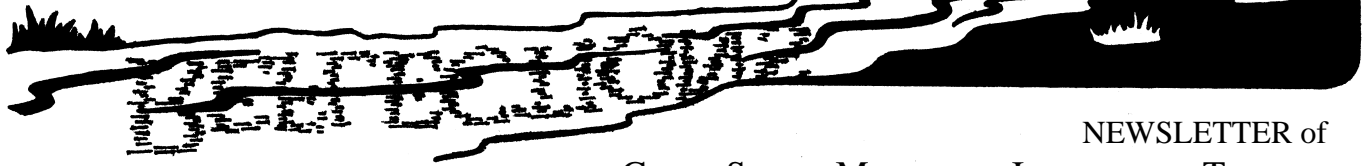


WALKER VALLEY REFLECTIONS



FALL 2001

NEWSLETTER of
GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

A MASTER PLAN FOR TREMONT

In the Spring issue of this newsletter I outlined some of the goals that have been developed for Tremont's future. Since that time we have continued to plan and refine our vision. In June with the generous assistance in funds from the Friends of the Smokies, we hired a firm to work with us to develop a master plan for the Tremont site and facilities. One of the first steps of that process was to gather all of the planning materials and documents that we have produced over the last several years and to consolidate and clarify the ideas that they contained. The resulting document is included at the end of this article. It will be the basis by which we develop the master plan and will guide our future planning.

Over the summer we held a number of focus groups to further determine the direction of the master plan. Focus groups were held with; current users, potential users, Tremont staff, GSMNP resource education staff, environmental groups, community leaders, and summer camp kids. Those groups were given an overview of our vision and then asked a number of questions about what Tremont should be. Some of those questions were; What do you most like? What would you most like to change? What should Tremont's image be? Does Tremont need to be inside the national park? What should remain the same? What needs improving?

What should the character of the facilities be?

In late August we will conduct a series of design charettes to pull many of the ideas together and begin to formulate something on paper. During the charettes, staff, board, park staff, and users will gather with a group of designers and brainstorm, draw, dream, criticize, and in the end create a conceptual plan for a redesigned site and facilities.

Once we have some conceptual drawings we plan to begin fundraising and finish with the planning, public input and environmental compliance necessary to be able to create what has been designed. The park and its partners have been tremendously supportive as well as involved in these efforts and share our excitement for making this vision a reality.

We welcome further comments from those who share an interest in Tremont's future. If you have ideas or comments please send them to me at ken@gsmnit.org.

We have a great deal to be proud of for what has been accomplished at Tremont in its first 30 years. We hope you share our enthusiasm as we look forward and continue to improve our efforts at connecting people and nature in Great Smoky Mountains National Park!

-Ken Voorhis

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT
TREMONT

Design Basis for Master Plan
Development

This document sets forth the design basis upon which the master plan for the Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont (GSMIT) will be developed. It establishes the parameters for programming and facilities that will guide the master planning process.

Mission

The Great Smoky Mountains Institute provides in-depth experiences through educational programs designed to nurture appreciation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP), celebrate diversity and foster stewardship.

Vision

The Great Smoky Mountains Institute will be a world-class environmental education center that is a model of sustainable design, practice and instruction.

Programs

The GSMIT will continue current programming with incremental improvements intended to enhance science education integration and broaden the user base, particularly during slow periods of the year. While GSMIT's focus is on children, the following are the targeted user groups in order of priority:

master plan continued

- School groups within the region
- Educators
- Children 9-17 years of age nationwide
- Adults
- Families

GSMIT will offer a limited level of day programming for the local community and park visitors through orientation and information facilities at the site and through offering occasional special events such as concert and hiking series and other special events. In addition, GSMIT will conduct programs for other groups interested in utilizing the facility to conduct a program within the GSMNP. However at least 30% of their program must relate to environmental education or GSMNP issues. This would include hosting conferences for environmental and education groups.

Facilities

The goal is for GSMIT to have facilities designed to 1) blend with the park environment, which are appropriate for a variety of uses, 2) model sustainable practices, and 3) minimize impacts on the landscape. The facilities and the developed landscape will be a showcase of sustainable design such that they become educational tools.

GSMIT will maintain roughly the same overnight capacity by providing up to 150 beds. The target optimal daily overnight population will be 90 for children's groups and 60 for adult groups. GSMIT will be able to accommodate as many as 200 total on a day use basis for special events, programs and conferences. Facilities will be designed to be flexible to adequately accommodate the needs of children, adults and families.

