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eNews



Carolina Mountain Club

1923 - 2023

www.cmc100th.org

August 2023

A Great Celebration!

On behalf of our planning team, I would personally like to thank our members who volunteered at CMC's 100th Birthday Party. Your passion, energy, and outstanding service to our partners and guests contributed to the overwhelming success of our celebration! We have received extremely positive feedback from our partner exhibitors acknowledging the support and kindness of our volunteers. The following link contains some of their gracious comments, an appreciation plaque presented to CMC by the National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway and links to a few articles covering our event in the media.

Thanks to all who helped make this a success and thanks to all Carolina Mountain Club members who attended! Your dedication to CMC and our mission ensures the CMC's legacy will continue to be strong because of members like you!

Tom Weaver, President & The CMC Birthday Party Planning Team

Award Nominations Needed

by Donna Bange

Each year, a CMC Awards Committee reviews nominations for two special awards given by the club. Donna Bange is the 2023 Committee Chairperson and the committee also includes members from both hiking and trail maintenance.

If you know of a club member that you would like to nominate, please send their name, which of the awards you feel they should receive, and a brief reason why you feel they qualify for the award to either Barbara Morgan at barbc129@gmail.com or Donna Bange at donna.bange@gmail.com. We have a review team assembled to help choose this year's recipients, to be announced at our annual meeting and dinner on October 28th.

The nominations need to be submitted before October 1, 2023.

Further details on these awards can be found on the CMC website. See the link below.

<https://www.carolinamountainclub.org/index.cfm/do/pages.view/id/42/page/Service-Awards>

The Award of Appreciation can go to any member who, during the year prior to the Annual Meeting, has rendered such exceptional service to the operation of Carolina Mountain Club that its goals were significantly advanced.

The Award of Distinction can go to a member who, during his/her membership, has made consistent and cumulative extraordinary contributions to the operation of the Club and to the achievement of its goals.

Note that the Honorary Lifetime Award is decided by the CMC Leadership Council.

We encourage CMC members to recognize your peers in their outstanding volunteer efforts in trail maintenance, hiking and/or Centennial Celebration efforts.

Supplemental Information

If you are interested, below are three links to supplemental information.

1. [CMC OM on Awards](#) (the Operations Manual description of the parameters)
2. [Award of Appreciation recipients 2000 to 2022](#)
3. [Distinguished Service Award recipients 2000 to 2022](#)

Modern Navigation for Hikers and Maintainers

By Bill Sanderson

"Hello, I'm injured and cannot walk. I'm on the Jerry Miller trail somewhere below where it hits the AT."

"Joe, there is a tree down on my MST section about a 30-minute walk from where the trail crosses the parkway."

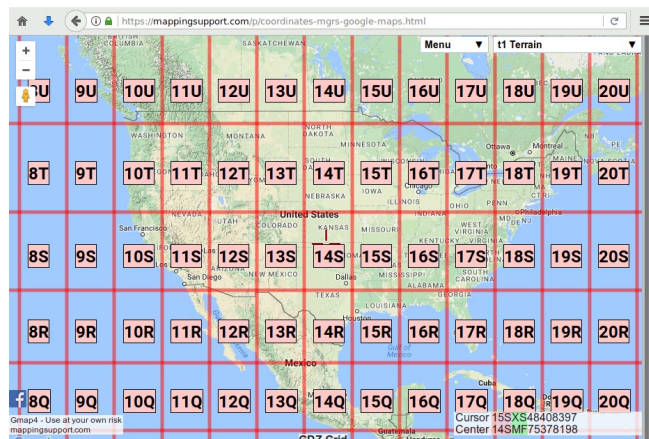
Could the 911 operator convey the location of the injured hiker effectively to a search team, and could Joe's crew find the downed tree? Sure, eventually, but in both cases

there is obvious opportunity for error and uncertainty. Since we all carry powerful, pocketable devices that can pinpoint one's location to within *one meter*, there's really no excuse for not employing them in communicating locations in the backwoods.

One reason that folks are hesitant to “navigate” is because the classic system of latitude and longitude is, to be honest, difficult to understand and hard to use. For example, in “lat/long” the summit of Mount Pisgah lies at $35^{\circ}25'32''$, $-82^{\circ}45'24''$. Do you know how far a second of latitude is, or why the longitude coordinates are negative?

