

Hike • Save Trails • Make Friends  
Carolina Mountain Club eNews



July 2024



## Celebrating National Trails: Quarterly Crew at Hot Springs a Huge Success

by Donna Bange

National Trails Day, sponsored by American Hiking Society, was June 1st. Its theme is “a day of service for the hometown trails and the people who love them.” This was certainly the case at Hot Springs, where 107 volunteers worked on the Madison County

hiking trails. There were four major work groups that covered the Appalachian Trail (above Tanyard Gap and Hot Springs Parking Lot Kiosk), River Ridge trail along the French Broad River, and Spring Creek Trail.

The “community love” was evident and vibrant. About half the workers were regular CMC trail maintainers. Overall, about 25% of the volunteers were brand new to trail maintenance. The volunteers ranged in age from about 8 years old to over 80 years old. There were volunteers that drove up from Charlotte. CMC also had tremendous community support. There were 4 major sponsors: Big Pillow Brewing, Fjallraven, Green Machine and Sawyer. Additionally, CMC had tremendous support from our land managers and trail partners. They included Natalia Muglia from Pisgah National Forest (NF), Franklin Tate from ATC along with Seong Hopkins and Brandon Church from Cherokee NF. Saturday is conventionally their day off and yet they came out to support CMC along with the Hot Springs Community. Richard McDaniel (Hot Springs Crew Leader) did an excellent job of engaging local businesses along with scoping work sites. Hot Springs Spa let CMC park cars in their lot. Big Pillow Brewery hosted the after-party.

Paul Curtin led several work crews on the A.T. above Tanyard Gap. This work focused on trail creep remediation and updating water diversions. Tom Weaver led the efforts to build a new kiosk where the A.T. enters into the town of Hot Springs. Hot Springs is well known to the thru-hikers to resupply and rejuvenate (local restaurants and hostel are famous). The new kiosk (where Skip Sheldon and Tom Weaver posed for a photo) welcomes the hikers into the Hot Springs community.



Chris Werbylo, Ed DiSalvo and Joe Bange led the efforts on the Spring Creek Trail to replace existing steps with new steps, update water diversions and tread work. The other work site was the River Ridge along the French Broad River led by Jan Onan, Madison Evans and Richard McDaniel. This work involved digging out berm, back-sloping and installing water diversions. These four distinct work sites offered volunteers the option to do beginner work (River Ridge) to more advanced trail maintenance work at Tanyard Gap and Spring Creek Trail.

There were countless other volunteers that made this day so special including Les and Catherine Love, Ike Isenhour, Bob Zeid, Christine Martens, Paul Wulfig, Priscilla Estes, Donna Bange, Linda Blue, Ron Navik, Robert Bolt, Bob Fuller, Bob Beach, Leslie Lajoie, Pat Flannery, Karen and Ken Schultz.

After working on the trails, Big Pillow Brewery sponsored the after-party with a gratis “beverage of choice.” David Huff was MC of this celebration and instrumental in obtaining door prizes. The party was a great way for veteran CMC maintainers across different weekday work crews to catch up with one another. Likewise the celebration enabled new volunteers to get to know CMC better. There were over 30 door prizes. In addition to prizes from our three sponsors (Fjallraven, Green Machine, and Sawyer), the following graciously donated prizes: Adventure Nerds, American Backcountry, Astral, Bluff Mountain Outfitters, ENO, French Broad Adventures, Josh & Amber Niven, Pisgah Map Co, Recovery Brands, and Sarah Jones Decker.

So how does CMC know if all this planning and work is beneficial? There are two measures of success. Monday after the event Joe and Donna Bange worked on their Lover’s Leap Hot Spring A.T. section doing regular trail maintenance work. Numerous A.T. thru-hikers heard about and commented about the “great day” on Saturday. Apparently, Saturday’s work day was “hot news” at the Hot Springs hostel where the A.T. thru-hikers like to stay. Second, Paul Curtin commented that less than one week later several individuals have signed up for crews or as section maintainers. This is a testament to CMC’s strength to attract new volunteers to support the 400+ hiking miles in Western North Carolina.