It is acknowledged that the existing facilities and disturbed landscape in their current condition do not meet this goal and may or may not adequately meet projected program needs. Therefore, the master plan for GSMIT will evaluate the existing facilities and may determine that many, if not all, cannot be renovated or altered to meet the program needs and facility development goals and therefore may have to be replaced. Any construction of new facilities will take place within the envelope of the existing facilities and/or where previous facilities have been removed in order not to expand beyond current or previously disturbed areas.

TREMONT HAPPENINGS

TRANSITIONS

Many thanks to the fine staff that helped us have another successful summer at Tremont. Summer is a particularly busy time at Tremont when staff work long hours and many times go above and beyond to meet the needs of our participants. Many of those listed on the staff roster on the back of this newsletter were working only for the summer and have already headed back to school or to other exciting positions around the country. Thanks again to both year round and summer staff for their hard work as a team, and obvious commitment to ...connecting people and nature.

Both Jennie Lee and Anya Marysheva will be leaving after a year with us. Jennie plans to pursue graduate school and Anya is returning to her final year of school in Moscow after serving as our international intern. We wish them both the very best!

Several staff that worked with us this summer will be returning as Naturalists during the school year. Adam Barnes, Bethany Hanna and Ryan Young will be Teacher Naturalists. Jeremy Lloyd has worked as a

Teacher/Naturalist for us in the past and is returning as Senior Teacher Naturalist after finishing an MS in English last spring. Emily McDonald will be joining us as an intern.

Paul Super is our super Science Education Specialist. Paul has been the right person to successfully get our Science Education Initiative off the ground. He agreed to leave a position with the National Park Service with the understanding that he would return as an NPS employee after three years. Paul will be leaving in October and we have hopes that his work with the Parke Seervice will be here in the Smokies so that we can continue to work together and utilize his expertise on occasions.

Michelle Prysby has been hired as the new Science Education Specialist. She has been working at the University of Minnesota where she has established the Monarch Larval Monitoring Network, a nationwide program involving citizens in hands-on science.

Welcome to all! We are excited about the talented team that is shaping up for the fall.

BOOKMARK CONTEST WINNER

Joseph Cheatham's illustration of a centipede was the winning entry in our 2002 Bookmark contest. Joseph is a student at Morristown East High School where his teacher, Carol Rouse, challenged her students to submit entries to our contest. She said, "It was a great way to combine teaching art and the environment." Thanks to all of the others who submitted artwork. Selecting just one winner was not an easy task. 2002 bookmarks with Joseph's artwork are available through our office.

NEWSLETTER RENEWAL

If you've not noticed all of our reminders yet, please fill out the enclosed form or e-mail us to make sure that you continue to receive our newsletter. The newsletter is available for the asking but we certainly appreciate any donation you can make to help defray the costs.

WORK WEEKEND

November 17th Details on page 10

COOKS CORNER

Whenever a "new batch" of T/N's join the Tremont staff, I always beg them for new ideas to serve here in the kitchen. Be it vegetarian, desserts or what do they have for dinner at home, I'm always eager to try new recipes. Until a couple months ago, I had never thought to ask a participant. This recipe came up in conversation, was promised to be sent, and true to her word, I received it and love it!!

The one problem I've been told we have with this dessert is that it's too rich, and too chocolatey. Can that ever be? Doesn't seem a problem to me, but you decide.

We are also trying to come up with a more pronounceable name for this dessert that our students can handle. Any suggestions you would like to make after you've gotten a taste of this would be great!! Just send them to the kitchen at kitchenstaff@gsmit.org.

Nanaimo Bars (Nah-Neye-Mow) (A small fishing village on the Pacific side of the Vancouver Islands in British Columbia, Canada)

Bottom Layer

1/2 cup Butter or Margerine

1/4 cup granulated sugar

5 T cocoa

1 egg, beaten

1 3/4 cup graham cracker crumbs

1 cup fine coconut

1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts (I've also substituted peanuts)

Melt first 3 ingredients in heavy pot.

Add egg and stir to cook and thicken- remove from heat.

Stir in crumbs, coconut and nuts.

Press firmly into an ungreased 9x9 pan.

Second Layer

1/3 cup butter or margerine

3 T milk

2 T vanilla pudding powder

2 cups powdered sugar

Cream butter, milk, pudding and sugar.

Beat until light and fluffy.

TREMONT: HOPE FOR THE EARTH

All of us have had important milestones in our lives. These are events sharply etched in our memory. One such milestone for me that altered my life, looking back on it now, happened ten years ago at a place called Wesley Woods. As a new member of the Tennessee Environmental Education Association, I was attending my first annual conference. It was at that fateful meeting that I had my first contact with the folks at Tremont. As I recall now, they put on "Voice of the Smokies" and captured my heart and soul with their simple but powerful message.