The first attempt at a new and more user-friendly system of coordinates was developed

in the early 1940's. Like lat/long, this new system, which came to be called UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator), created a global grid by drawing lines from north pole to south pole, and perpendicular lines east to west. The rectangular areas created by this grid are given letter/number designations. All of NC (except the far western tip and the lower coastal plain) is in grid zone 17S.



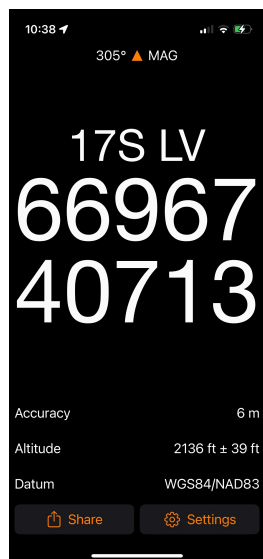
To pinpoint your location within a grid zone, UTM uses “real” units of distance...meters to be exact. First is “easting” ... how far are you (in meters) from the western edge of the zone? Second is “northing” ... how far are you (in meters) from the Equator? Mount Pisgah, in the UTM system, becomes 17 S 0340517E 3921664N. That's still a lot of digits, so the advantage over lat/long is not obvious except that meters are far easier to visualize than minutes and seconds.

As usual, necessity bred invention, and NATO militaries further refined the UTM system to make it easier to use by subdividing the huge UTM zones into many smaller, square units each given a two-letter designation. In this system, called MGRS (Military Grid Reference System) or USNG (US National Grid) we (Buncombe, Haywood, Madison, etc.) are in Zone 17S LV. As before, the precise location is determined by measuring east then north in meters, but now we are measuring from the western and southern edges of square LV, rather than from the far-away edge of Zone 17 and the even-farther-away Equator. This reduces the number of digits to a maximum total of ten (two sets of five) which are much easier to remember, copy accurately, and communicate via radio. In the USNG system Mount Pisgah is 17S LV 40517 21664. That provides an accuracy of +/- one meter.

Why is the preceding discussion important? Remember our injured hiker? If he or she cannot provide an actual coordinate, or is not at a specific named location that appears on a map, the 911 operator will attempt to use multiple cell towers to triangulate the

source of the cell signal to determine where the injured person is located. 911 still uses lat/long (because computers don't care if you use four digits or four hundred, and all civilian GPS units, including your phone, unfortunately still default to lat/long because, again, computers don't care how many digits are needed). Triangulation provides at best a rough estimate of the actual location. When the 911 operator determines this location (remember, it's an estimate) they will deliver it to a fire department or a search-and-rescue team, the majority of which navigate using the USNG system, not lat/long. Someone on the team will have to convert the lat/long coordinates to USNG coordinates and deliver that data to the actual rescuers. Conversion takes time and creates another opportunity for error: one digit out of place could result in a huge mapping error. Meanwhile our injured hiker waits, and waits...

"Hello, I'm injured and cannot walk. My coordinates are 17S LV 48127 88817."



The 911 operator delivers the USNG coordinates directly to the SAR team, who quickly and accurately map the location and plan the best route to reach the injured hiker. How did the injured hiker know their coordinates? A one-touch phone app (USNG Me for iPhone; USNG for Android) produced the coordinates and on the same screen provided an upload button for 911 and a text block for them to type a message. Always remember that texting will often carry on a weak signal when voice calls will not. Additionally, anything sent to 911 will ALWAYS be picked up by any receiving cell tower, whether it's your service provider or not.

If you have no cell service at all the USNG app still works because it is reading directly from the GPS satellite system. In this case the location data can be carried, by a partner or passer-by, to a spot where 911 can be called. (See why hiking with others and filing a detailed flight plan with someone back home is so important?)

"Joe, there is a tree down on my MST section. The coordinates are 17S LV 22743 09283."

Our heroic maintainer, coming across the downed tree, used the phone app to instantly grab the coordinates, later relaying them to the MST supervisor who was then able to map the exact spot and most expedient route to the tree.

Mapping is beyond the scope of this article, but that and other navigation skills are part of the training received by all members of the CMC Search and Rescue Crew. Contact Bill Sanderson or any CMC SAR Crew member if you have questions. Navigation classes have been conducted for CMC members in the past and we can do so again if there is interest. Let us know how we can help you improve your navigation skills.

UNCA Student's Survey Can Help CMC

by Jan Onan

If you missed it last month, we would like you to consider taking a few moments to fill out a survey about trail use and trail maintenance for our Felipe, a UNCA Student who is doing research that will possibly help CMC. Please click on the link to answer a few questions. If you have already done so, thank you!

