



MURPHY'S LAWS FOR HIKERS AND CAVERS

By Doug Plemons, Nashville Chapter
(With Respect to All Trip Leaders, Wherever They May Be)

As a newcomer to the Tennessee Trails Association (but not, of course, to Tennessee trails themselves), I would like to make a few additional comments as an aside to Jim Poteet's January article concerning the Virgin Falls hike. I've been a member of several caving clubs for over 15 years with vast experience in participating and leading caving trips, and lo and behold, when I joined TTA I found that the outings between the two groups seem to have much in common.

The first common ground I discovered quickly as my fiance, Laurie, and I were cruising along with Jim going to Virgin Falls. That one thing is that on both caving AND hiking trips, the following takes place:

Two vehicles are parked at the gas station, the final pit stop before actually going to the destination. One driver says to the other:

Driver #1: "We'll be another few minutes here, I guess. We're waiting on the ladies to get out of the restroom, y'know."

Driver #2: "OK, I guess we're gonna go on ahead. We'll see ya out there in a bit..."

Car #2 leaves, going in the most obvious direction...or did he? No one actually saw him leave because they were too busy packing the Cokes in the cooler, but it is assumed that he went in the right direction.

Driver #1: "Did you see him turn right or left?" Passenger: "Well, YOU KNOW THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY FROM HERE."

This is the thing. Murphy's Law Number One says clearly that THERE ARE EITHER SEVERAL WAYS TO GET THERE, or THERE AIN'T NO WAY TO GET THERE FROM HERE. In this case, the lead car, which Car #2 feels obliged to follow if he/she can, went the wrong way at the wrong intersection and is going to wind up 45 miles out of the way. The next car assumes, incorrectly most of the time, that the lead car knows what is going on. In the case of the Virgin Falls trip, the leader, who shall remain nameless but whose initials are K _ _ _ n K _ _ _ o, took the right fork instead of

the left one, on the wrong interstate exit, and it was only by the grace of the Tennessee Topographic Atlas and Gazetteer that the next car, driven expertly by Mr. Poteet along with two backseat drivers, managed to take the left fork instead of the right one, and did not wind up in Cassville, TN instead of Sparta. After 18 winding miles of road on the Highland Rim Escarpment, we arrived in Sparta to meet the poor souls who were supposed to meet us at the bank next to McDonald's.

Here is where Murphy's Law Number Two happens. Murphy's Law says over and over (when will we ever learn?) that **THEY ALREADY LEFT or NEVER EVEN WENT THERE**. The ones whom you are counting on, be they extra cavers you need to push the leads, or the extra hikers who will round out the merry crew, **ARE NOT GOING TO BE THERE**, because they are the only ones on time at the trailhead.

It is now a full hour that we are behind, and we assume that the trip leader has regained his/her sense of direction and will meet us there. By all means, he is probably waiting for us there right now, so we must hurry!

Enter Murphy's Law Number Three. Just when you think nothing else can go wrong, it will. You won't be able to find the obvious and necessary landmark you need most in order to get where you're going. It's a little foggy and we are looking for the store at the forks in the road in DeRossett where the Virgin Falls sign is. Hmm...where is it? I've been here 10 times or more so where the &#*!! is the store? It's called Thousand Oaks and it can't have gotten up and walked away since the last time I was here! After reaching the Cumberland County line we

decided we had gone too far and turned around. Murphy was good to us for once and we found the store, now boarded up tight as a drum and whitewashed.

So there we are driving down the dirt road to the trailhead, and what do we see but the Honorable Trip Leader driving back down the road toward us. He is looking for us, thinking we are lost. Yes, we did to an extent, but not nearly as lost as the Trip Leader, which made us feel somewhat better. The Trip Leader nearly got mixed up in the last of Murphy's Laws for Cavers and Hikers, which clearly states **NEVER GO LOOKING FOR THE ONES WHO GOT LOST**. That's why they're lost, because if they don't know where they are, how the heck do you think you will ever find them? You will wind up getting lost again and then Car #2 will have to go find the Trip Leader again, ad infinitum.