From that meeting, I started attending events at Tremont to learn all I could about their message and their work. Ten wonderful years have passed and I have been privileged to become a member of the Tremont family and work as a teacher naturalist.

In my lifetime, I have seen and read much about our disregard for this beautiful planet we inhabit and dire predictions for the future. My association with Tremont and the children and adults I have taught on mountain trails and mountain tops, gives me hope that all those dire

predictions for the Earth need not come to fruition.

Children and adults who attend Tremont camps and programs leave with a changed attitude about the Earth, armed with a determination to change hearts and minds in the place they call home. Take heart, "Mother Earth": help is on the way.

My mind and heart now turns towards my own home and hearth. It is like I'm looking down a long road with a bend. I can't see around the bend into the future, but I do see mountains in the distance. These are mountains of ignorance and despair built by people who do not know the healing message of Tremont. I have scaled the mountains of Tremont so now carrying a torch of understanding and concern I journey back to my place on the earth to spread Tremont's message. I go with a heart full of hope for I have seen attitudes changed and live transformed by the sweet cool mountain mist. Miles may separate me from Tremont, but this magical place will be as close as my heart. My prayer will be, let the circle remain unbroken.

- Mickey Larkins

SUMMER REFLECTIONS

Mountain Stream

Rushing water trickling
down on the rocky ground
Mossy moss on the ground.
Tripping, I found a small
snail

The sound of the water
flowing in the stream,
Where salamanders live in
comfort.

The patterns on the fish
and bugs;
Where butterflies drink;
Where I like to think in
peace.

The Smokies

The mountains are a wonder-
ful place.

They stand tall and stong.
They are peaceful and beau-
tiful.

They sing a song everyday
that can only be heard in
silence.

Big and small, all are
grand and stand for the
Smoky Mountains.

The beautiful air so crisp
and clean makes the birds
and crickets sing.

Majestic and beautiful, far
and near;

Big and small they hold
peace.

MY SUMMER WITH THE ATBI

When Mr. Super first asked me to write an article for Tremont's newsletter about what I have been doing this summer, I was speechless. How could I describe all of the exceptional experiences that I have had here, all of the wonderful people I have met? I began wishing that I was back in the third grade, where everything is simpler and not as scientific. There, my article could be a one-page essay about chasing dragonflies with a squirt gun and digging in the dirt for beetles. The realization that I should examine the importance of this job in my life, and its impact on my mind-set slowly came over me. What I have done this summer has had an effect on my future and hopefully the future of the Smokies as well.

Through working at Tremont and being a part of the ATBI, I have been privileged to have the chance to contribute to the Institute's goal of ensuring society's understanding of our connection with nature. My activities during the day range greatly in their purpose, from checking clear-winged moth traps for the University of Tennessee to putting out reptile traps in coordination with Maryville College. Brightly colored bowls are set out on Mark's Trail and in the Tremont field to collect pollinators that are pinned and sent out to specialists for identification. Despite my ignorance of snail families, I grouped snail shells according to their likeness and entered the data into the computer before sending them off to be better sorted by an authority on snails. Multiple graphs were constructed using the data from the moth refrigerator trap in order to help assess future catches. After my work is over, I can only hope that my various tasks have been able to be of some help to the progression of Tremont's goals for the park.

During my constant interaction with the natural world this summer, I have developed a better appreciation for all kinds of life in the Smokies. Spending so much time searching for beetles in the park now makes me want to discover what