Sustainability Survey

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSciQ4JrNyEnOikZ3IUahgjDQMUtYjgFw3L-9iaKjRVuU7IB8A/viewform>

Here is a bit about Felipe:

My name is Felipe Ahmada and I am a senior economics student at UNCA who is working alongside the CMC on a research project regarding trail accessibility and the value of trail volunteers. This is a project I am really passionate about and plan to expand on later in graduate school where I can focus more on conservation and sustainability. I was born in Chile and plan to go back home once done with school, and take what I have learned about sustainability and outdoor recreation back with me to hopefully establish a more environmentally conscious generation of trail and outdoor enjoyers. It is also my plan to share my research with CMC council members in hopes it can provide information as CMC plans for the next 100 year.

You could help us by filling out this short survey for me following this link Sustainability Survey. Thank you

CMC Completes First 6 Miles on the "Forgotten 14"

by Paul Curtin

On July 21st the Asheville Friday crew completed an historic work project. Four years ago the "Forgotten 14" was identified as an unsafe section of the MST within our 155 mile responsibility (and the only part in the Nantahala Forest). This trail portion runs 14 miles from the Old Bald and Haywood Gap access and travels 500 ft below and upto a mile away from the Parkway, making maintenance access very difficult on this remote section, which in



Friday crew after walking out on July 21st. Peter, Paul, Ed, Tom, Chris, Glyn, John, David, Donna, Joe, Henry

part lies below Richland Balsam. The first six miles of it were mainly tread (as opposed to logging road) but had some very rocky sections which were narrow and slanted, and had suffered some dangerous root ball tearouts up to 6 feet deep. The remaining 8 miles are on an old logging road and has a lot of wet spots. This will be addressed in time but was not the priority.



A finished rock section with David Jones looking on

The Wednesday and Friday crews decided to take on this challenge and improve the trail to make it safe for the backpackers who are the most frequent visitors. Two new maintenance access portals were created and one improved, now known as One Tree, Two Trees, and Three Trees. Two Trees, about 4.5 miles in, was created first, and is the most notorious. It rises about 350 ft in less than a half mile, a long way to trudge up with tools after a hard work day. There were some maintainers who went down and up with us once and “never again”. One Tree is about 2 miles in and a big longer and not as steep. This is mainly used by trail section maintainers now. Three Trees is longer and is regularly used by hikers doing the SB6K challenge.



Finished rock steps by Ike, Joe, Bob, Tom, Ed, and Chris

Using these access portals, the crews steadily crept along the 6 miles and improved it one rock and root at a time over the four years. On July 21st the Friday crew finished the 6 miles of rough trail (referred to as one of the most challenging sections of the MST in the guide) and climbed out for the last time in awhile, carrying all the tools which had been stored down there over the four years of work. All told dozens of trips have been made on this project totaling over 2,700 hours or more than 1.3 person-years. Danny Bernstein chronicled some of our work in this area in the 100th Anniversary book.

All told crews have made 37 work trips to the area to complete this project. The top 3 visits were made by Chris Werbylo, Paul Curtin, and John Turley. But more than 100 people have made the trip over the four years. Carrying a rock bar or chain saw or weedeater out of “the hole” along with your pack is an experience you won’t forget.

The crews are very proud of their accomplishment. Cheers to all the many maintainers who have contributed! This area needs section maintainers to preserve the work and is closest to people living in Waynesville, Maggie Valley, or Sylvah/Cullowee.

Camp Celo Campers Join CMC Crew for Trail Work

By Mike Williams

An enthusiastic crew of teens from Camp Celo near Burnsville recently volunteered a long, hard day of trail work, joining a Carolina Mountain Club/NC High Peaks crew of adults to do major rehabilitation work on the Colbert Ridge Trail.

The group installed more than 50 water diversions and steps on a badly-eroded stretch of the popular trail, which leads from the South Toe Valley up to Deep Gap and the Black Mountain Crest Trail.

“These youngsters are amazing,” said CMC Monday Crew Chief and High Peaks co-founder John Whitehouse. “They really pitched in to help us get the water off this trail. Our regular crew members were very impressed with their energy and commitment.”



The combined crews included thirteen campers and four counselors, along with a dozen adults from the two hiking clubs. They split into smaller teams and spent the day installing water-bars, which channel rainfall off the trail, and steps, which make footing easier and also capture silt to slow erosion.

