

The Cumberland Trail

FALL/WINTER 2008

THE CUMBERLAND TRAIL CONFERENCE

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- The CTC says goodbye to old friends.
- Bridge construction over Rock and Big Possum Creeks.
- Read about the first ever Winter Breakaway!
- New Cumberland Trail Merchandise

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tion



Now A Word From The GM

It began in March 1965 with the Clinch and Powell River Valley Association. The members of this group proposed a trail from Cumberland Gap following the ridge of the Cumberland Mountain south to Cove Lake State Park. From this park, the trail was to continue south along Walden Ridge to Oliver Springs. A connector trail to Oak Ridge was also planned. This route was to be named the Cumberland Trail (CT). **After some initial support, the association’s enthusiasm faded and by July 1965 the concept evaporated as dew in the summer heat.**

In 1968 the Tennessee Trails Association (TTA) was organized by a small group of people interested in creating a state wide system of hiking trails. This group envisioned a Cumberland Trail stretching from Cumberland Gap southwest to the Tennessee River Gorge. The CT was to serve as a pilot project to prove the feasibility of a state wide system of scenic trails. In 1971, the TTA assisted with the passage of Tennessee’s Trails System Act. **This legislation designated the Cumberland Trail and six other proposed trails as state scenic trails.** State funds for the Trail Systems Act were very limited; however a small, state trail system staff was funded. This staff working with the TTA began obtaining agreements with land owners for the various trail corridors. This coordination allowed construction of the CT to begin. In 1976, the TTA became a non-profit organization to provide a legal entity for agreements with land owners and to maintain continuity of Tennessee’s scenic trails program. From 1972-1979, the TTA and the State of Tennessee continued their cooperative efforts and several miles of the Cumberland Trail were constructed, primarily with volunteer labor.



CT Visionaries, from left: Donald Todd, Bob Brown, Sam Powell, Rob Webber, and Mack Pritchard

Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander was inaugurated in 1979, and he supported the proposed scenic trail system. Additional funding was allocated and state trail building crews were formed along with a state trails system administrator. By 1986, about 100 miles of the CT from Cumberland Gap to Lone Mountain State Forest were built along with 32 miles on Signal Mountain, and 14 miles in the Grassy Cove segment. It was managed as the state’s only linear park and was designated the Cumberland State Scenic Trail. The majority of the trail passed through private property with land owner agreements allowing for the trail. Unfortunately, in 1988 during Governor McWherter’s administration, budget problems arose. All new trail construction

Continued on Page 5 & 6



Mr. Ray Haley

*"Chooooow
Time!"*

Ray Haley

"Chooooow Time!" Ray's always-punctual shout resounded from the big porch of the Dogwood Lodge all the way down to the lake where some of us used to camp during CTC's BreakAway and Big Dig trail construction programs. Then later, while waiting in the chow line, I would often feel a gentle tap on my shoulder: "Yours is over there" Ray would whisper. Even though Ray and Carol might be busy feeding over 100 hungry volunteers, he would never fail to tell me where to find a portion they had put aside for me that did not contain a certain ingredient to which I am allergic. That was Ray's way--quiet, gentle, thoughtful, and a hard working, faithful volunteer.

Ray and Carol would drive all the way from Memphis to volunteer for the CTC, both in the kitchen and on the trail. But while most of us volunteered a few days at a time, Ray and Carol would come for the duration--4 or 6 or more weeks. And they did this over and over again! For this almost unbelievable service, he received The Cumberland Trail Award in 2004 and the Tennessee Trails Award in 2007 as part of the "Kitchen Crew" of Betty Porter, Carol Haley, and Ray Haley.

On a typical day, Ray would be in the kitchen long before sunrise to get the coffee started--including an extra strong pot for those of us who needed it. Sometimes he'd prepare a dish guaranteed to wake us up and get us off to the trail on time--"Ray's Firecracker Grits". This was a big hit among the BreakAway students, especially those from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). Is Ray's breakfast the reason this particular school always constructed more quality trail--especially rockwork--than any other? Anyway, Ray was so popular with the IUP students that they named a band in his honor. Its name? "Ray's Firecracker Grits", of course. A recent Google search turned up 9 references to this band that has been making the rounds in the Pittsburgh area. You can hear it on several of the referenced sites, and find a link to Ray's recipe; the recipe also appears in the CTC Newsletter dated Summer/Fall 2005.