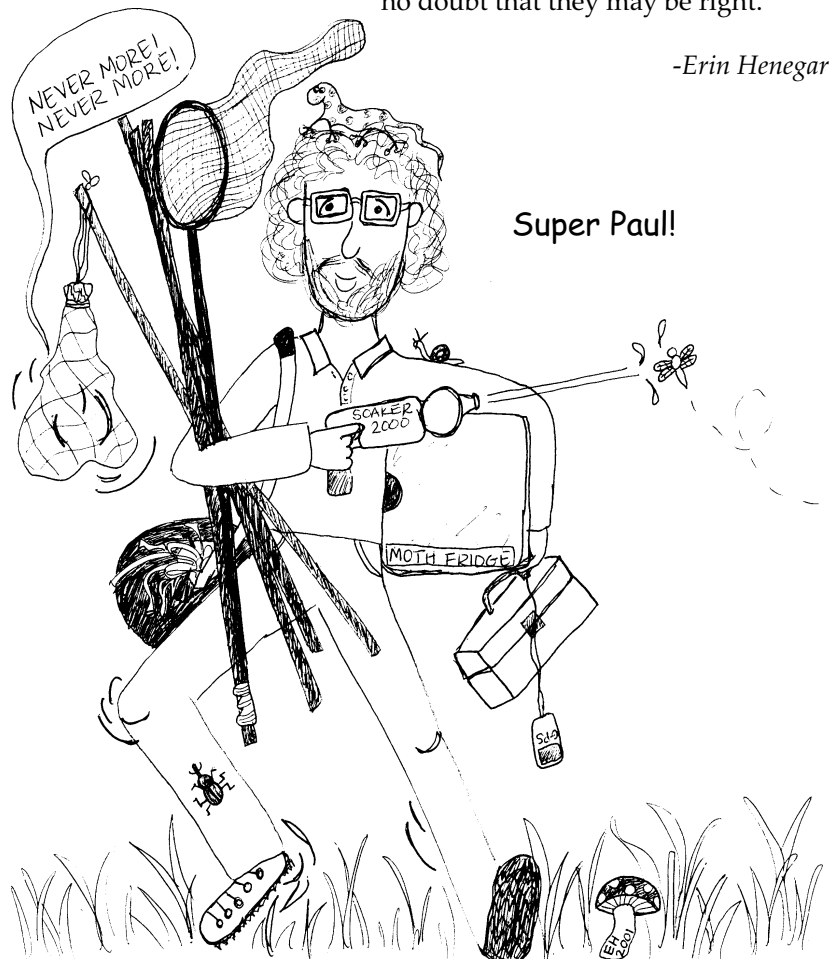
kinds of beetles live around my own home. Even birds are now mysterious to me, for so many things that I assumed to know about them have been proven false. Perhaps actually seeing an Indigo Bunting so closely during bird banding caused me to realize how unaware I am of their lifestyles. Curiosity combined with a fascination of their habits causes me to stop along the trail as I am hiking and take notice of the world above me. Simply listening to their songs and watching for their colors in the trees holds a special charm.

Maybe the most significant part of my job is its pertinence to my future. My understanding of the science of nature has been greatly furthered, thanks to everyone who has educated me. The inexperience that I began with has been transformed into a comprehension of the processes of research, such as collecting, pinning, and labeling. Although beating for beetles may not qualify as a professional affair, it is at least an

educational escapade that has provided me with experience that I can use in college. While my scientific capabilities are still extremely limited, Mr. Super's instruction has enabled me to explore my interest in the world of science and nature.

Working in the national park is a reward in itself because of the beautiful scenery that surrounds me every day. There is no way one could help but enjoy crawling around in creeks looking for aquatic insects, running after dragonflies with nets, or rummaging through leaves to see what can be found. Being able to help protect the national park that I have enjoyed since I was a child has been such a gratifying experience for me, that I look forward to having a career that will enable me to do the same in the future. My parents keep telling me that this is the best job I will ever have, since I am learning about the outdoors all day and working to preserve the environment. After all I have discovered this summer, there's no doubt that they may be right.

-Erin Henegar



MEREDITH'S MOTH MISADVENTURES

Working at Tremont has certainly been an enjoyable, educational and enlightening experience. Although it may have appeared to observers that all Erin and I did this summer was to walk up and down the road from the dining hall to the office, such claims are unsubstantiated; in reality, we not only walked, but also ran, skipped and occasionally clicked our heels in transit. I suppose that I should attempt to shed some light on our lofty accomplishments, but since all absurdity is my fault (according to Erin), I will just share a few Tremont related thoughts.

*The morning breeze
visibly ripples the fur
of the caterpillar*
~Buson

Despite my achievements in math and science, I am a verbally minded person. Therefore, when stranded for hours upon end at the computer analyzing the vast database of moth information from the refrigerator light trap, I became intrigued by the common names of moth species found at Tremont. The humorously named "Cynical Quaker" is among the 550+ moths residing in the area. A scientist dubbing a moth "cynical" is one thing, but I also believe that such a name is a gross inaccuracy. I could believe in a "Simple Quaker" or a "Hospitable Quaker"; however, the people who sing about the gift of simplicity and freedom are surely never cynical—well, maybe they are a tad bitter about their name also being stolen for oatmeal, but that is a completely different matter. Besides the "Quakers," there are many "Confused" moths and a family of "Carpets." (It is a shame, however, that there is no "Shag"). Many of the moths' common names, although less than descriptive of the creatures, would make excellent book titles or names for a band; in fact, I would like my band to be called the "Dimorphic Grays." We would sing angry songs with few lyrics, since I

cannot carry a tune. Erin, on the other hand, would prefer to sing happy music, so her band will be called the "Blackberry Loopers."

