

# The Thin Green Line



Volume 1, Issue 1

February 2009

## What is the Friends of the Cumberland Trail all about?

- Assist with resource management projects and other park needs.
- Promote the understanding and appreciation of Cumberland Trail's significant cultural and natural features through educational activities for visitors and neighbors.
- Raise dollars to further protect the Cumberland Trail corridor.
- Bring CT user groups together "under one roof" to maintain balance between recreation and protection.

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## Triple Crown Donates \$1,500 to the FOTCT

The Triple Crown Bouldering Series (TCBS) made its annual stop at Stone Fort (aka Little Rock City) Dec. 6 on Mowbray Mountain in Soddy-Daisy TN. Over 450 rock climbers from 30+ states came to climb, compete, and raise money and awareness for rock climbing access.

The Stone Fort leg of this series is the final leg of three bouldering competitions. The first was held at Hound Ears in Boone NC on Oct. 4 and the second at Horse Pens-40 in Steele AL on Nov. 1. The entire series sees about 1,000 attendees each year and ranks as one of the largest outdoor rock climbing events of its kind.

Now in its sixth year, this event has raised over \$50,000 to support the Carolina Climbers'

Coalition (CCC) and the Southeastern Climbers' Coalition (SCC). These two organizations have been instrumental in the acquisition of land for the climbing community, in a region riddled with access issues.

Proceeds from the TCBS have supported the purchase of three properties: Boat Rock—GA, Laurel Knob—NC, Yellow Bluff—AL. All three areas are now owned and managed by climbers.

Triple Crown also pays the annual lease on the Asheboro Boulders, a fantastic boulderfield in eastern NC. Historically the Triple Crown has also donated to Habitat for Humanity.

This year, the Triple Crown donated **\$1,500 to the Friends**

### of the Cumberland Trail.

Climbing areas along the Cumberland Trail include the Obed, Devil's Racetrack, Black Mountain, Laurel Falls, Buzzard Point, and the many crags located in the Suck Creek Gorge. More than 60 climbers from the TCBS joined the FOTCT during the event as well.

(See *Triple Crown*, page 5)



Pictured from left: Scott Howell, Chad Wykle, John Dorough, Jim Horton, Joseph Decosimo, and Jaime Trotter.

## Friends Dancing at Main Street Festival

On a cold December afternoon in a factory turned art studio, about 30 people were introduced to Old Time Square Dancing at its finest. FOTCT Board Member Joseph Decosimo put together a "house band," Park Manager Bobby Fulcher provided the instruction and calling, and everyone in attendance had a great time. Cessna Decosimo, a prominent Chattanooga sculptor and

painter hosted the event in his downtown art studio on Williams Street. This event was a last minute addition to the MainX24 Street Festival held in downtown Chattanooga. Joseph Decosimo, a former trail crew leader and historian/folklorist for the Cumberland Trail, has additional events in the works this winter and spring.



Members of the "House Band" getting ready to play for the dance include: Edwin Wilson, Karen Falkowski, Joseph Decosimo, and Isaac Akers.



**CT Rangers and Managers gather for group photo after wrapping up a search for lost hikers in the Piney River Gorge. Pictured from left: Anthony Jones, Daniel Basham, Andy Wright, PM Kenny Mathews, Jeff Nicholson, and PM Bobby Fulcher.**

## 2008—A Good Year to Become Friends

### All This For Only \$5!

2008 has been a successful year for the Friends of the Cumberland Trail. Annual dues were lowered to only \$5 per person. This is an affordable rate opening the doors of the Friends Group to any who have an interest in the Cumberland Trail, it's recreational potential, the protection of it's resources, and the completion of it's corridor.

Ramping up efforts of membership drives, the FOTCT has

more than quadrupled since 2007!

Also, two local chapters have formed, and are organizing community events in Hamilton and Cumberland Counties. We look for more chapters to form as membership continues

to grow in 2009.

Tell all of *Your Friends* how easy it is to become a Friend of the Cumberland Trail—we'd like to quadruple again in 2009!