Tourism is a cornerstone of the Hot Springs Town economy and vitality. CMC supports this community with the A.T. and secondary hiking trails maintenance. National Trails Day is a perfect opportunity to showcase the vibrant partnership between CMC, ATC, Forest Service and the Hot Springs Community. Mark your 2025 calendar now. We will be back in Hot Springs the first Saturday in June for National Trails Day.

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## Councillor Elections

**Dear CMC Members:**

**Would you like to give back to our western NC trail community, connect people to the outdoors, and help preserve and protect your favorite trails?**

The Carolina Mountain Club (CMC) is looking for dynamic and motivated leaders to fill several club officer (Councillor) positions in our upcoming November 2024 election.

The club-wide council positions listed below are up for election this year for two-year terms beginning in January 2025. The club needs councillors to provide the critical leadership for our important work in maintaining our status as the best hiking club in WNC. CMC is a non-profit organization with over 1200 members. Volunteer members lead over 200 hikes a year and help maintain and preserve over 440 miles of our local trails.

**Positions we are looking to fill for next year include:**

- Secretary: responsible for Council meeting minutes and managing club records
- Councillor for Trails: provides oversight and support to trail crew leaders
- Councillor at Large: assists Council with special projects

If you are interested in a leadership position, like to help develop organizations, and you have a few hours a week to volunteer, we'd like to know more about you. To apply or to recommend a candidate, you can email [tomjweaver@gmail.com](mailto:tomjweaver@gmail.com).

We will contact you to learn more about your interests and provide additional information.

If leadership is not for you, but you would like to support the work of CMC, please contact Les Love ([leslove55@gmail.com](mailto:leslove55@gmail.com)) for more information about volunteer opportunities that might be right for you.

If you cannot help now but know of potential candidates, please tell us and we'll contact them.

Sincerely,  
The 2024 CMC Nominating Committee

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## **Call for Award Nominations**

by Tom Weaver

Each year, a CMC Awards Committee, led by the Past President, reviews nominations for two special awards given by the club. Tom Weaver is the 2024 Committee Chairperson. The committee includes members who were last year's winners & from both hiking and trail maintenance.

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 over 10 years has made consistent and cumulative extraordinary contributions to the operation of the Club and to the achievement of its goals.

We are also looking for nominations for the Honorary Lifetime Award - nominations will be reviewed and decided on by the CMC Leadership Council.

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>

If you know of a club member who 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 Tom Weaver ([tomjweaver@gmail.com](mailto:tomjweaver@gmail.com)). We have a review team assembled to help choose this year's recipients which will be announced at our annual meeting and dinner on November 2nd.

**The nominations need to be submitted before October 1, 2024.**

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

*Tom Weaver*

Supplemental Information

If you are interested, use the above link for lists of past recipients for each of these awards from 2000-2023.

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## **Hike for Healing Event**

by Karen Schultz and Jan Onan

*"Hike for Healing is an annual event that encourages self-reflection and open, honest, and meaningful conversation to ignite healing of racial and cultural divides... Healing begins with a conversation. There are a number of things that divide people in this country. The outdoors connects people in ways that things like politics have not been able to do." Lee Fortune*

On June 20<sup>th</sup> and June 21<sup>st</sup>, Carolina Mountain Club and Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail (FMST), collaborated with CMC member Lee Fortune, to bring awareness to the annual 'Hike for Healing.' The plan was for Lee to hike 70 miles of segment 3 on the MST, which included 'The Pitchell' – the hike from Mt Pisgah to Mt. Mitchell. The goal of Hike for Healing is to build connections through conversations, that are often more easily facilitated in the outdoors. As part of the process, Lee invited others to join him on any part of the trail.