*I do not know whether I was then a man
dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I
am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man.*
~Chang-tzu

The most valuable lesson I have learned this summer has not been about beetles, moths or snails. It has been a confirmation that I need a balance in my life, a balance between language and science. As much as I've enjoyed hiking, collecting data and sorting specimens, I've been craving to read and write, and not just grocery store check-out line novels or bad poetry; I've been in the mood to write a 3000 word analysis of Keats or Joyce. I should be careful what I wish for, however, because come midterms this fall, I will be screaming to get outside to hike a trail or play in a stream. C'est la vie. As for my plans for the future, I am heading to UT Chattanooga as a member of their honors program. I am double majoring in environmental science and English and may continue on to either law school or eventually become a writer or a college professor. But who knows, I could very well end up back in a national park; if I get one of those nifty Smokey the Bear hats, I don't think I could resist.

~Meredith Jagger

Erin and Meredith worked this summer as ATBI Summer Research Assistants funded by a grant from Discover Life in America. Erin and Meredith graduated this year from Maryville High School and will be attending Center College in Kentucky and UT—Chattanooga, respectively, this fall.



Trees

Trees, trees everywhere and very small leaves in their glare.

Bark which tells each little spell.

They grow to be stong and when they die they bring nutrients to the soil, To begin the life of another.

The trees are green as grass.

Trees are good in many ways.

And when it rains the trees can play,

Then catch the drops upon their leaves.

*-Summer Reflections by
Kyle Botica, Stephan Peitrowski, Stefan D., Robert McKinney, Gabrielle Armijo, Ashley McDowell, Devon Jones, and Heather May: Natural Arts Quest, NWF Ranger Rick Wildlife Camp*

Michael created this story about a snail he noticed crawling along a gravestone in the cemetery along the West Prong Trail:

I knew I had left my world behind. The stone I was on was more smooth, more vertical, more drab than the rugged land I dwelt on. But up I crawled, up this gray monolith. I was looking for more food. I was bigger, older, ready to widen my range. On my back was my home, part of me, and all around me was the rich forest. But I was not comfortable. The stone troubled me. It was drab, sad, tired. What did it mean? What joyless force had created it? It's solemnness began to seep into me, and I began to feel it marked more than just sadness. But what was that other feeling? Ah well. There was food to find, things to do. I was getting dry. Yet the other thing troubled me for the rest of my life.

~Michael Schulson

ENDLESS SUMMER

The summer began for me about March. If all goes well it will wrap up before the school groups start pouring in in September. I love summer, don't get me wrong but it is a relief to look back on it and say we pulled off another one.

At the beginning of the year I was asked to coordinate the summer backpack program as well as our internship program so let me tell you how that went. Tremont hired five interns this summer. They came from as far away as Boston and as close as Brevard NC. They came to learn about teaching, Tremont, GSMNP, kids, backpacking, air quality, leave no trace, guitars, campfires, themselves and much more. They worked hard for us this summer, supervising campers, leading activities and creating an original lesson plan to use at Tremont. We appreciate this effort and hope this experience will influence future professional and personal decisions. Thank you Crawford, Kelly, Rachel, Sarah and Brad. We would also like to congratulate Crawford on her position here at

Tremont beginning in the new year. If you are a college student and would like to find out more about what our internships have to offer please get in touch with our Special Program Director Amber Parker.

If you or someone you know participated in our backpack program then I'm sure there have been many great stories told or heard by now. We had campers crossing the park from north to south, south to north, over the highest peak, up the steepest trails, through heavy rains, hot humid days and even by van. I ran support for these trips and didn't have the pleasure of the experience but got to hear the stories during food drops and pickups. Numerous bears were seen, a few wild boar, a rattlesnake, tent cities constructed by boat campers on Fontana, old lawn chairs found during campsite clean ups. The groups saw much of what the Smokies have to offer a backcountry camper. These campers spent from three to seven days learning the ways of Leave No Trace, camp stoves and cooking, how to pack a backpack, how to prevent or

mend blisters as well as looking for ferns and land snails to help the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory. They were busy and they got dirty. Let me just tell you, two hours in a van with a group fresh off the trail can bring tears to your eyes.

Smiles and looks of relief and accomplishment met me on the final days as these campers who mostly agreed that they enjoyed their trip gladly headed to the showers and the bunks of the dorm.

On the side I act as medical counsel to all our participants. Thankfully this part of my summer provided me with the least worry and effort. Blisters, scraped knees, insect bites and stings, bouts of homesickness and lost teeth peppered my summer and were to be expected. With this said I give credit and thanks to our staff and participants for another safe, successful summer here at Tremont. We hope to see you back again next year, just give us a couple of weeks before we start summer again.