Well, that's about enough of this nonsense. I just thought you might want to know that when it comes to getting to that cave or trailhead, Murphy's Law has the jump on us all. The thing to do is **NEVER LET THAT FIRST CAR BUMPER OUT OF YOUR SIGHT**. It's better that both cars are lost in the same place. Am I right?



STATE BOARD MEETING
SATURDAY, JUNE 3

The next TTA Board meeting will be held at Reelfoot Lake State Park in Tiptonville, TN. There will be a boat tour of the lake at 9:00 am CDT with the tour completed by noon. If you like catfish, there will be opportunity for that either at Boyette's or other restaurants at Tiptonville. For those not interested in consuming all their yearly fat intake at one sitting, there are other items on the menu! The meeting will be held at 3:00 pm at the AirPark Inn which is about 7 miles from Tiptonville.

You will need to have a reservation for the boat tour. Please call me at (901) 363-4408 no later than May 20. If you plan an overnight stay, you will also need to make lodging reservations at the AirPark Inn (901) 253-7756. For those who might want to camp, there is a park campground available. There will be more information in the May newsletter.

--Jerri Bull, Memphis

AGENDA

- New Chapters?
- Piney River/Scott's Gulf/Short Springs
- Cumberland Trail
- Directory
- Annual Meeting
- Please submit additional items by May 25th

ALL MEMBERS WELCOME!!

NEW TTA MEMBERS

CLARKSVILLE

Joseph & Betty Flaherty
Carl Gadsey

CROSSVILLE

Mary & Harry Kelly (Mary & Harry are going to try and organize a Crossville Chapter!
Bill & Sue Eldridge

CUMBERLAND MOUNTAIN

William Thomas

EAST TENNESSEE

Peggy Beauvois
Harold Draper (new Life Member)
Dale Dyslin
Mike & Nancy Lain

MEMPHIS

Helen McCallie
Mary Lou Guinle
Kathleen Dodd

MURFREESBORO

Julia Mitchell
Mary Belle Ginanni (MTSU)

NASHVILLE

Frances Henry (Lyles, TN)
Pam Crawford (Antioch)
Luda Davies
Karen Lechner
Lisa Massey
Todd Stallwood
Stacy Sutcliffe
Deryl & Larry Weaver (Franklin)
Sue Wilson

UPPER CUMBERLAND

Connie Whitesell



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

401 Church Street
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

IT'S TIME!!

IT'S TIME TO START THINKING ABOUT YOUR PART IN THE TENNESSEE CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL TRAILS DAY ON JUNE 3, 1995. THIS YEAR'S THEME IS **RECOGNIZING AMERICA'S TRAIL VOLUNTEERS** WITH THE NATIONAL GOAL OF 1,000,000 VOLUNTEER DAYS WORKING ON TRAILS. HELP YOUR CLUB OR ORGANIZATION PARTICIPATE IN BUILDING A TRAIL, MAINTAINING A TRAIL, OR HIKING ON A PROPOSED SECTION OF A NEW TRAIL.

EVERYONE IS INVITED!!



MORE INFORMATION WILL BE COMING SOON. THE STATE COORDINATOR IS BOB RICHARDS. YOU CAN CONTACT BOB AT 615-532-0753 BETWEEN 7:30 A.M. AND 4:00 P.M.

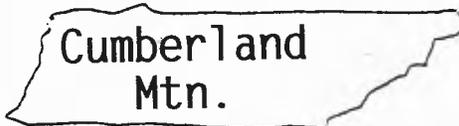
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CHAPTER NEWS



Meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm in the Community Room at Governor's Square Mall.

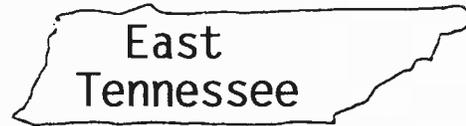
MAY 20 - Fall Creek Falls. Call Wanda Cumberland (615) 358-3338.



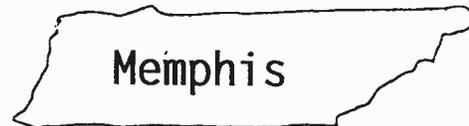
Meeting and hike the third Saturday of each month at varying locations.