In collaboration with Lee, CMC organized several hikes along segment 3 of the MST, starting from the Folk Art Center. Brent L from FMST, led a hike near Craggy Gardens.

To prepare the Hike for Healing Hike Leaders, Lee conducted a training for them, with an invitation to all CMC Council Leaders as well. Several critical areas of focus were covered, including creating a safe space for participants to engage in open and honest dialogue about experiences with respect to race and culture.



Several CMC members gathered for a picnic dinner at Pisgah Inn on Thursday June 20<sup>th</sup> to send Lee off on his journey – Paul Curtin joined Lee on the first leg of the hike!

The next morning, Hike for Healing Hike Leaders gathered at the Folk Art Center to prepare for the Hike for Healing hikers to arrive. Discussions with participants and hike leaders evolved as the hikes began.

As with any new event, there is much to learn and challenges to overcome. Despite fewer hikers, we successfully led groups to Lunch Rock and Craggy. Lee completed 50 miles before having to end his hike due to the demanding MST segment.

Diversity and inclusion work is an ongoing and gradual process for all of us. We must look at what we have accomplished to provide motivation moving forward. Our work is not finished, yet our commitment and optimism remain unwavering.

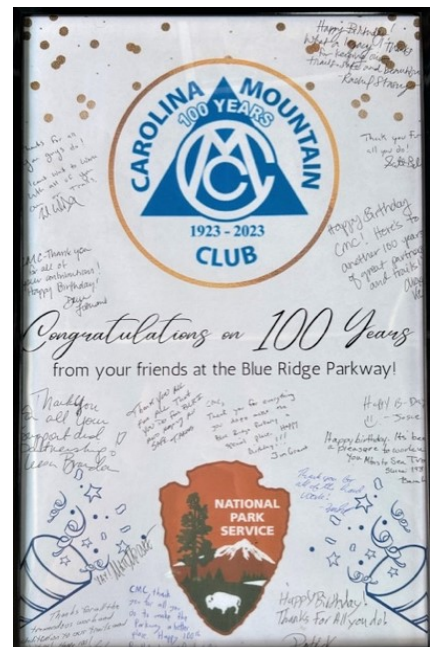
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## Remembering CMC’s Centennial Celebration and Celebrating the 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday

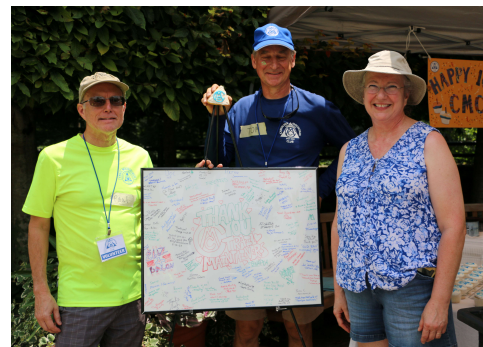
by Donna Bange

It is hard to believe that it has been nearly a year since CMC’s huge Centennial Celebration at the Arboretum. On July 16, CMC will turn 101 years old. This impressive milestone is a testament to CMC’s vitality and impact in the Western North Carolina Community. More importantly CMC’s foundation is still built upon 100% volunteers who are passionate and dedicated.

The CMC Centennial Celebration planning began in May 2022, about 15 months before the actual birthday with a small steering team of Donna Bange, Les Love, Tom Weaver, Sallye



Sanders, David Huff and Henry Kassel. Sallye had a vision of a family event with booths to engage individuals of all ages from small children to our centenarian, Lew Blodgett. Lew is older than CMC and he attended the Arboretum event. *The first photograph below* is of Sallye welcoming individuals to the CMC Centennial Celebration. With the help of Piet Bodenhorst, CMC secured the North Carolina Arboretum for the event. A core team quickly assembled to plan and execute the event. They included Sallye Sanders and Adrienne Chang (co-leaders), Les Love, Piet Bodenhorst, David Huff, Jan Onan, Tom Weaver, Henry Kassel, Bev MacDowell and Jeff Wilcox. There were over 50 CMC volunteers for the day. *The second photograph* is of Catherine Love and Jan Onan volunteering. *The third photograph* is of Paul Curtin, Tom Weaver (last year CMC President) and Peggy Romesburg (also known as the Southern Cookie Lady). Peggy cooked hundreds of CMC Centennial cookies for the celebration.