*“The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired in value.”*

*-Theodore Roosevelt*



**Larry Cook of the North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy testing Hogskin Branch for acidity and heavy metals.**

## Water Quality Intern Resumes Field Work

### NCCC to sponsor again.

There are many economically important coal deposits throughout the Cumberland Plateau. Much of the coal mining that was done within the Cumberland Trail corridor was completed prior to the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA), which now regulates mining operations to prevent the impacts of AMD on water quality. These “pre-law” surface and underground coal mines are major sources of acid mine drainage (AMD) impacting water quality throughout the Cumberland Plateau and the entire Appalachian region.

AMD is created when minerals present in the rock with the coal, especially pyrite or “fool’s gold,” are exposed to water and oxygen in the atmosphere. The process of coal mining increases the exposure of these minerals allowing them to dissolve in water and significantly decrease the pH (making the water acidic) and increase the concentrations of dissolved

metals including iron, aluminum, manganese, and magnesium. The result of this process is streams with pH values too low to support aquatic life, rocks stained orange from high iron levels (armorings), and aquatic habitats clogged with orange sludge (yellowboy).

Several years ago, representatives from the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail (CTSST) and the North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy (NCCC) started to wonder how these water quality issues might impact hikers and backpackers along the Cumberland Trail. The main question was: Is it safe for a backpacker to use an affected stream as a drinking water source? To try to answer that question, our two organizations applied for a US Office of Surface Mining (OSM) Summer Watershed Intern to investigate. Our first intern, Ben Miles, performed an extensive literature search to explore any existing studies on the topic, performed field sampling of streams to create a database of water quality data for the Cumberland Trail corri-

dor, and tested several commercially available water filtration and purification products to assess their effectiveness on AMD impacted waters.

In order to continue and expand on Ben’s work, NCCC and the CTSST applied and received a second OSM intern this year. This month we hired Nathan Helton, an environmental science major at UTC with 6 years experience working on invasive plant control in National Parks. In addition to following up on Ben’s work and sampling water at sites farther north along the trail to expand the water quality database, Nathan will help to create informative materials that will be available to trail users to help them have the best experience possible along the Cumberland Trail.

For more information on AMD or the OSM Watershed Intern Program, please contact Larry Cook at the North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy, 423-842-1163. or visit [www.northchick.org](http://www.northchick.org). Submitted by Larry Cook.

## Land in Sight

During the past 45 years, the acquisition of Cumberland Trail's corridor has progressed in fits and starts and ups and downs. Between the 1970s and early 1990s, the CT was built on available public lands at Prentice Cooper State Forest, the City of Signal Mountain, Frozen Head State Natural Area and Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, and on private property through handshake agreements and short term leases. In its first lifetime, the trail system spawned by Cumberland Trail incorporated about 155 miles. In 1992, the State of Tennessee withdrew all management support for the project and by 1995, only the 45 miles of trail on public lands remained under real management.

The resurrection of the Cumberland Trail began in 1996, as a few members of the Tennessee Trails Association proposed a new route and new approach for the completion of Cumberland Trail. Under the leadership of Rob Weber and Alreen Decker, the Cumberland Trail Conference incorporated and rebuilt existing trail in four spectacular Bowater recreation areas, renewed some key handshake

agreements, and rerouted old trail through additional public lands -- the new Royal Blue Wildlife Management Area, Catoosa WMA, and the Obed National Wild and Scenic River -- providing an immediate boost to the CT land base. Beginning in 1998, the State began acquisition of a permanent corridor for the Cumberland Trail, in an earnest partnership. By 2004, the Cumberland Trail Conference had negotiated a key donation from Cumberland County's John Donnally on Brady Mountain and raised \$1.8 million dollars to support a 5000-acre acquisition from Bowater, Incorporated. The Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation led a capital campaign to fund the acquisition of the wondrous rock gardens at the top of Black Mountain.

To this date, 70% of the land base required for the Cumberland Trail system is in place. Another 23% of the land base is in active process of acquisition with available funding. Only 7% of the proposed acreage for the CT system remains unfunded!

The State of Tennessee has acquired about 23,000 acres for the Cumberland Trail system, including

the unprecedented acquisition of more than 6,500 acres from Bowater through Governor Bredeesen's initiative. Additionally, Bowater's donation of 3,500 acres contributes to a sum of \$11.3 million in property value *donated* to the State to date, amounting to 40% of the value of Cumberland Trail lands at the time of their acquisition. The generosity of Tennesseans supporting the trail is astounding -- the donation of 352 acres on the crest of Brady Mountain by Plateau Properties, Inc. of Crossville, Tennessee is the most recent reason to celebrate.

