mile.

In August the focus was on the opposite side, the counterclockwise side that starts from the Fish Hatchery parking lot. This trail was previously heavily used by the mountain bikers. Rutting and cupping were prevalent. Many mountain bikers like the ruts to ride up and down the trail. Conversely for hikers this cupping leads to trail erosion and makes it more difficult to climb the mountain. As the trail ascended the mountain, there were potholes and channels, making it difficult to traverse. Asheville Friday weekday crew earlier in August and then quarterly crew focused on installing water diversions to offset the erosion. Then the dirt removed from these water diversions was re-purposed to fill in potholes and ruts. Trail maintainers installed wood steps to offset the steep slope.

In April, Tom Weaver led the effort to build a new bridge crossing a stream. In August Tom scoped out future bridge construction.

The John Rock/Cat Gap Loop is 4.4 miles. It is a beautiful trail; the views are spectacular. It follows numerous streams. This trail is also popular by backpackers.

Robert Fuller, Crew Leader, stated: "We had a great group of volunteers who had fun, worked hard, and did a great job. They should be proud of what they accomplished. We are looking forward to seeing all of them again at the next quarterly."

It takes tremendous effort to organize and execute Quarterly Crew, with a significant number of first-time trail maintainers. Behind the scenes Tim Carrigan updated the CMC website so that the registration process was more efficient. Roy Davis, Karen Schultz, Jeff Wilcox and Donna Bange greeted the volunteers, answered questions and assisted with registration.

The next quarterly crew is scheduled for October 12, 2024 at John Rock. Sign up on the CMC website.

The Quarterly Crew photograph was taken by taken by Sharon Posniak. This work site team was led by Robert Fuller.

**Volunteers still needed to staff CMC booth at
2024 Blue Ridge Pride Festival**
Saturday, September 21st, 11am-6pm, Pack Square Park

Please consider helping us support our LGBTQ members and neighbors at the Blue Ridge Pride Festival in downtown Asheville. [Blue Ridge Pride](#) seeks "to promote equality, safety, and quality of life for western North Carolina's LGBTQ and allied communities." We could use some additional volunteers, particularly in the later afternoon hours, to help promote inclusivity within the club and speak to how CMC contributes to all of our lives in WNC. If you can donate an hour or two to help staff our booth, please sign up [here](#).

By the Numbers: How GPS Coordinates Helped Us Avoid a Day of Needless Searching

by Bill Sanderson

Co-Director Carolina Mountain Club Search-and-Rescue

A southbound A.T. hiker reported a gnarly downed tree to Peggy Romesberg (the Appalachian Cookie Lady!), describing the location as “between Jerry Cabin and Little Laurel Shelter” (which is a section of trail over 7 miles long), but fortunately he also gave Peggy the GPS coordinates of the tree, which he had collected via a phone app. Peggy reported all this information to the maintainers in that area. We plotted the coordinates on a map, and the location was a point on the A.T. north of Big Butt, multiple miles from the area indicated by the hiker’s verbal description.



Knowing that hikers who are unfamiliar with our area are often confused about shelter names and just exactly where they are at any given time, Dennis Boone and I chose to ignore the description and instead make the long hike directly to the location indicated by the coordinates. As we hiked along, burdened by heavy saws and other tools, we both hoped that we would actually find the tree where the coordinates indicated it should be.

“According to the map the tree is about 100 meters ahead.”

A few minutes later the snarl of pine limbs blocking the trail loomed into view.

“Well, what do you know.”

If that hiker hadn’t taken those few seconds to record accurate coordinates we would have likely wasted the day searching in vain, miles from the actual location of the blowdown. This story should once again demonstrate the value of using phone-based

technology to accurately report trail issues. The technology is not hard, and the phone in your pocket will collect these data whether or not you have a cell signal.

Click [HERE](#) to go to a short presentation on how to use your phone to quickly and easily capture location coordinates!

CMC April Quarterly Crew Featured by Blue Ridge Public Radio

by Donna Bange

It is not every day that CMC trail maintenance crews receive public attention. Most of the 230+ trail maintainers volunteer work goes unnoticed, until the trail is in poor condition and a hiker vociferously complains. So it was so special and memorable that CMC April Quarterly crew was highlighted by Blue Ridge Public radio in both an audio and website story.

Below is the link to the audio and the article. Thank you to David Huff as he promotes CMC across the western North Carolina community.