To say that the July 16, 2023 CMC Centennial Celebration was fantastic is an understatement. The event exceeded everyone's expectations, including the NC Arboretum management. This event had over 1200 visitors, the most the Arboretum had ever seen. People were searching for parking spots and eventually parked in the grass. As people were leaving, they asked if this was an annual event because they wanted to come back next year.

Below are a few comments from CMC's partners that joined us for the celebration.

"The amount of detail, support, and kindness that was felt from all of the CMC volunteers was unprecedented. Ya'll truly planned and executed to such a high degree, and I believe it was a year+ in the making. I heard over and over again from community members who were attending the event that it was so amazing to see so many local groups out in the same spot. I've not personally seen a gathering to that degree of like-minded people and it was truly inspiring!" ~ Natalie, SORBA

"We had a blast celebrating 100 years of @carolinamountainclub yesterday at the @thencarboretum! Thank you to our hosts for putting on such a great event, all of the partner groups who helped to make the day special, and the hundreds of people who came out to join the festivities. We are so grateful to be part of this community! Cheers to 100 years, CMC!" ~ Pisgah Conservancy

“Thank you so much for inviting us to be part of your 100-year celebration! We had a wonderful time.” ~ Pete, Howdy Homemade Ice Cream

CMC is still 100% volunteers, no paid staff. Birthdays are always a milestone in a person’s life, a time to reflect on the past year and look forward to the next year. CMC has an exceptional past with being the oldest hiking club in the southeast USA. Likewise CMC’s future looks bright and outstanding. We are vibrant and impactful to Western North Carolina hiking and hiking trail maintenance.

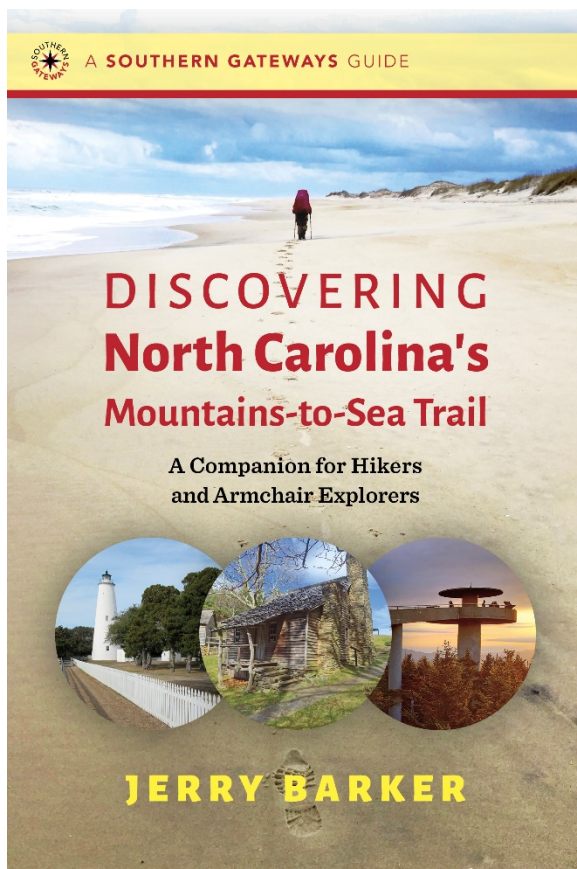
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## ***Discovering North Carolina’s Mountains-to-Sea Trail” A Companion for Hikers and Armchair Explorers***

by Jerry Barker

published by The University of North Carolina Press 2024.

Reviewed by Danny Bernstein



Jerry Barker has championed the Mountains-to-Sea Trail for a long time. Now he has authored a book which describes, explains, and supports North Carolina’s premier trail.