Thanks!

-Jason Barschdorf

MEMORIES

As the summer comes to an end, I look back on all that I have done and seen, and a kaleidoscope of images comes to mind. The only way I can find to summarize this summer is by giving words to these random pictures that have been imprinted in my memory.

It was great to see how much they had progressed in a short 4 days. In the beginning they barely knew the names of one another, hiking rests were frequent, they were concerned about how they smelled or going to the bathroom outside. The last day Wilderness Adventurers walked over 45 minutes without needing a break, they announced out loud when they needed the shovel, most of them ate an ant, and on the car ride out of the woods they sang and danced along with the....

The core staff were dressed in costume to represent people who lived here when there were only rumors of this area becoming a national park. As the group walked around and came upon new characters, they were encouraged to ask the characters about their feelings of the land that was being logged, rumors of the area becoming a national park, and how they would feel about giving up their land. Seeing the Smoky Mountains as they are today, it can be hard to understand why people would be against preserving such a beautiful place. It was a great way to show grandchildren and grandparents alike, why the people who lived here might not want to give up their land to the government in order to start...

Breakfast with our participants. Then we helped them clean the dorms and gather their things. Afterwards, we had our closing circle as always. Jason told them to pass around the antler while remembering the Cherokee "way": when holding it, it gives you the power to talk, while others have the power to listen. The antler was passed around as they each named something they would remember from the week. One boy held it in his hand and thought for a moment before he finally replied, "I will remember to care for the earth, and all the creatures living on it."

-Kelly Stegall

ADVENTURES IN NORTH CAROLINA

This summer Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont was excited to begin leading regular trips to the east end of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This area is of increased interest due to two recent developments - the reintroduction of elk at Cataloochee, and the park's acquisition of the final parcel of land atop Purchase Knob.

Elk are native to the Smokies but were extirpated from this area about one hundred fifty years ago. They later were hunted out of the entire eastern United States. In fact, the eastern subspecies of elk is extinct. Through intensive reintroduction efforts, small herds have been established in a handful of locations, such as Land Between the Lakes in Tennessee and Kentucky, and the aptly named Elk County, Pennsylvania. The Park released 25 elk in Cataloochee on April 2, 2001, firmly putting this remote mountain valley in the tourism spotlight.

At an elevation of over five thousand feet, Purchase Knob is a unique and beautiful area that has excellent examples of diverse, high elevation forests within a short walk of the house. The property was donated in parcels by a North Carolina family. The central area with the house was transferred to the park as of January 1, 2001, planning for the area began soon after. Plans include converting the house into a science education center, and the garage into a laboratory as well as using the land for science-based programming.

National Wildlife Federation Explorers (13-14 year olds) decided to make the two and a half hour drive to Cataloochee for a two day exploration of the area. So, at 9 A.M. on Thursday, July 19th Bethany Hanna, Charlie Muise and fifteen campers boarded a van loaded with 2 coolers, 3 mist-nets, field equipment, and all their assorted gear, and headed out..

The group met with Carrie Schumacher, Field Technician on the Elk Project. Carrie taught us about

elk, explained how the release was performed, and gave us the latest news. She showed us some pictures, handed around an antler from the biggest male in the herd, and brought us out to see the temporary enclosure in which the elk lived from February until the actual release. Then she took us out looking for a hidden radio collar, to simulate how she finds elk. Taking turns holding the receiver, the kids found the collar in about 15 minutes. Now that we knew more about the life history and local habits of elk, as well as the work being done on this experimental release project, all that was left was to actually see some of these beautiful animals.

While waiting for the elk to visit the fields at dusk, we set up three mist nets to attempt to capture some birds until then. In addition to learning a little more about the habitat use of birds, we looked for some creatures that hitch rides on birds. A regular reader of Walker Valley Reflections will be familiar with the All-Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI), which is a large project whose primary goal is to identify every organism that lives some or all of its life within the park. We looked for such interesting creatures as feather lice, "hippo" beetles and ticks. We also took a blood smear so that Paul Super, our Science Education Specialist, could inspect the slides for blood-borne parasites.

When the rain began we decided that dinner was in order. So we headed to the end of the road to cook some great tortilla pizzas while waiting. Just as we began eating the first elk appeared. Nobody actually saw it come out of the woods. For huge animals (300-600 pounds) they are very good at fading into and out of view. Over the next hour we were fortunate enough to see at least 15 of them. It made for great dinner theater.