Our new organization must join this cause. It will require at least \$5 million to finish corridor acquisition. The full benefits of the Cumberland Trail cannot be realized until the connections are complete. As Friends of the Cumberland Trail, we must give serious attention and support to make it happen. Will you be one to get it started? Whatever the amount, you will be investing in a heck of a mountain.

**“...70% of the land base required for the Cumberland Trail system is in place.”**  
-see story



Join us Saturday, February 28, 2009 at 7pm in Chattanooga to hear 87 year-old National Heritage Award Fellow Clyde Davenport and Michael Defosche. An old time Plateau Square Dance will conclude the show. 1427 Williams St. Chattanooga, TN  
Admission—\$10

## Cumberland Trail Air Space

Every Sunday night, the real and raw music of the Cumberland Trail drifts from radio sets and computer monitors, reaching from Norris, Tennessee to the edge of the known universe. No other radio show in America is quite like it.

The “Cumberland Trail” features unvarnished sounds from every aural document left behind by our neighbors in the 75 communities that line the CT corridor. That includes peeling 78rpm recordings made on privately-owned disc-cutters in the 1940s, or soaring fiddle tunes from the “hillbilly” records of the 1920s. There are the sounds from the small custom studios set up in storefronts and basements to make the rockabilly



**Tune in every week to hear the sounds of the Cumberlands!**

45s, gospel LPs, bluegrass cassettes, or blues CDs sold at country shows or given away to friends. They are field recordings made by CT folklorists last year or New Deal folklorists in the 1930s. And they are family recordings that have been in the shoebox for forty years. It forms a powerfully authentic musical

scenery, without apologies.

Bob Fulcher, Park Manager of the Cumberland Trail, has carried the program into its 9<sup>th</sup> season. Along the way, the program has also been hosted by Cumberland Trail's seasonal historians and full-time rangers. It features Friends of the Cumberland Trail and CTC news, or interviews with volunteers, neighbors, and Friends.

The Cumberland Trail remains the only park in the nation broadcasting a half-hour profile of its artistic soul every week. In Tennessee or beyond, tune in at [www.WDVX.com](http://www.WDVX.com) at 8:30 Eastern Time on Sunday nights. For auto travelers or residents of East Tennessee, tune in at 89.9 or 102.9 on your FM dial.



**Did You Know?**

**The Cumberland Trail is the only state park in Tennessee with its own Herbarium Collection?**

**“I always wondered why somebody didn’t do something about that. Then I realized I was somebody.”**  
-Lily Tomlin



**HELP WANTED!**

Below is a listing of projects, ongoing or ready to begin. If you see one that interests you, please contact the person listed to see what needs to be done. Sign up for as many as you like!!  
\*Projects listing Park Ranger Andy Wright (Andrew.wright@state.tn.us; 423-332-7394) as primary contact may still be in need of a lead volunteer coordinator. If you would be willing to take on a leadership role, please contact Ranger Andy to see what is needed. If you are not interested in leading a project, please don’t let this steer you away from the ones that interest you most!

**The Earth Laughs in Flowers**  
Floral Inventory—document occurrences of wildflowers growing along the CT, photograph, GPS.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Freedom of the Press**  
CT Herbarium Collection—Learn proper plant collection techniques, make collection trips, press and label collected samples. Participation requires registration under CT collection permit with the Division of Natural Areas.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**What’s in Your Bottle?**  
Water Quality Evaluation and Monitoring—Sampling streams along the Cumberland Trail primarily for pH and Heavy Metals. Joint Initiative with North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy. See Article.  
Contact Larry Cook  
Larry@northchick.org  
423-842-1163

**Seeding the Cumberlandds**  
Biodiversity Protection—A nationally significant seed preservation project for current and future restoration efforts in the Cumberland Mountains. This is a joint Initiative with UT Tree Improvement program and the National Center for Genetic Resources.  
Contact Belinda Esham  
865-974-0715