Tara Wu, an AmeriCorps Vista intern for the U.S. Forest Service’s Appalachian Ranger District Office in Mars Hill, also joined the work day, representing the public land manager that oversees Colbert Ridge and many other area trails.

Camp Celo is a co-ed summer camp located in the Celo Community and has run continuously for over 75 years. Set on a working farm, the camp offers 7-14-year-olds one-week to four-week overnight programs that are rooted in the Quaker values of non-violence, simplicity and environmental awareness. Instilling a strong work ethic is core to the camp’s mission.

“All of our camp programs regularly utilize the Black Mountain trails for day hikes and backpacking trips,” said Sadie Perrin, a Camp Celo program director. “We are excited to team up with High Peaks and the Carolina Mountain Club to learn more about the on-going effort that is required to maintain these beloved trails and to get our oldest campers involved in this important work.”

High Peaks is a Burnsville-based hiking club that leads local hikes and maintains the trails on the Black Mountains. The group is also the official Friends of Mt. Mitchell State Park group. The High Peaks trail crew works in conjunction with Asheville-based

Carolina Mountain Club's Monday Crew, which has been led by Whitehouse for the past decade.

"It's great to see young people enjoying our gorgeous natural surroundings here in Yancey County," he said. "Both High Peaks and CMC try to engage youth with the outdoors so that coming generations will help us preserve and maintain our natural heritage. The Camp Celo campers have clearly embraced this outlook by volunteering to do badly needed trail work."

Photo caption: Campers from Camp Celo in the South Toe River Valley recently joined a Carolina Mountain Club/High Peaks trail crew to do rehabilitation work on the Colbert Ridge Trail.

Paul Dickens is Back!

by Becky Smucker



What a wonderful thing for CMC that Paul Dickens has returned! After leaving Western North Carolina for paid work in 2013, he has now come back to us as a "retiree" to continue his real work as Wilderness trail maintainer and traditional hand tool guru and trainer. In his absence he has worked on weekends to deepen his skills and experience, and returns to us as a certified trainer of trainers, well-known throughout the southern and central Appalachians by organizations that use wilderness trail maintenance tools and skills. I personally am glad to have this dear friend and trail colleague back.

CMC has asked Paul to take on leadership of the Wilderness Response Crew. He will be following the good work of John Turley who is now focusing his time with CMC's Search and Rescue Crew. The current Wilderness Response Crew was

the vision of Rich Evans, and was set up to work in conjunction with section maintainers in formally designated Wilderness areas.

Paul wants to pick up where Rich and John left off, to build the crew into a highly skilled team that coordinates work with the section maintainers and partner groups including the Forest Service and Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS). The main job Paul sees for the first year is a thorough clearing and brush-out of the Shining Rock and Middle Prong Wilderness trails, not an easy job without power tools. I can say from personal experience that Paul is a patient, kind, and effective trainer, and he looks forward to working with interested CMC members in this effort.

For Paul, it all goes back to 2009. In 2008 he joined the new CMC Wilderness Crew which I was leading. He already knew and loved Middle Prong and Shining Rock from

hiking on weekends, and quickly became a valued member of the Crew. In 2009 we sent Paul, Nan Needs, Gary Eblen, and Kay Shurleff (see photo) to the fledgling Wilderness Skills Institute at the Cradle of Forestry, "and that was it," says Paul. "I found my passion." In quick order he learned not just how to use the traditional hand tools in the field, but also to maintain, sharpen and restore them. If you ever get a chance to see Paul in action in his own workshop, jump on it. The place is a marvel of detail and orderliness, and his passion for the work is evident in the respect and affection he shows as he handles his trailwork tools.



Nan Needs, Paul Dickens, Gary Eblen, and Kay Shurtleff (left to right) on the early CMC Wilderness Crew.

In 2013 Paul and Martha left Asheville for Pennsylvania and then Virginia for a job with Dominion Energy, a job that he struggles to define. Restructuring and rebuilding environmental and other legal compliance programs, then training someone to move in behind him to maintain the programs might describe it. Weekends he spent hiking and biking and doing trail work. He was certified to train cross-cut sawyers and axe wielders, and has helped train folks from many A.T.-maintaining clubs from Georgia through Virginia. He has worked extensively training SAWS employees, US Forest Service employees, and trail club volunteers, and is now on the SAWS board as Treasurer. He says this last year he has helped certify or re-certify over 100 people, partly due to a pandemic backlog. In 2022 he became certified to train trainers.