'Lifblood' of the forest: Meet the volunteers who maintain Western North Carolina's trails

BPR News | By [Felicia Sonmez](#)

Published August 8, 2024 at 8:38 PM EDT

<https://www.bpr.org/bpr-news/2024-08-08/lifblood-of-the-forest-meet-the-volunteers-who-maintain-western-north-carolinas-trails>



Carolina Mountain Club 2024 Annual Meeting and Dinner

Save the Date!

Saturday, November 2nd, 2024
Hilton Inn Biltmore Park, Asheville
5:30 pm – 9:00 pm

We're thrilled to invite you to the Carolina Mountain Club's 2024 Annual Meeting and Dinner! This year, we're excited to welcome Jay Leutze from the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy as our featured speaker. Jay will share his passion and insights about the plans for Deaverview, a beloved mountain that's at risk. Don't miss this inspiring talk! [Learn more about Deaverview.](#)

Based on your valuable feedback from last year, we've made some exciting changes to enhance your experience:

1. **New and Improved Space**
We've added the Mitchell Room across from the Pisgah Ballroom for our open bar and social hour, giving you more room to mingle and enjoy the evening.
2. **Better Registration and Merchandise Space**
We've expanded the area for registration and merchandise to make things more convenient and accessible.
3. **Two Buffet Lines**
Enjoy a delicious enhanced salad bar and a separate line for hot foods—no more waiting in line!

4. Streamlined Awards Recognition

We've made the process smoother for recognizing our fellow CMC Members with various awards, making this a night to celebrate!

Join us for an incredible evening of great food, wonderful company, and entertainment—all for just \$40.00 per person. Please RSVP on the CMC website in the 'Members Section'—registration is now open!

If you'd like to be part of making this event a success, we could use your help! We need volunteers to staff the registration, awards, and merchandise tables. Interested? Please reach out to CMC VP Karen Schultz at vp@carolinamountainclub.org.

We can't wait to see you there!

Get to know Tom Weaver, Past President

I grew up in NW PA and attended PSU where I met my future wife Kathy and we both earned our degrees in Polymer Science. I went on to a 33-year career with Dow Chemical, serving in a variety of positions, working in 6 states, as well as Germany, and finishing my career in NC in 2013.

I joined the Carolina Mountain Club's CMC Friday and Saturday trail crews in 2013 after learning about CMC's work from some men at a woodworking club meeting. I have been the Trails Facilities Manager since taking over the role from Howard McDonald. Building bridges and making signs is my passion.

I have served as Counselor at Large, VP and President - currently fulfilling my role as Past President. It has been great to learn more about the inner workings of Carolina Mountain Club and the passion our volunteers bring to the club.

2024 has been a year of looking to the future of our club - I am proud of our current leadership team's efforts to create a strategic plan for Carolina Mountain Club which will help to keep our club strong and growing.



Happy Birthday Mountains-to-Sea Trail!

by Marcia Bromberg



September is the MST's birthday month. It was 47 years ago that Howard Lee, then NC Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources, suggested the creation of a trail across North Carolina from the mountains to the ocean during a speech at the National Trails Symposium at Lake Junaluska. It wasn't long before eager hiking and outdoor enthusiasts got permission from the state to lay out a likely pathway. Quickly volunteers across the State, including our own CMC maintainers, began building the trail.

Eventually the MST became the first official State Trail and, in the 1990's, those volunteers established a nonprofit organization, Friends of the MST, to raise recognition and funding to help continue moving trail off-road. In 2006 the Friends hired their first executive director, Kate Dixon, and from there trail visibility took off. Finally, in 2021 the State realized how important the MST (and other State Trails) are to NC residents and the tourist economy and included trail funding in the State budget.

Today approximately 2/3 of the 1,175 mile trail is off-road, with more sections coming on-line every day. Those of us living in the mountains are fortunate to have a section of the trail that is almost all off-road. Our CMC maintainers have built and are responsible for taking care of over 140 miles of MST, and they do a great job. And, of course, our hikers love hiking on the trail. And our database lists over 125 hikes that include the MST. Every quarter 15-20 CMC hikes are fully or partly on the MST. In September, the birthday month, you have a choice of seven MST hikes of various lengths and difficulties including a hike I'm leading on September 14th.

In addition to the CMC-sponsored hikes, the Friends is offering a number of activities during the birthday month including a birthday challenge, hikes, and other events. You can find out about hikes offered across the state and all the other events by going to <https://mountaintoseatrail.org/challenges/birthday/>.

So go out and take a hike on the MST and on September 9th (the actual birthday date), raise a glass to our own North Carolina long trail.

Fall is back in Western North Carolina!