**A Future for the Hemlocks**  
Project initiated by Girls Preparatory School and the North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy. Middle School Girls are cataloging stands of Eastern Hemlock trees within the North Chick State Natural Area. Need commitment from similar groups up and down the CT. School Groups, Scouts, hiking clubs.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Abundant Beauty**  
Natural Features Inventory—Photograph, GPS, occurrences of the unique natural features that make the CT so interesting. Overlooks, waterfalls, large trees, etc.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Spare That Tree**  
Native Plant Rescue and Restoration—Relocating native plants doomed to destruction by the construction of trailheads, etc.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Oral History**  
Conduct interviews with people that have lived the story of the Cumberlandds and the Cumberland Trail. Learn the professional methodology and help to train others. Interviews will be included in an online database managed by the Tennessee State Library and Archives.  
Contact SIR Ben Bateson  
423-566-2229

**Say What?**  
Transcribe fascinating interviews from our neighbors along the Cumberland Trail. This aspect of the Oral History Project may appeal to those not comfortable conducting interviews. Each interview requires transcription and/or proofreading prior to being sent to the archives.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Images of the Cumberlandds**  
Historic photograph collections—Collect or contribute images related to the CT corridor, its communities, and activities. Learn scanning and digitizing techniques.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Archaeology**  
Participate in archaeological investigation of the recently acquired Head Of Sequatchie Property. These will be organized in cooperation with the Tennessee Division of Archaeology and the UTK Department of Archaeology.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Cultural Resources Inventory**  
Photograph and GPS occurrences of historic and prehistoric features protected by the lands managed by the Cumberland Trail.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**What’s the Scoop?**  
Search newspaper microfilm in local libraries for that needle-in-a-haystack story pertinent to the CT or surrounding area.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Let’s Go Fische-ing**  
Courthouse research to track previous title to CT lands. Will aid in Interpretation, further build understanding of land use patterns, and could provoke additional oral history projects.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**History Hike Leader**  
Lead hikes into the CT’s most historically unique areas, including Laurel-Snow, Head of Sequatchie, etc., to introduce the story of these places to those not familiar with their tales.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Cumberland Trail Musical Heritage Project**  
Lead a Jam Session, teach a musical tradition, contribute recordings, photos, and bios for FOTCT website.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Louie Bluie Music and Arts Festival**  
www.louiebluie.org  
June 13, 2009 will be the third annual event. Volunteers needed for fundraising, setup, parking, artist tent, FOTCT recruitment.  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

**Which Side Are You On?**  
Need a little off-trail adventure in your life? The CTSST has hundreds of miles of boundaries in need of monitoring. GPS data and photographs will be needed of any issues found.  
Contact Andy Wright

**Build the Cumberland Trail**  
Organize Friends Group outings to participate in Cumberland Trail Conference outings, or just get plugged into the CTC as an individual volunteer. Visit www.cumberlandtrail.org or Contact Tony Hook  
Tony.hook@frontiernet.net  
931-456-6259

**Wanted—Newsletter Contributors**  
The Friends of the Cumberland Trail needs volunteers willing to edit and contribute articles for regular issues of **THE THIN GREEN LINE.**  
Contact Ranger Andy Wright

## WWW.FRIENDSOFTHECUMBERLANDTRAIL.ORG

A GREAT PLACE TO CALL HOME!

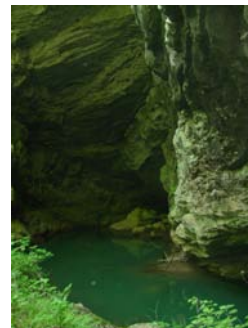
The latest Friends of the Cumberland Trail site will become the go-to spot on the Web for all of the multimedia, activities, and information about the park. We've already developed the new site design and in the very near future we'll add a simple sign-up form for new members as

well as an ongoing programs page. After that, we'll be adding snippets of multimedia to give a taste of what's to come: art, music, folklore, photography, and historical documents will be added to the site in order to create a virtual museum on the Web. Much of the site will be structured in blog format so that multiple, approved authors will be able to write

and publish articles very quickly.

Go ahead and bookmark [www.friendsofthecumberlandtrail.org](http://www.friendsofthecumberlandtrail.org) now, and keep up with all the new additions as they come online!

Submitted by Kelly Stewart, FOTCT webmaster.