MAY 13 - Smoky Mtns. Newfound Gap to Clingman's Dome, Moderate 8 miles. Call Bob Washburn (615-879-5426) or Marvin Shanks (879-9765).



MAY 20 - Hensley Settlement in Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. We'll climb 2.1 miles on a steep trail from the Chadwell Gap Trailhead in Caylor, VA and then hike 1.1 miles West on the Ridge Trail to the Settlement. We'll tour the settlement and have lunch before returning to the cars the way we came. We'll leave the Cracker Barrel in Lake City (Exit 129, I-75 North of Knoxville) at 9 am EDT. Sally Jaunsen (615) 482-9708. Hike is 7 miles, rated difficult on steep sections.



Meets the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm in the Scout Building at Kingsway Church.

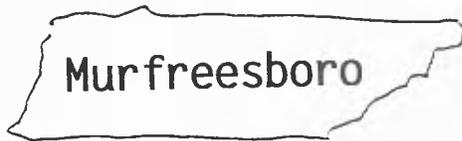
MAY 6 - Nathan Bedford Forrest State Park. See details in April newsletter. Contact person is Margaret Dixon (901) 795-8634.

MAY 18 - Monthly Meeting at Kingsway Church. TTA home movies!

Ken Novak plans to show videotape segments filmed during various chapter outings, as well as footage of the Smokies.

MAY 21 - Wolf River Trail (east of Germantown Rd. Boat Ramp). We'll hike 6 miles east to Graves Creek (cars will be shuttled so we don't have to turn around and go back). A member of the Wolf River Conservancy will accompany us. Bring snacks, plenty of water, and bug repellent. Boots recommended. For info, contact Norma McMinn (901) 785-1479.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: If you plan to participate in the canoe training session at Patriot Lake on June 25th, call Freddi Felt at (901) 685-9915. She needs to know in advance how many canoes will be needed.



Meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm at St. Mark's Methodist Church.



MAY 6 - Canoe Outing and River Cleanup. We paddled a lower section last Fall. Join us at Readyville Mill for a cleanup, then float the Stones River East Fork from Readyville Mill to Goochie Ford (1 mile), Halls Hill Bridge (4 miles), Guy James Road (12 miles) or any combination of these. We should be able

to swim. Bring lunch and water and your work gloves. Life jackets, paddles and canoes can be rented from MTSU's Recreation Center (615) 898-2104. For more info, call Heloise Shilstat 896-6278 (h), 254-5410(w), or page her at 201-5545. Rain Date is May 7, Sunday.

MAY 16 - Monthly Meeting. New member, Mark Hall, and his son, Mark Jr., will explain orienteering. We plan to follow this up with an orienteering hike later this month. Bring a compass and a protractor (if you remember what that is!)

MAY 20 - Hidden Passage Trail, Pickett State Park. This is a 10-mile hike, with at least 1 additional mile because of the distance from the parking area. The trail is level but the hike is considered moderate because of the distance. For those who want to carpool, we'll leave from my home in Murfreesboro at 6:20 am (CDT) and from Hardee's in Lebanon at 7:00 am. We'll meet in the picnic area parking lot at Pickett and begin our hike at 10:00 (CDT). We'll take our time and be back at the car 3:30-4:00. Bring a lunch, snacks and plenty of water. Hiking boots are recommended. Dress for the weather. It's usually a little cooler at Pickett than in Middle Tenn. To preregister, call Cathy Williams (615) 893-7748. If leaving a message on the answering machine, please leave your phone number.

MAY 28 (SUNDAY) - Orienteering at Cedars of Lebanon. If you learned about orienteering at the Fall '93 Annual Meeting, or at the Murfreesboro Chapter meeting--or even if you didn't--join us and experience this challenging sport. Leaders: Mark Hall and Mark Hall Jr. Call Mark at 896-4345(h) or page him at 898-9484 for specifics.



Meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm at Cumberland Science Museum.

MAY 6 - MAMMOUTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK, KENTUCKY.