Lynn Pettipaw shares ways to explore Asheville and its beautiful fall weather – take a look at these hidden gems she’s shared!

Fall Adventures

Here are some ideas to add some spice to your fall adventures:

Kayak and Hike

One of my favorite things to do is to take my dog kayaking at Price Lake (BRP mile marker 297, near Boone). Price Lake Boat Rentals offers kayaks, paddleboards, and canoes. It’s a small lake, taking about an hour to paddle around. The lake has mountain views, so it’s a pretty location for easy paddling. There is no need to reserve boats in advance. Check their website for hours and fees: <https://www.pricelakeboatrentals.com/> They also offer monthly full moon paddles, with two nights being offered in September. Note that when fall foliage hits its peak, the drive on the BRP can be very crowded, especially on weekends.



A short hike to add on to your trip is the Flat Rock Trail from Flat Rock Parking Overlook (Blue Ridge Parkway milepost 308.3). Take the trail from the parking lot. The trail splits and you can either go clockwise or counter-clockwise around the loop. It’s only a 0.7-mile hike, making it a quick stop on your way home. Halfway through the hike, you reach a rocky plateau with a view of Grandfather Mountain.

Art and Hike

East of Asheville is the Western North Carolina Sculpture Center in Lenoir, NC. On the grounds is a free, open to the public, sculpture park. There’s also a short hiking trail with sculptures. It’s about 1.5 miles of walking to see all of the sculptures. The park is open 7 days a week, from dawn until dusk. <https://www.wncsculpture.org/>

If you have more time, you can stop at the Tuttle Educational State Forest in Lenoir. This forest has specific days/hours its open, so check their website for details: <https://www.ncesf.org/tuttle/about.html>. A map of the trails is available on the website. My favorite trail in the park is the Gazebo Trail, with its mountain views.

Petroglyphs and Hike

Hagood Mill in Pickens, SC is a place that has been on my list to see due to the petroglyphs. This makes a good fall trip, as it’s very hot in the summer. Petroglyphs fascinate me, and I’m always excited for a chance to see them. The petroglyphs are on a large rock outcrop inside a building. The grounds also have cabins, a working mill and

a moonshine still and a .75 mile nature trail. They have special events every third Saturday. <https://visithagoodmill.com/>

Add to this trip a short hike to Twin Falls (in Sunset, SC), one of the hikes on Carolina Mountain Club's Waterfall Challenge.

Bike and Hike

A really fun fall foliage day trip, or even better, an overnight trip, is a visit to Damascus, Virginia to bike the Virginia Creeper Trail. There are businesses in town that rent out bikes and drive you to the start of the trail, so you can bike back to town. There are different distances you can bike – I opted for the 17-mile bike ride. Not sure you are up to it? Most of the bike ride is a gentle downhill, so most of it is cruisy coasting. We spent around 4 hours on our ride, stopping at sites along the way. This is great outing to do during fall foliage season.

Two hike recommendations I'd add to this, depending on how much time you have. The first is to park at Massie Gap, in Grayson Highlands. They provide a map when you park. A 1.5-mile round trip hike will take you to see the wild ponies. Follow the sign for the Rhododendron Trail and hike .75 miles in. Return the same way. This trail has amazing fall views and who can resist a hike with ponies?



If you make this an overnight trip, I suggest adding a hike at the Channels Natural Area Preserve. Parking is very limited (10 spots on Route 80), so I suggest doing this on a weekday morning, and having a backup plan. The hike starts on a gravel road, which lead past a retreat with cabins. From there it turns into more of a trail. Stay left where the trail splits. Pass a tower (no access). Shortly after that you reach another split in the trail. A small spur trail to the left goes to the top of the channels formation. The path straight ahead descends down into the channels. The channels are large sandstone rocks, 30-40 feet tall, reminding me of a slot canyon. It's very unique and worth a visit. <https://dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/Channels-SF-General-Map.pdf>

Beer and Hike

One of my all-time favorite hikes in North Carolina is Shortoff Mountain. This hike is on the 100 Favorite Trails list. If you time your outing just right, you'll see incredible fall foliage, with a lot of pink color. When fall leaves are covering the trails making footing tricky, this is also a nice hike. The footing is rocky, but there are very few leaves on the trail in the fall. Parking is a challenge here. Please respect the people who have houses on this road, and make sure to park legally. Have a backup plan in case the parking area is full. Drive slowly on the road, and of course pack out all of your trash. I highly recommend only doing this hike on a weekday, due to the crowded parking situation.