After the breakfast clean-up, while most volunteers were out building trail, Ray performed another indispensable service. Did you ever wonder who sharpened many of the mattocks, fire rakes, saws, and other implements of destruction we all used? Then, after working in the kitchen and in the tool shed and maybe doing some food shopping, Ray would return to the kitchen to help with dinner!

Finally, after the dinner dishes were done, Ray got to his favorite part of the day--fishing down at the lake. I would sometimes join him there, and learned that he had fished all over the country, and once--in Alaska--caught a 37-pound salmon that was about as long as he was tall! He certainly never forgot that fish, and those of us who were fortunate enough to know him will not forget Ray.

Ray passed away November 16, 2008 leaving Carol, his wife of 45 years, a daughter Margie and her husband Mark, and two grandchildren, Eliana and David.

Warren Devine

Faith Dippold



“If Faith can do it, then I can do it” seemed to be the unspoken motto among the members of the Cove Lake Chapter of TTA. In speaking with several original members of our group, Faith Dippold was named as the force that led to the creation of our chapter in the late 1990s.

Quite simply, from what was told, it seemed that Faith had read about the Cumberland Trail and asked a friend, Arlene Decker, to show her the trail section in Campbell County. The rest is history. Several friends from the First Presbyterian Church in La Follette met with Faith at Cove Lake State Park and began discussing plans to form a new chapter of the Cumberland Trail Association. And so, the Cove Lake Chapter of TTA was created, first meeting in the basement of the Presbyterian Church and later moving into the La Follette Recreation building.

Like all new organizations, the chapter experienced leadership changes in its early years. But, one determined, often head-strong woman seemed to keep the unit intact: Faith Dippold. Faith was committed to the Cumberland Trail and was always the first to support any activities that furthered the development of the trail. Sometimes to a fault, she pushed and prodded others to become involved with trail activities. She loved trail maintenance and especially loved working with the college students who came to work during the BreakAway weeks. She said that the students kept her young and she enjoyed their enthusiasm. The Cumberland Trail was indeed big in Faith’s heart and she committed herself to all CTC events.

The saying, “If you want something done, ask a busy person,” proved true with Faith Dippold. She gave a lot: organist of her church; involvement in Food Life Services; Campbell County’s Habitat for Humanity; HAVEN; the Cove Lake Hiking Club; the Cumberland Trail construction; and, the Community Garden. She personally took the responsibility to oversee the maintenance of the La Follette Nature Trail. It was on that trail that Faith spent her last day doing what she loved best...making the trail beautiful for those who shared her love of nature. We will all miss Faith; and, we will not forget the commitment to the many projects that she loved.

Submitted by: Sharon Phillips, secretary

Cove Lake Chapter of TTA



TC Varner and Jim Hardy workin' hard

E.T. Techtonics, Inc. These bridge components are made of a very durable, fiber-glass polymer resin material that stands up very well against the elements and are pre-engineered to support the load of the required spans.

Fortunately, there was a steady stream of volunteers throughout the entirety of this venture which helped make it all come together. Many different groups were represented during this project. The volunteer work force consisted of members from the TTA, Nashville Hiking Meet-Up, Team Green, AmeriCorps NCCC, students from UT Knoxville, Warren Wilson in NC, Baylor School in Chattanooga, and unaffiliated, hard-working enthusiasts. They gave it their all in spite of unpleasant weather, rough terrain, and strenuous manual labor. None of this would have been possible without them and the CTC staff is very grateful for all the tremendous effort.



The new 60 ft. bridge over Big Possum Creek

A Bridge Not Too Far

This fall CTC volunteers and staff, along with state park personnel, and an AmeriCorps NCCC team completed the arduous bridge construction projects on Big Possum and Rock Creeks near Soddy-Daisy, TN. These weren't your average foot bridges either. Because of the span and the remote locations of the proposed bridge sites, a resilient, low maintenance structure was necessary. Additional requirements would not allow the bridges to have support structures in the streams. Suspension bridges were discussed but the idea was rejected. So, it was decided to construct a pre-fabricated truss bridge that is manufactured by



AmeriCorps NCCC/ Water 4

The CTC partnered with AmeriCorps NCCC yet again this fall for eight weeks. This team assisted with trail maintenance in the Tennessee River Gorge segment and with the bridge over Rock Creek. For those readers who don't know, AmeriCorps is a service based program that operates all over the country assisting communities where it's needed.