After leaving Cataloochee we drove to Purchase Knob, where we slept in a beautiful 170-year-old cabin. Though we shared it with at least one bat, and probably some rodents, we all enjoyed the aesthetics of it. We slept remarkably well after a long and exciting day.

Due to rain, the mist nets were very wet, causing them to sag - and thus be more visible to the birds. These two facts often lead to an unsuccessful effort. However within 5 minutes, we had a bird! It was an adult Song Sparrow. Not expecting a lot of birds, we took our time with this one, learning identification techniques, how to handle the birds, talking about the measurements we were taking... when one camper casually said, "There are four birds in the net." Surprise! And it didn't stop there, either. We caught 18 birds, including several hummingbirds, in just a couple hours. The kids were thrilled to be able to hold birds, and then release them finished with the processing.

With all the excitement and work, we only spent a little time looking for salamanders. Even so we found four species. And with that, it was time to head home. We had a great time, saw lots of wildlife (deer, fox, snakes...) and helped with a scientific project. The campers left with a knowledge of new species and an enthusiasm for science and natural history.

-Charlie Muise



NATURALIST AND HIKING WEEK NOSTALGIA

Do frogs really say “ribbit”? What exactly does strenuous mean? What tree has the largest leaves? Do black bears really like sardines? Why? These and many more questions were answered during Naturalist and Hiking Week at Tremont this July. Environmental educator and entertainer, David Stokes, was our special presenter for the week. David inspired the participants with his humor, stories about animal behavior, and his own animal magnetism. Thanks, David, for traveling all the way from Milwaukee with his family to spend a week in the Smokies with us.

The sessions were varied including an all day trip to Twin Creeks Research lab to learn about the ATBI, fly fishing, making spirit wheels, Cherokee medicinal plant uses, birding in Cades Cove, pollination of flowering plants, bluebird boxes, trees of the Smokies, exotic species, storytelling, salamanders, Leave No Trace outdoor ethics,

nature photography, earth skills, black bears of the Smokies, nature art, logging history, and the cultural history of the Spicewoods. If that wasn't enough, hikes were offered each day. Some of the places we visited were Rocky Top, Charlie's Bunion, Gregory Bald, Andrew's Bald, Albright Grove, Mt. LeConte, White Oak Sinks, and Green Camp Gap.

What a wonderful week it was! Old friends reconnecting, and new friends getting connected with Tremont and the Smokies. It's a week for our staff to take a break from summer camp and their responsibilities with the campers. It's a week for those of us who get caught up in our daily routines to take a step back, take a breath, and become inspired again by being in the mountains and learning from each other.

Personally, I enjoyed being on the trail with folks that love the mountains as much as I do. Rocky Top and Spence Field are special

places to me and to hike there with such wonderful company was a pleasure. Just getting there at all was a pleasure.

I would like to thank all of the presenters for being a part of this special week. I know it's hard to take a week in the middle of the summer and spend it in the mountains teaching, interacting and learning with participants that all share the same goals and vision for the environment. I would also like to thank all the participants for their enthusiasm, energy, ideas, input and cooperation in making this program a success. It is a testament to the hard work of not just our staff but also the participants that make Naturalist and Hiking Week one of our most popular programs. It is your input and ideas that give us direction and focus. If you have not participated in Naturalist Week and have questions about the program, please call or e-mail me at: bill@gsmiit.org or (865) 448-6709 ext. 16.

-Bill Klein

HIKE TO LECONTE

It's a grey and wet Friday morning, 6:30 a.m.; my alarm clock rings like crazy. I jump up and try to realize what's going on. It's the week of College Consortium and I'm leading a hike to LeConte!

The day doesn't promise to be hot and sunny, but an early breakfast cheers us up. We get to the Newfound Gap covered in a thick blanket of fog, and stretch our legs before the 13-mile journey. It doesn't seem very encouraging before the long hike.

We start our trip to the 2nd highest point of the park. A rocky trail leads us forward, up and down. The smell of wet spruce and fir trees fascinates, makes one stop, take a deep-deep breath and close the eyes to fully enjoy the moment. It's so magnificent that nobody talks. The giant uprooted trees strike ones imagination, encourage one to think about the adaptations of the root systems to the rocky terrain.

Now the trail follows the steep side of the mountain. You catch your breath looking down and subconsciously grip the cable that park service installed in the slope. The view clears a little and we are able to see the nearest mountain ridges. It's so quiet no birds, no sound of a stream; no insects buzzing...it's spooky. College students stop and glance at each other, but nobody dares to utter a word. We look once more at the ridge and notice the fog coming quickly and covering and hiding from view the mountains in front of us. In a matter of seconds we find ourselves surrounded by the white cloud.