Now he's back with CMC. His current plan for the Wilderness Response Team is to work two Tuesdays and one Saturday per month. He wants the group to work with section maintainers where they've identified a need for help. He plans a systematic brushout of Wilderness Trails, as well as a focus on targeted project areas. In July he and his crew participated with the Remote Overnight Crew led by Paul Curtin, camping at Ivestor Gap and working the weekend on the badly washed-out Art Loeb Trail just inside Shining Rock Wilderness, supported by a Friday equipment haul-in by The Pisgah Conservancy.

"I love it. It's fun!" Paul says. "I like to do work that has a purpose and achieves results. I enjoy working with people doing something that's needed." Paul is actively looking for a wide range of folks who might be interested in joining the Wilderness Response Team. You can contact him at psdicken@gmail.com or 828-279-4304 (cell).

Hot Springs Mountain Club Donation and Trail Plans

by Paul Curtin

Hot Springs NC is a trail town, and the Appalachian Trail runs right down main street. But Hot Springs also has 13 other popular hiking trails nearby on Pisgah National Forest lands that surround the small town. These trails all need regular maintenance to keep them open and safe. Many don't know that the US Forest Service relies heavily on volunteers and organized trail clubs to do this fun and rewarding work.



Left to right, Jack Dalton, Paul Curtin, Mary Kelly and Rob Kelly. Mary Kelly president of HSMC, hands off a check for \$2,466.36.

For 25 years, Hot Springs has had its own small trail club, the Hot Springs Mountain Club (HSMC) doing some of this work, including building and maintaining the Betty Place and Bluff Mountain Loop Trails. But on June 29th, HSMC merged its trail maintenance efforts into the Carolina Mountain Club. The HSMC will still hold occasional wildflower hikes but handed off remaining club funds as a birthday present to the CMC prior to the 100th year Centennial on July 16th.

The HSMC was formed in 1998 to build trails and a trailhead on Bluff Mountain after a negotiated settlement ended controversy over plans for a large logging and roadbuilding project on scenic Bluff Mountain. HSMC received an NC trails grant and in cooperation with USFS, local loggers, and farmers, the club built two footbridges, one on Jerry Miller Trail and one at Betty Place. In 2001, HSMC completed the one mile Betty Place Loop Trail and its parking area, partly with funds raised at the first two Bluff Mountain Music Festivals and with the help of college students on spring break. Over the next 25 years, the HSMC also conducted surveys for invasive plants, led hikes along with CMC, helped Mtn True hold a Bioblitz on Bluff Mountain, and completed the 3.5-mile Bluff Mountain Loop in 2015. The group also helped CMC with the re-opening of the Roundtop Ridge trail in 2020 after a destructive wildfire.

“We are hoping that by combining forces with HSMC we can get some folks excited to train with us for a volunteer crew based in Hot Springs,” said Les Love, VP of CMC. “We have a lot of fun when we work around Hot Springs and thank the HSMC for this nice birthday present. We’ll put it to good use.”

The CMC was formed in 1923 and is constantly recruiting and training new volunteers to maintain over 420 miles of trails. These include 94 miles of the famous Appalachian Trail, 155 miles of the Mountains-To-Sea Trail and over 170 miles of other secondary

trails, including the Roundtop Ridge, Pump Gap, Silvermine, Betty Place, and Bluff Mountain trails near Hot Springs.

CMC is looking to develop a trail crew in the Hot Springs area to continue the work of the HSMC. Several folks in the local area are already very active in maintaining trails around the town, the A.T., and over to Shelton Laurel. If you are interested in joining this effort, contact Paul Curtin (pmcurtin@hotmail.com) or Richard McDanel (rmcdanel61@gmail.com). The funds the HSMC provided will be used to purchase tools for use by this crew, primarily weed eaters that can be staged in the area. If you know of a location we could store the tools outside of Hot Springs please contact Paul or Richard.

The Southern Cookie Lady: Peggy Romesberg

by Donna Bange

She is widely known by the A.T. thru-hikers as the “*Southern Cookie Lady*”. Peggy and Tim Romesberg's home is literally on the Appalachian Trail and resides on Log Cabin Road. The actual Appalachian Trail traverses across their driveway and thus A.T. hikers trek by their home. Peggy and Tim purchased the log cabin as their retirement home a few years ago when they were both working in northern Ohio. They have spent considerable sweat equity and time to update the 80+ year old log cabin home.