The original intent was to have the team assist with the construction of three bridges, in the Rock and Possum segments. However, due to emergency hurricane relief in Texas, the team was reassigned to the gulf coast for three weeks. They were able to return after their stint in the gulf to help us for five weeks. They contributed to the project by acting as a constant work crew, aiding us in all facets of the project. Staff, rangers, and volunteers who worked with them appreciated their efforts and wish them all the best in the future.



Water 4 standing on the finished project.

To learn more about AmeriCorps go to, www.americorps.gov

GM, cont'd.

was halted and the state trails system administrator position was abolished. Later, additional budget cuts eliminated operating funds for the Cumberland State Scenic Trail. The state ceased maintenance on the CT sections it had built and land owner agreements were allowed to expire. The noble goals of the Trail Systems Act were not achieved, and many miles of the trail dissolved into the wilderness. Nevertheless, TTA and Tennessee River Gorge Trust members along with State Forestry Division personnel performed minimal trail maintenance and managed to keep the Grassy Cove and Tennessee River Gorge segments open.

In an effort to restore and generate new interest in the Cumberland Trail, the TTA hosted the first *Breakaway* program. In March of

1996, eight students from East Tennessee State University spent a week restoring the Eagle Bluff section in the CT's Cumberland Mountain segment. This initial event revived volunteer support of the Cumberland Trail project. Through the 1990s most new public funds for trails were in the form of grants to be matched by the grantees, creating public/private partnerships. With the renewed interest in the trail project, the TTA sought funding to continue the volunteer effort. To help establish a partnership with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) and other funding partners, the TTA created the Cumberland Trail Conference (CTC) in 1997. This organization's mission is the completion of the Cumberland Trail utilizing volunteer labor. With *Breakaway* as the backbone of the volunteer effort, the CTC obtained a formal funding agreement with TDEC for the development of the Cumberland Trail. In June 1998, the project gained additional support when Governor Sundquist announced the creation of the Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail State Park which was "to be the backbone of Tennessee's expanding system of greenways and trails."

Since 1996, the Cumberland Trail project has progressed forward. Strengthened by the TDEC partnership, CTC trail building programs and other initiatives have been the catalyst for the development of the trail. Today's Cumberland Trail is a collection of separated trail segments lined up along the eastern edge of the Cumberland Plateau, with project supporters diligently working to connect the dots. Once completed, the trail will stretch 290-miles from Signal Mountain near Chattanooga, Tennessee, north to Cumberland Gap, creating one of the last unbroken greenways in Tennessee. Additional plans are to include the Cumberland Trail as part of the Great Eastern Trail. To date, 170 miles of the trail are maintained for hiking and other outdoor pursuits. With the trail as the central feature, the Cumberland Trail State Park is Tennessee's 53rd state park. The park has a manager, rangers, and other staff positions along with office facilities.

Thus far, the reader has learned of the project's past and present. But what is the future of the project, what next? Since 1998, a TDEC grant has been a major source of support for the CTC. Unfortunately, history has a way of repeating. Tennessee state government is again experiencing financial difficulties and budgets are being reduced. After June 30 of this year, TDEC will no longer be able to fund the CTC grant agreement. However, the CTC is diligently seeking other funding sources to replace lost state funding.