Meet at the Visitor Center at 10:00 am CDT. We'll hike the 1 1/2 mile Green River Bluffs Trail and then we will hike the shorter River Styx Trail. Both of these start at the Visitor's Center and end not far from it. After a picnic lunch we'll drive to the Cedar Sink parking area off of Ky Hwy 422. This trail takes about 2 hours to hike and includes exploration of a huge sinkhole containing a disappearing stream, massive bluffs and dense woodlands. The day's activity will conclude with a drive on the 2-mile Joppa Ridge Motor Trail. If the group desires, we will explore additional hikes off of this motor trail. Call Bob or Arleen Barnett (615) 832-6484(h), 343-0013 (Arleen's work).

MAY 11 (Thursday) - Vanderbilt Campus Tree Hike. Rated easy. We will wander the campus to admire and search for all the grand and different tree species, with a stopover at the White Mountain Creamery Ice Cream Shop on 21st Ave. Meet at the southeast corner of Centennial Park across from Kobe's at 6:00 pm. Call Rob Weber for details (615) 952-2949.



MAY 21 (Sunday) - Narrows of the Harpeth Cleanup. This is the Nashville Chapter's newest Adopt-A-Trail, but you don't have to be a Nashville member to join us. We will do a cleanup along the riverbank and trail, and any minor trail maintenance. We will meet at the Narrows at 12 noon CDT. Please call Rob Weber (615) 952-2949 if you are interested in participating.

MAY 26-29 - Shawnee National Forest, Southern Illinois. Believe it or not, there is a wonderland of hiking, unusual geologic formations, fossil beds and pirate caves just 2 1/2 hrs from Nashville in Southern Illinois. We will camp at Fern Clyffe State Park outside of Goreville. There are 109 sites, 64 with water and electric hookups. This will be our base camp to explore Garden of the Gods with unusual rock formations, Cave-in-Rock State Park where pirates hid out on the Ohio River, Pounds Hollow, and of course Fern Clyffe. Call Bob or Arleen Barnett (615) 832-6484 (h) or 343-0013 (Arleen's work) for more info and directions.



Meets the first Tuesday of each month at First Union Bank in Sparta.

April Chapter Meeting

The Wildflower Contest attracted a good crowd, with 27 on hand to test their knowledge. A cycling friend of mine, C.J. (Chuck) Burnett, spoke to the group

about joining the Rails-to-Trails effort on the line from Algood to Monterey. The group showed unanimous support. I reviewed the Scott's Gulf Project and we planned some hikes through June. Then we got down to the business of the 2nd Annual Wildflower Contest. Ross Cardwell and Bonnie Greene did an excellent job of putting together a slide show of 75 flowers and places that challenged everyone in the group. I only scored 27 out of 75. Elise Ingram took the first prize with a score of 49. Pam took second place, second year in a row, with a score of 40. Prizes were gift certificates of \$15 and \$10, donated by Cumberland Mountain Outdoor Sports on the Square in Cookeville.

TRIP REPORT
HONEY CREEK, MARCH 25

This was a weekend that no hiker wanted to miss. We met up with the Nashville Chapter and hit the trail at 11:00 am. We were a group of 32 plus one dog. Attending from the Nashville Chapter were: Jim Poteet, Susan and Rob Weber, James Leininger, friend Beverly Lamb and dog, Cissy, Judith Foster, Elizabeth Gerlock, Michael Oldfield, Linda Sparks, Beth Brown, Marthe Lisle, Jean Harris, Trina Montemayn, Pattie and Larry Beaty, Vera Churcher, Nina Fitzgerald, Eric Wilson and Vi Biehl. Attending from the Clarksville Chapter was John Sneed. Barbara Stagg and Johnny Gilliat represented the Cumberland Mtn. Chapter and Upper Cumberland members hiking were: Carol and David Anderson, their daughter-in-law and son, Elizabeth and Grant Anderson, Herb Sudhoff, new members Connie Whitesell, Mary Jane and Keith Fliss and Pam and myself.