Peggy has always liked to cook, especially baking. She would watch the hikers in the Spring go across her driveway and decided to offer them cookies. So far this year, she baked and served over 2500 cookies! Word quickly spread amongst the thru- and section-hikers. They dubbed her the “*Southern Cookie Lady*”. Peggy and Tim enjoy interacting with the hikers. They greatly appreciate her positive energy and cookies!

Joe Bange and I hiked from Rocky Fork Tennessee State Park to the A.T. trail. They talked to a thru-hiker and mentioned CMC. The thru-hiker started talking about the Southern Cookie Lady and how nice she was to him. It was raining heavily when he stopped by for a cookie and enjoyed eating them on their covered porch. He was incredibly grateful for the cookies and a chance to dry off.

Besides baking all those cookies, Peggy has found time to do trail maintenance. Peggy and Tim are A.T. section maintainers near their home on Log Cabin Road. Tim is now a regular Friday Trail Maintainer, especially on the Madison County A.T. Trails.



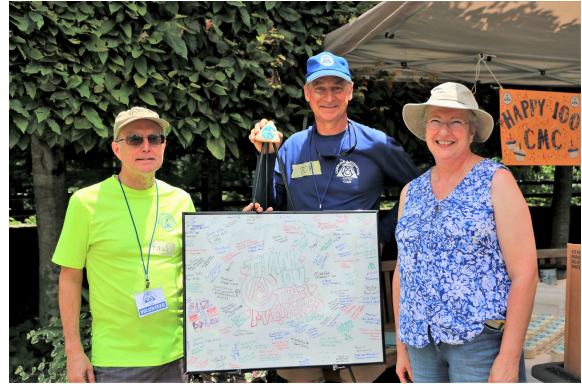
Peggy also baked over 270 CMC cookies for the Centennial Arboretum Celebration. The cookies had

white icing with the blue CMC logo. Peggy individually made the CMC logo for all 270 cookies. At the Centennial celebration the cookies went fast; there were no leftovers.

Appalachian Trail Thru-Hikers Thank CMC Trail Maintainers

by Donna Bange

Since she is known as the popular “*Southern Cookie Lady*”, Peggy Romesberg interacts with countless A.T. thru-hikers. Peggy and Tim Romesberg’s home is literally on the Appalachian Trail, near Log Cabin Road. Peggy and Tim routinely hear comments from the hikers on how well the Appalachian Trail is maintained in western North Carolina. This is an impressive compliment given that the thru-hikers have been hiking in Georgia, Tennessee and North Carolina for almost 300 miles.



CMC maintains 94 miles of the A.T. from Davenport Gap to Spivey Gap. This also includes 10 shelters and privies.



Peggy decided to make a “Thank You” poster for the CMC Centennial Celebration at the Arboretum. The A.T. thru-hikers expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the CMC Trail Maintainers. The poster was displayed at the Arboretum for everyone to see.

The photos shows a thru-hiker signing the poster. Paul Curtin (CMC A.T. Supervisor), Tom Weaver (CMC President) and Peggy Romesberg (The Southern Cookie Lady) posed for a photo next to the Thank You poster.

Low Blodgett Participates in CMC Centennial Celebration at the Arboretum

by Donna Bange

Lew Blodgett turned 100 years old in May; he is actually older than the Carolina Mountain Club. At age 99 Lew had to give up his trail work and turn in his hazel hoe. Lew was struggling with his balance and for safety reasons, thought it was best to retire from trail



maintenance. He came out to the Arboretum Centennial celebration and sat next to the Welcoming Table. Friends, colleagues and US Forest Service Workers all came by to talk to Lew. His mind, as sharp as ever, could remember hiking trails and trail features. Lew has been active with CMC since 1971, over 50 years.



Roy Davis, Lew's former trail maintenance partner, escorted Lew to the event. Roy commented that the Centennial Celebration was like an extended family reunion; he was able to see countless CMC friends and colleagues.

We congratulate Lew on turning 100 and still being active with his CMC friends. Lew is a great role model for the Carolina Mountain Club.

Carolina Mountain Club eNews is published on the first Friday of each month. 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.

To join Carolina Mountain Club go to : www.carolinamountainclub.org. Click on "Join CMC" on the right side. Follow the instructions. For all 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.

Carolina Mountain Club - P.O. Box 68
Asheville, NC 28802
www.carolinamountainclub.org