



Meet Tom Weaver

By Bobbi Powers

Tom Weaver has lived in NC for only 8 years and has been trail maintaining for only 3+ years, but this Pennsylvania transplant is making a big impact on the trails in WNC.

First, a little background on Tom. One of 12 children in a farming family, he earned a degree from Penn State in Polymer Science and 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 his career in NC in 2013. Because he and his wife Kathy are avid hikers, he wanted to learn about sustainable trail building and maintenance, so he joined the CMC Friday and Saturday trail crews after learning about CMC's work from some men at a woodworking meeting.

He grew up in a hunting family and enjoys flintlock hunting, a very traditional and exceedingly challenging way to "bring home the bacon." His interest, combined with years as a hobbyist wood worker, led him to build his own flintlock rifle and pistol. He also has built a dining room table, coffee table and headboard from natural edge slabs for his home.

And now to his impact in our club and North Carolina – Tom is the newly appointed Trail Facilities Coordinator. Tom sent me the 15-point job description; believe me, I don't see how any one person can handle all this but, according to Pete Petersen, to whom he reports, "Tom took over this weighty responsibility from Howard McDonald who had concentrated his activities on A.T. facilities.... Tom has successfully widened the scope ...to include facilities on all the trails the CMC is responsible for. This has resulted in his involvement in guiding the replacement of the Dingle Creek Bridge on the MST this past spring and, so far, planning the major renovation work that is just beginning on the Art Loeb Trail at Silvermine." In a nutshell, Tom devises, plans, collaborates, and supervises all aspects of trail building not involving the trails themselves – shelters, picnic tables, privies, bridges, signage, bear cables – and the list of responsibilities goes on and on.

Tom has helped design and build or repair bridges on Cat Gap Loop (Friday Pisgah crew), Bad Fork Trail (Thursday crew), Balsam Gap (Wednesday Waynesville crew), and over Neal's Creek (Monday crew). Many of us have undoubtedly walked on and admired Tom's handiwork. However, his volunteerism isn't all about building things; he also gets to tear houses apart as a member of Habitat for Humanity's deconstruction team. This multi-talented man gets around!

Most recently, the NC Secretary of the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources appointed Tom to its 7-member North Carolina Trails Committee, a 5-year commitment. The committee makes funding recommendations and represents outdoor groups across the state - hikers, cyclers, paddlers, equestrians, and off-road vehicle enthusiasts. Les Love, who recommended Tom for the position, said, “...he quickly showed a love and talent for engineering trail construction...I know that serving on this committee will give him an even greater knowledge of hiking trails and other recreational user groups, as well as sharing his knowledge of trails and WNC with that prestigious group.”

I asked Tom if he, like Davy Crockett, had named his rifle. He replied, “No, I have not named her...yet!” Stay tuned, folks. And perhaps suggest some names!

In all seriousness, Tom Weaver is a doer, a perfect example of an active retiree. We CMCers are lucky he chooses to stay busy with projects that benefit us and our environment. Thank you, Tom.