Jim wisely suggested breaking into 3 groups for fast, medium and slow hikers. Some flowers were incredibly early this year. We counted about a dozen types of wildflowers--hepatica, bluets, spring beauties, trout lilies, common and yellow violets, trailing arbutus, wake robin trillium, columbine, toothwort and bane berry. Trees blooming were the redbud and confetti trees.

The weather was delightful, there were numerous waterfalls, babbling streams, an incredible overlook, and several cave-like passages to negotiate. Some wide rock hops, tree branches and large boulders made the day challenging. We had two falls; one with an injury when Larry Beaty's wet boot met a slippery rock. Our newly acquired First Aid Kit came in handy. Susan Weber and Herb Sudhoff teamed up to open a new "doubles" category in the fall competition when Susan stumbled near one of the widest rock hops and fell back into Herb's strong arms. Thanks to Herb for preventing what could have been a serious fall. As Susan was unharmed, the fall rated 9.5. One judge thought Susan's form was a little stiff but awarded her extra points for giggles at the end.

The hike was alleged to be 5.6 miles. My pedometer and body estimated it more as 10 miles.

--Paul D. Miller



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Prices include postage. Mail your check made payable to TTA to:
 TTA Membership Director, P.O. Box 41446, Nashville, TN 37204.

ADOPT-A-TRAIL

If you are interested in main-
 taining a particular trail or
 section of trail, please
 contact Jerri Bull, Adopt-A-
 Trail Coordinator, at (901)
 363-4408.

HIKING/CAMPING ITEMS FOR SALE
 OR TRADE??? IF YOU WOULD LIKE
 TO LIST SOMETHING IN THE NEWS-
 LETTER, PLEASE MAIL YOUR INFO
 TO THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR.

MAY HIKES/ACTIVITIES

- 6 Memphis Nathan B. Forrest State Park
- 6 Nashville Mammoth Cave Nat'l Park
- 6 Murfreesboro Stones River Cleanup and Canoe Float
- 11 Nashville Vanderbilt Campus Tree Hike
- 13 Cumb Mtn Smoky Mtns, Newfound Gap to Clingman's Dome
- 20 Clarksville Fall Creek Falls
- 20 East Tenn Hensley Settlement, Cumberland Gap
- 20 Murfreesboro Hidden Passage Trail, Pickett State Park
- 21 Memphis Wolf River Trail
- 21 Nashville Narrows of the Harpeth River/Trail Cleanup
- 26-29 Nashville Shawnee Nat'l Forest, Illinois Camping/Hiking
- 28 Murfreesboro Orienteering at Cedars of Lebanon State Park

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Unless you have a lifetime membership in TTA, your membership expires on January 1 of each year. All TTA memberships are based on the calendar year and not 1 year from the month you join. Please register me as a member for the calendar year 1995 (Jan-Dec) with the type membership checked below.

- Student 6.00
- Individual/Family 15.00
- Supporting 30, 40 or 50
- Life 150.00

MAIL DUES TO: Membership Director
Tennessee Trails Assoc.
P. O. Box 41446
Nashville, TN 37204

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

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WORK PHONE: _____ PLEASE LIST ME WITH THE FOLLOWING CHAPTER:

CLARKSVILLE EAST TENN. CUMBERLAND MTN MEMPHIS

MURFREESBORO NASHVILLE UPPER CUMBERLAND AT LARGE

All newsletter submissions are due by the 15th of each month. Mail to Arleen Barnett, Newsletter Editor, P. O. Box 41446, Nashville, TN 37204

TTA OBJECTIVES: TO PROMOTE, CONSTRUCT AND MAINTAIN A STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF HIKING TRAILS, AND TO WORK FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES INHERENT TO THIS OBJECTIVE. SPONSOR FOR THE CUMBERLAND TRAIL.

1995 TTA LEADERS

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- VICE PRESIDENT: Jim Johnson (615) 356-6246
- CORRES. SEC/TREAS: Judy Van Cleve (615) 473-8136
- SECRETARY: Evelyn Tretter (615) 859-0566
- BOARD REP: Heloise Shilstat (615)896-6278
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