Clear Pool at the mouth of Devil Step Hollow Cave, Cumberland County

## UT Chancellor Congratulates FOTCT on Chapter Formation

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Hamilton County Friends of the Cumberland Trail,

It is my great pleasure to recognize the formation of your new Friends group and to extend my enthusiastic encouragement for your efforts on behalf of the Cumberland Trail State Park. The Trail, as you know, provides a remarkable pathway across the natural and cultural heritage of our beautiful State. It also provides opportunity to preserve and protect certain critical archaeologi-

cal resources, some among the most important in North America. In Hamilton County, for example, the Trail corridor contains an engraved rock bluff that some have argued was a solar observatory, used (ca AD 1200) by prehistoric Mississippian priests to schedule their annual agricultural activities. At the Head of the Sequatchie Valley in Cumberland County, the Trail now protects Devil-step Hollow Cave, a prehistoric cave art site of international importance that contains an-

cient paintings, engravings, and mud glyphs of obvious religious significance. For your willingness to engage in the support of the Trail and its myriad treasures, I offer my sincere thanks.

Jan F. Simek, Ph.D.  
Chancellor

Distinguished Professor of Anthropology

University of Tennessee,  
Knoxville

**"...critical  
archaeological  
resources, some  
among the most  
important in  
North America"  
- Jan Simek,  
Ph.D.**

## Triple Crown (continued from page 1)

"The Triple Crown and the entire climbing community are proud to have the opportunity to support the efforts of the Friends of the Cumberland Trail," said Jim Horton, event co-organizer. "We are all very lucky to have such an amazing resource for outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy here in the Southeast."

Details on Triple Crown donations to date in 2008 are:

Asheboro Lease—\$2,000  
Donation to Hound Ears Country Club—\$1,000  
Hound Ears Raffle Donations—  
Laurel Knob—\$5,000  
Donations/Raffles for Yellow Bluff Acquisition—\$5,000

**Membership Raised for the Friends of the Cumberland Trail—60+**  
**Friends of the Cumberland Trail Donation—\$1,500**

To learn more about climbing and bouldering opportunities in the area, please start your search with these websites.

Triple Crown Bouldering Series:  
[www.triplecrownbouldering.com](http://www.triplecrownbouldering.com)

Southeastern Climbers Coalition:  
[www.seclimbers.org](http://www.seclimbers.org)

Submitted by John Dorough



Bouldering competitor at 2007 Triple Crown Event ([www.triplecrownbouldering.com](http://www.triplecrownbouldering.com)).

**THE THIN GREEN LINE**

**FRIENDS OF THE  
CUMBERLAND TRAIL,  
INC.**

220 PARK ROAD  
CARYVILLE, TN 37714

NORTH TRAIL  
423-566-2229  
MIDDLE TRAIL  
423-533-4003  
SOUTH TRAIL  
423-332-7394

E-mail:  
info@friendsofthecumberlandtrail.org



Like what you see? Want to get all of your friends plugged into the Friends of the Cumberland Trail...



Five Dollars provides full membership...it puts your name on the line in support of the Cumberland Trail, and connects you to volunteer opportunities for important resource management projects. If you would like to give more, by all means, give more! Your dues will fund park projects, purchase essential equipment, promoting the CT and the FOTCT, and acquire acreage essential to the management and completion of the Cumberland Trail. Joining the Friends is easy! Go to the FOTCT website at [www.friendsofthecumberlandtrail.org](http://www.friendsofthecumberlandtrail.org), locate the "Join Now" icon and fill in the blanks...or, fill in the blanks below and return with a check for \$5 to the address on the left margin of this page. We welcome all with an interest in the Cumberland Trail, or any of the resources it protects. Your level of involvement is up to you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**New Member** or **Renewal** (circle one)

**Individual** . . . \$5 or More

**Corporate / Organization** . . . \$100 or More

Please Indicate your area of interest:

Education / Outreach \_\_\_\_\_

Natural Resource Management \_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Resource Management \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resource Management \_\_\_\_\_

Trail Construction / Maintenance \_\_\_\_\_

LOOK FOR YOUR FOTCT WINDOW  
STICKER TO ARRIVE IN THE MAIL  
SOON!