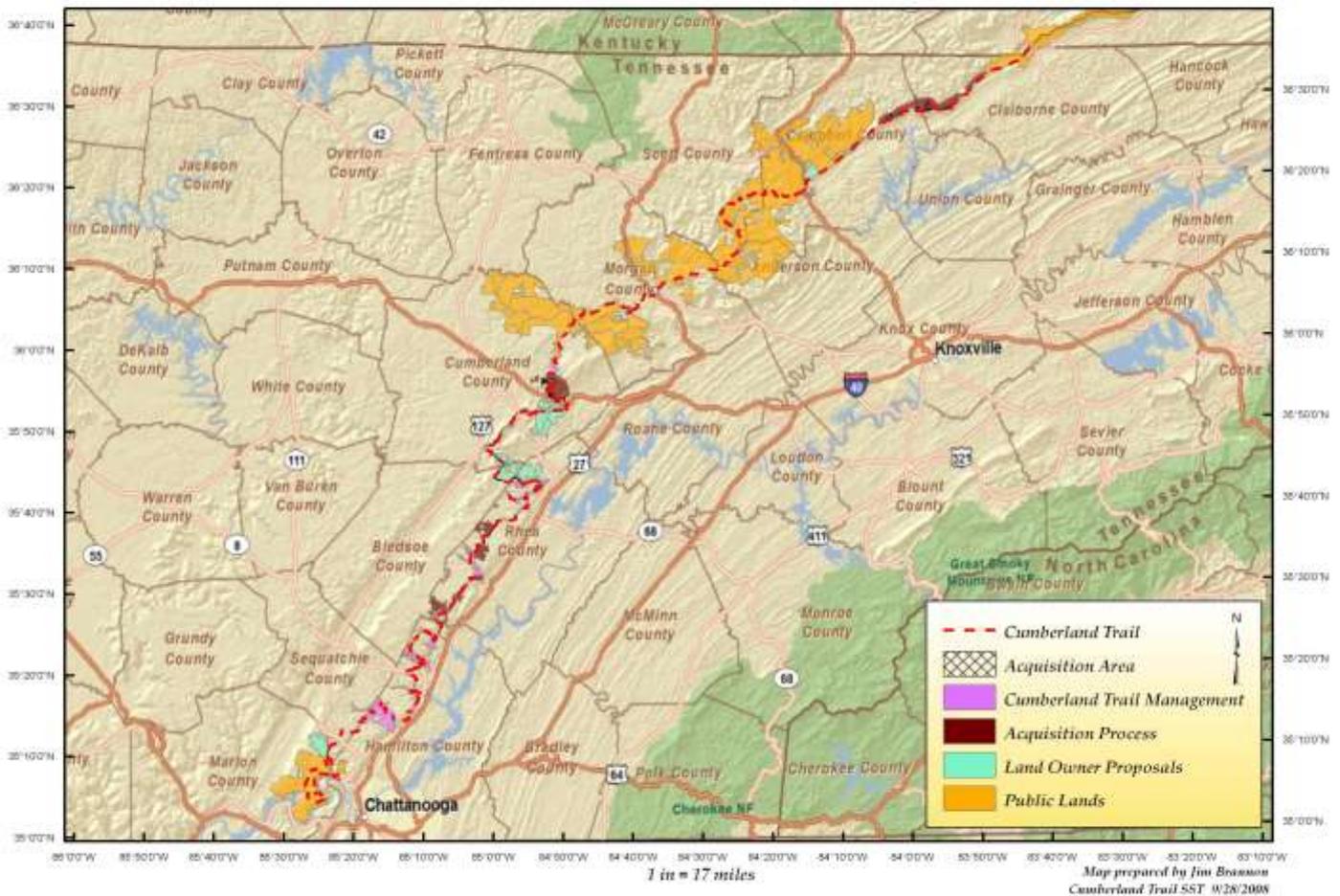


Many may ask, what does this mean for the Cumberland Trail project; has the work of the past ten years been for nothing? Have 183,000 volunteer hours been wasted time? The answer to those questions depends on what you, the reader, want to do. The CTC is not just the paid staff and the Conference board members, or a grant agreement; these are only a small part. No, the conference is a diverse group made-up of TTA members, *Breakaway* students, members of various partner organizations, un-affiliated trail volunteers, and financial supporters all working together. All groups supporting the same idea, a completed footpath from Signal Mountain to Cumberland Gap. The State wants to continue coordinating with the Conference for the building and maintenance of the trail, but

funding of these operations will have to come from other project supporters. The question at hand is what do you want the future of the Cumberland Trail project to be? Will you allow the idea to slip into nonexistence or recommit yourself to support and finally bring the idea to fruition? If allowed, the completion of the Cumberland Trail will create one of the last un-broken greenways in the state and a lasting legacy for thousands of project supporters.

Historical information from [Hiking Tennessee Trails](#) by Evan Means

Land Acquisition Program





CT Park Ranger Anthony Jones gives a lunch-time program on turkeys.