After your hike, stop by Fonta Flora at Whippoorwill Farm in Nebo, NC. They have some really interesting beers. They also have food available Thursday-Sunday. <https://fontaflora.com/location/whippoorwill-farm/#location-information>

Rainy Day

Weather got you down? Stay in and enjoy a hiking related movie.

- Edie – 83 year old Edie goes for an adventure in Scotland (available on Amazon Prime)
- Good One – a movie about a Catskills backpacking trip (showing at the Grail starting 8/30).

NEW BOOTS ON THE GROUND

Volunteers Appointed Through August

TRAIL SECTION MAINTAINERS:

For the A.T.:

Bill McKinney-- Flint Gap to Devil Fork Gap incl. Flint Mtn. Shelter
Deaver Shattuck --Devil Fork Gap to Sugarloaf Gap Access

THANK YOU!

CMC Hike Leaders' Appreciation and Education Dinner - Hold the Date!

By Karen Lachow

The annual Hike Leaders' Appreciation and Education Dinner has been confirmed for Friday evening, February 28, 2025 at the Hilton Asheville Biltmore Park. Always a fun time, this event is for anyone who will have led or co-led a hike during 2024 or the first quarter of 2025. CMC Council members are invited too! Be sure to mark your calendars and look for your invitation in January.

CMC Blue Centennial Shirts Now Available in Short Sleeves

It is not surprising that CMC's birthday, 16 July 1923, is essentially the midpoint of summer. Hikers flock to western North Carolina in the summer to enjoy the beauty and majesty of the Smoky Mountains. Last year CMC hosted a huge Centennial party at the North Carolina Arboretum. How many 100% volunteer led organizations do you know

reach 100 years? To help fund the Arboretum celebration, CMC sold long sleeve blue Centennial shirts.

CMC has remaining inventory of these blue Centennial waffle shirts in both men's and women's sizes. As a means to sell off the inventory, the long sleeve shirts are being converted into short sleeve shirts. This past August was exceptionally hot and humid. Now you as a CMC member or CMC guest have the opportunity to have both a long and short sleeve blue Centennial shirt to wear all year independent of the temperature.

The short sleeve shirts are \$20; a portion goes to offset the Centennial birthday celebration costs. If you are interested in a short sleeve, available in men and women sizes, please contact Donna Bange at donna.bange@gmail.com. Note that there are some sizes with more inventory than others. Donna can coordinate your order. Please indicate men's or women's and what size, along with delivery information before September 28th. Your short sleeve shirt purchase helps to spread the CMC awareness within our community and support our club.

Help Wanted - Trail Maintenance

The Club needs section maintainers for the section(s) listed below. Section Maintainers "adopt" a section of trail. Adoption includes (but is not limited to) quarterly walk-throughs, routine maintenance (tread, trimming, water diversions), and noting downed trees and other trail blockers. (For complete adoption guidelines, see the Members' Section of CMC's webpage. Click on "Trail Work," then "Trail Maintenance," then "Extras.") If interested, please contact the Supervisors listed below. Thanks!

SECTION MAINTAINERS NEEDED!

1. Mountains to Sea Trail / Three Trees to Hwy 215 - Supervisor: Robert Bolt, Jr., otherob@inbox.com
 - Cowee Overlook Access to Reinhart Gap, 3.8 miles
 - Reinhart Gap to Bear Pen Gap Trail, 3.0 miles
2. Mountains to Sea Trail / Hwy 215 to Big Ridge O/L – Supervisor: Joseph Bange, joseph.bange@gmail.com
 - BRP 417 (Bridges Camp Gap) to Bennett Gap, 2.4 miles
3. Pisgah Ranger District / Art Loeb - Supervisor: Les Love, lesrlove55@gmail.com
 - Art Loeb Trail - Ivestor Gap to Black Balsam Rd 816, 2.6 miles
 - Art Loeb Trail - Farlow Gap to Deep Gap (S), 1.4 miles
4. Pisgah Ranger District / Bad Fork to Mt Pisgah - Supervisor: Les Love, lesrlove55@gmail.com
 - Courthouse Falls - FS Rd 140 to Falls. 0.3 mile
 - Case Camp Ridge Trail - BRP to Seniard Ridge Tr., 1.7 miles
 - Bridges Camp Gap Trail - Greasy Cove Tr. to MST, 1.0 mile

- Graveyard Fields Loop - BRP to Upper Falls Tr. to BRP. 2.0 miles
- Upper Falls Trail - Graveyard Fields Loop to Upper Falls. 0.8 mile
- MST Access Trail - MST to Graveyard Fields Loop. 0.2 mile