Unlike a turn-by-turn guidebook, you can read this book straight through. It could be in your armchair or better yet, a little each evening before you walk the next section of the MST.

The Mountains-to-Sea Trail is a 1,175-mile trail crossing North Carolina. Barker’s book on the MST is, as the subtitle says, the companion. What is on the trail? What is available immediately off the trail? The author describes the history and natural history of the trail as he moves along from Clingmans Dome in Great Smoky Mountains National Park to Jockey’s Ridge State Park on the Atlantic Ocean.

CMC Members may know the 140 miles that the club maintains, from the start of the Blue Ridge Parkway to NC 80. But the western end of the MST starts at the top of Clingmans Dome in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. About twenty-eight miles are in the park.

What lies ahead east of the CMC section?

North Carolina is an extremely diverse state. The MST shows off the best of the state: mountains to tobacco barns to the Atlantic Ocean and everything in between. But you don't have to walk the whole trail to enjoy the book. Read a little, then go out and find these spots.

When I walked the MST (2010-2011), I was so surprised to find the extent of Revolutionary War history in North Carolina. The South saw plenty of action during the American Revolution. On the trail, you find bits and pieces of the Overmountain Victory Trail. Patriots, those who wanted to get rid of the British in the colonies, marched to meet another contingent of soldiers in present-day Elkin. Together they eventually fought the British in the Battle of Kings Mountain in South Carolina. There are more indications of the Revolutionary War in Hillsborough where the Halifax Resolves were signed calling for independence from Great Britain.

Moving further east, we encounter the Carolina Bays. The bays get their names from various trees such as sweet bay, loblolly bay and red bay. Jones Lake State Park hosts the four-mile Bay Trail. Jones Lake was the first state park for African Americans which opened in the summer of 1939. Are the bays lakes or swamps? So much fascinating natural and human history as you move east with the MST.

As Sharon McCarthy, my MST hiking partner says when she talks to hikers from the Western part of the state, "You need to get out of the mountains, people."



**Jerry Barker, author**

The Eastern end of the MST is at Jockey's Ridge State Park where Barker had his celebratory photo taken. The park has the tallest living sand dune on the Atlantic Coast. Or as my seven-year-old granddaughter said years ago, "It's the world's largest sand box."

### **Book Dedication**

Unlike most book dedications where the author thanks her mother or spouse, Barker dedicates the book to Kate Dixon, Executive Director of Friends of the MST from 2008-2022. Dixon was the force that added over two hundred miles of off-road trail. Under her watch, the Coastal Crescent route in southeastern North Carolina was developed. She built the strong organization that is the Friends of the MST.

Jerry Barker retired from North Carolina State University as Associate Vice Chancellor and Director of Student Health Services after a 31-year career. Previously he worked as a health educator in the Wake County school system (Raleigh). He was on the board of Friends of Mountains-to-Sea Trail for many years, serving as president in 2013 to 2015. He was president when I was on the FMST board. He has since been invited back to be on the Board and is currently serving again.

As a child, Barker spent six summers at Camp Sequoyah in Weaverville/Reems Creek. Three of those formative years were with Pop Hollandsworth who got him hiking and climbing. Pop Hollandsworth was a figure in outdoor leadership, camp, and education for over 50 years in Western North Carolina and a member of CMC. Barker is an MST volunteer with the Falls Lake trail crew.

### **Where to buy “Discovering North Carolina’s Mountains-to-Sea Trail”**

The best place to buy Jerry Barker’s book is from the Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail website at <https://stores.portmerch.com/mountainstoseatrail/> Your purchase supports Friends of the MST. Of course, there are other online vendors that carry the book. It is also currently on the shelves of Malaprop’s Bookstore in Asheville.

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Carolina Mountain Club eNews is published on the first Friday of each month. Members can send your news to [eNews@carolinamountainclub.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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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