Winter Breakaway 2008

The 13th-20th of December marked the very first Winter Breakaway program for the Cumberland Trail. Twelve students from Grand Valley State University came down from Grand Rapids, Michigan

to assist staff and local volunteers with trail maintenance task in the Soddy and Possum Gorge segments. These hard-working individuals along with state personnel removed trash from Little Soddy Gorge, repaired and reopened trail damaged by the rock harvesting in Deep Creek Gorge. They definitely had their work cut out for them. Their diligence enabled them to complete these tasks and move on to build a new campsite near Hughes Branch in the Little Possum Gorge. The group was small but the amount of success was great, due to their exceptional work ethic.



Students stand proudly in front of the garbage they pulled from the gorge.



Maintenance in Little Possum Gorge, on there way to Hughes Branch.

Rock Creek Outfitters Donates \$3,500



October 4, 2008 Rock Creek Outfitters hosted their 8th annual Stump Jump, a 50k and 11 mile trail running race. The Rock/Creek Stump Jump has become one of the largest ultra marathon-distance races in the country. The Chattanooga-based retailer raised \$9,000.00 to benefit local trail development.

The CTC depends on donations and grants to help develop the trail. The Conference plans to use this donation to fund the 2009 *Alternative Spring Breakaway* program. This program brings college and university students from across the nation to Tennessee for trail construction and maintenance. Because of the generous support from Rock Creek Outfitters and other project partners, the CTC can continue its mission, the completion of the Cumberland Trail.

Check Out Our New Merchandise!



Moisture Wicking T-shirts
Large Coffee Mugs
Water Bottles

Keeps you feeling comfortable and leaves you looking fabulous!

CTC moisture wicking t-shirts: \$20.00

We have small, medium, large, and extra large.

CTC stainless steel, BPA free water bottles: \$15.00

Large CTC coffee mugs: \$8.00



MOISTURE WICKING T-SHIRTS (CUMBERLAND TRAIL CONFERENCE ON FRONT)



BACK VIEW WITH CT LOGO



BPA Free stainless steel water bottle



LARGE COFFEE CUPS WITH CT LOGO

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Ray & Jo Ann Garrett
 Gary & Carol Grametbauer
 TC & Judy Varner
Donations from \$5000 or Greater
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Memorial Donations

In memory of Mr. Ray Haley
 Kathryn Skinner
 Maj Albert G. Churcher
 Diane Manas
 Joel & Fredrika Felt
 Russell Smith
 Betty Porter
 Anne Wesley
In memory of Mrs. Faith Dippold
 Anonymous
 TTA Cove Lake Chapter
 Betty Porter
Given by: Sam & Emilee Powell
 Mrs. Mary Farmer Rankin
 Mr. Henry Withers
 Mr. Stanley Kell
 Matthew Christopher Hopper
Given by: Bob Barnett
 Michael Turpen

In-Kind Donations

Tower Steel
 Gary Darnell
 Wally Bigbee
 TC & Judy Varner

CTC programs funded in part by:

Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation
 Tennessee Trails Association
 Rock Creek Outfitters
 Jordan Bischell(Esurance)
 Lyndhurst Foundation
 Jack Daniel's Distillery
 Darnell Food Market
 Anne Potter Wilson Foundation
 B.R.A.T.

Clean-up on Hotwater

Great news! A letter writing campaign spearheaded by Cumberland Trail State Park supporters produced outstanding results. These letters prompted the clean-up of the illegal dumps in Little Soddy Gorge. During the summer of 2008, a clean-up contractor, Environmental Management and Engineering under contract with TDEC, removed household waste, tires, and construction debris from the Hotwater Road dump sites. Hamilton County provided dumpsters, haul trucks, drivers, and disposal alternatives. Waste was segregated into dumpsters for scrap metal, tires, and other trash/debris and handled accordingly. Additionally, nine (9) drums of dried paint waste were removed. To help prevent further dumping, a chain-link fence was installed at all of the road's pull-outs.



New chain link fence on Hotwater Rd.



The CTC thanks all of the park's supporters that assisted with this extremely worthwhile effort. A special thanks to Ms. Caroline Woerner, CT volunteer, and Mr. Steve Baxter, Director, Chattanooga Environmental Field Office, TDEC.