5. Pisgah Ranger District / Mt Pisgah to Haywood Gap - Supervisor: Les Love, lesrlove55@gmail.com

- Little Sam - MST to Flat Laurel Crk Tr., 1.3 miles
- Big East Fork Tr - Big East Fork Parking to Greasy Cove Tr., 3.4 miles
- Greasy Cove Trail - Bridges Camp Tr. to Art Loeb Tr., 3.2 miles
- Green Mountain Tr - MST to Hwy 215 at Sunburst Cmpgrnd, 5.0 miles

6. Appalachian Ranger District / Standard ARD - Supervisor: Les Love, lesrlove55@gmail.com

- Fork Ridge Tr in Shelton Laurel - FS Rd 111 to AT, 2.0 miles
- Hickey Fork Tr in Sheltn Lrl - FS Rd 465 to Pounding Mill Tr., 2.3 miles
- Van Cliff Trail - Hot Springs Park, 2.6 miles
- White Oak Tr in Shelton Laurel - FS Rd 465 to Poundg Mill Tr., 2.3 miles

7. CMC Secondary Trails – Supervisor: Les Love, lesrlove55@gmail.com

- Art Loeb Trail - Deep Gap (N) to Shining Rock Gap, 2.9 miles
- Courthouse Falls - FS Rd. 140 to Falls, 0.3 mile
- Bridges Camp Gap Trail - Greasy Cove Trail to MST, 1.0 mile
- Upper Falls - Graveyard Fields Loop to Upper Falls, 0.8 mile
- MST Access Trls. - MST to Graveyard Fields Loop, 0.2 mile
- Sam Knob Summit - Sam Knob Trail to Sam Knob, 0.7 mile
- Little Sam - MST to Flat Laurel Creek Tr., 1.3 miles
- Big East Fork - Big East Fork Parking to Greasy Cove Tr., 3.4 miles
- Greasy Cove - Bridges Camp Tr. to Art Loeb Tr., 3.2 miles
- Fork Ridge Trail in Shelton Laurel - FS Rd. 111 to AT, 2.0 miles
- Hickory Fork Trail in Shelton Laurel - FS Rd. 465 to Pounding Mill Tr., 2.3 miles
- Jack Branch - River Ridge Loop to FS Rd. 422, 2.4 miles
- Pounding Mill Tr. in Shelton Laurel - AT at Camp Creek Bald to Hickey Fork Tr., 2.3 miles
- Van Cliff Tr. in Hot Springs Park - Rocky Bluff Picnic Area South, 2.6 miles
- White Oak Tr. in Shelton Laurel - FS Rd. 465 to Pounding Mill Tr., 2.3 miles
- Grassy Knob - Sleepy Gap Parking to Grassy Knob summit, 0.4 mile

For Trail maintenance map, see the Members' Section of CMC's webpage. Click on "Trail Work," then "Trail Maintenance," then "Lists."

Carolina Mountain Club eNews is published on the first Friday of each month. Members can send your news to eNews@carolinamountainclub.org. **Articles are due on the last Friday of the previous month.** Please limit articles to no more than 1,000 words. You may send up to two photos as jpg attachments. For members' address and email changes, log in, select "Modify Profile", make changes and click on "Update Member" or email Dennis Bass at dbass3607@gmail.com. Your email changes will be automatically reflected in eNews delivery.

About Carolina Mountain Club:

Hiking. CMC leads about 200 group hikes per year. Hikes are open to all, and we welcome guests (though please contact hike leader first). Hike information--including dates, times, meeting locations, scout reports, and leader contact information--can be found on the CMC website [here](#). Additional information about hiking can be found [here](#).

Trail maintenance. CMC maintains over 440 miles of trail in western NC. Individuals of all ages and groups/organizations are invited to participate. CMC membership is not required, and all required tools

are provided. We have weekly crews every day of the week from Monday-Saturday, quarterly Saturday crews, and other special events. For those with busy or unpredictable schedules, we also have section maintainers who maintain a short portion of trail and/or report issues that require a larger work crew. To volunteer, please email volunteer@carolinamountainclub.org or visit [here](#) for more information.

Conservation. The CMC Conservation Committee advocates for the sustained natural beauty and access to our hiking areas. More information can be found [here](#) or by emailing Conservation@carolinamountainclub.org.

How to join the CMC

For just \$20 (\$30 Family) per year, you can join western North Carolina's oldest and largest hiking trail club. CMC members receive the *Let's Go!* quarterly hike schedule via email and have full access to member services on the CMC website. There is a link to join on the [CMC website](#).

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