Plateau TTA members organized a tree planting ceremony for Doris Ruetenik where, friends and family gathered at the Head of the Sequatchie to plant an eastern red bud in her memory. This tree reminds us of her strong will and larger than life personality.

Picture courtesy of Jim McCullough

Would you like to donate? If so, fill out the information below and send this form back to us. We appreciate your support.

Yes, I want to help the Cumberland Trail Conference change the map and leave a legacy!

Name _____

Organization or business name if applicable _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Donation gifts:

___ \$1,000+ receives stainless steel water bottle, wicking t-shirt, and mug

___ \$500+ receives wicking t-shirt and mug

___ \$100+ receives a mug

___ \$50 trail supporter t-shirt (cotton)

___ \$25

___ Other

Method of Payment:

___ Check, made payable to "Cumberland Trail Conference"

___ Visa ___ MasterCard _____ card no.

_____ Signature _____ Exp date

The Cumberland Trail Conference, an associate organization of the Tennessee Trails Association, is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization and donations are tax-deductible. Please see your tax advisor. We are grateful for you support.

All donors will receive a bumper sticker and recognition in our newsletter

Cumberland Trail Conference List of Events

February 22 - March 28, 2009 - BreakAway 2009 - Hamilton County - BreakAway 2009 is a 5-week trail building program and is combined with environmental education, history, culture, and musical sessions. This program involves students from across the United States traveling to Tennessee and volunteering on their spring break to construct and maintain the trail. BreakAway 2009 will take place in **Hamilton County, the trail's southern corridor. The objectives of this program are the repair and building of new trail in the North Chickamauga Gorge, trail maintenance in other areas, replacing three log bridges in Rock Creek Gorge, and assisting with the construction of a bridge in Little Possum Gorge. The program's camp will be the Dogwood Lodge near Soddy-Daisy, TN. Space is limited and volunteers will need to RSVP with the CTC office.**

March 28, 2009 - Chattanooga Outdoor Expo - Chattanooga - Join other CT hikers as Outdoor Chattanooga kicks off the 2009 outdoor season at the brand new home in Coolidge Park. See [Outdoor Chattanooga Outdoor Expo, Gear Swap and Grand Opening Celebration](#) website for more details.

April 18, 2009 - Earth Fest 2009 - Pellissippi State 11am-7pm EST - A day of food, fun, entertainment, and lots of environmental education opportunities. Admission is free. See [East Tennessee's Earth Day Festival](#) website for more details.

April 19 - 26, 2009 - Frozen Head Outing - Wartburg, TN - Students from Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa will be traveling to Tennessee to assist with construction of the Cumberland Trail. Participants will be camping at Frozen Head State Park and working to re-open the closed [North Boundary Trail](#) which will become the northern section of the CT in Frozen Head. Volunteers interested in working with the students, please RSVP with the CTC office.

May 7 - 10, 2009 - Southeast Foot Trails Coalition Conference - Pine Mountain State Resort Park in Pineville, KY - Meetings and some activities will take place at Pine Mountain State Resort Park in Pineville, KY. Other activities will be held at nearby Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. Park staff will lead guided hikes. We will have educational sessions and group breakout discussions. There will be social activities including a square dance on Friday evening and a visit to the Hensley Settlement at CGNHP on Saturday evening for a cookout and some night sky / night hike activities. A special public ceremony is planned to recognize the connection of Cumberland Trail and Pine Mountain Trail at Cumberland Gap. Registration will open in January on the [SEFTC website](#).

May 15 - 17, 2009 - Scout Weekend - Scott County - **Scout groups will be camping at Nick's Creek campground in Scott County, TN.** Saturday, May 16, trail construction in the Smoky Mountain (New River) segment with an environmental program that evening. Sunday, a 5 and 10 mile hike on the Cumberland Trail is scheduled. A patch will be given to commemorate the event. A \$3.00 registration/person is required and scout groups will need to RSVP with the CTC office.

May 31 - June 6, 2009 - AHS Week - Scott County - American Hiking Society vacation participants will be constructing trail in the Smoky Mountain (New River) segment of the CT located in Scott County, TN. The Stony Fork school will serve as the base camp. All volunteers will need to RSVP with the CTC office.



Cumberland Trail Conference

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