We finally reach the cliff tops and spot a white-tailed deer feeding on some leaves. His antlers are small and fuzzy and he looks at us suspiciously with his huge wet eyes. We can see a vast white abyss from the cliffs that stirs our imagination.

Our way down is sprinkled with rain. Water runs down the slopes,

drips from the mossy rocks in million drops and collects in spider webs. One of the students says: "People spend a lot of money to have this beauty in their gardens and we are just lucky to see it here."

The rain gives new touch to everything, changes colors, turns a path into a running mountain stream, brings the scent of freshness. In the openings along the trail we see the most gorgeous views: the mountain chains fainting in the mist.

Everybody is happy to get to the van and take off wet boots, but nobody chats loudly. We are still enchanted by the beauty and serenity of the mountains. It was a great hike, a great finale of a wonderful year for me. On the way to Tremont I realize how quickly the time for me has flown by, I remember the summer, joyful, colorful, full of campers, new friends and new challenges. But I'm ready to go home, though I'll miss the mountains and Tremont and the river whispering me to sleep.

-Anya Marysheva

A SUMMER OF SCIENCE

More research and science learning happened at Tremont this summer than has ever happened here before. As I write, I am looking at a long list of catch-up tasks to deal with all of the data collected by Erin and Meredith (our ATBI Research Interns), the volunteer student interns, our campers, and others. Below, I touch on the highlights of some of our many research projects and the people who worked and learned on them:

- ❖ Teen Science Camp 2001 was a complete success with a full registration this year (12 campers). There were not many animal species in the park we did not see, including bear, boar, deer, mink, hellbenders, red salamanders, coyotes, and wild turkey. At Tremont, participants searched for new park record moths and beetles, banded birds, and studied the stream salamander populations, then we hiked up to Gregory Bald for two days of doing the same at high elevation. We also assisted the UT bear researchers and a group studying Junaluska salamanders, pulled exotic grasses, assisted an archaeological dig, learned to use an atlatl, trapped lizards, and still had time to walk to the falls and back. Thanks to teachers Crystal Yates and Les McGlasson for
- their hard work during camp and to The Daily Times and Knoxville Church of the Ascension for providing scholarships.
- ❖ We held a service Elderhostel with 17 participants assisting with beetle, moth, bird, fern, and snail research, as well as yanking invasive exotic grasses.
- ❖ Over a dozen assistants and several groups, anchored by a core team of student bird-bander interns, helped us catch over 200 birds of 42 species. We collected 182 blood samples to look for blood parasites, 46 tail feathers to genetically link our breeding bird populations with their particular wintering sites, and dozens of lice, mites, ticks, and biting flies, many of which will be new park record species. Only two out of every five birds we caught at Tremont was a Louisiana Waterthrush this year, instead of half of them.
- ❖ The moth project added at least 15 new species for the Tremont list, two new park records, and dozens of specimens awaiting identification by lepidopterists who are more competent. Analysis of our data indicates we are still getting big returns of newly-found species for our efforts, especially in April, May, June, and September.
- ❖ Marsha Segal of Oak Ridge St. Mary's school selected eight of her 8th graders (and added two other students during the course of the summer) to conduct trail-based surveys of fern, land snail, and beetle distribution for us. Stopping every 200 meters along the trail to describe the habitat and identify their study species, it took them most of a day to cover a kilometer. They finished the West Prong/Bote Mountain Trail and are now working on the Chestnut Top Trail.
- ❖ Many of our backpacking groups collected data on fern and reptile distributions in the backcountry and collected empty snail shells for future identification.
- ❖ Research continued, with student involvement, in reptile distribution, stream salamander monitoring, beetle/tree relationships, clearwing moths, pollinator and dragonfly inventories, atmospheric haze, river hydrology, and weather.
- ❖ Lastly, I learned from Erin and Meredith that our Supersoaker squirt gun does not knock the dragonflies out of the air, but it does slow them down enough to net them. More research needs to be done on this next summer. Anyone out there have a good aim with a squirt gun?

-Paul Super

SMOKE SIGNALS

A feature especially for teachers bringing groups to Tremont

The upcoming school season is upon us and we are excited as ever about your school coming to Tremont. If your school is coming in September or October, you have received your planning packet already, including the User Guide. Schools coming in November and December will be receiving packets in the middle of August.

We are also very excited about opportunities for integrating science into our lesson plans. Enclosed in your planning packet is a supplement entitled 'Science at Tremont'. This supplement is a guide to all of the science activities happening in and around Tremont. Please read through the supplement and note any activities that you would like for your school to be involved in and send it in with your schedule request form. As stated in the supplement, we can incorporate these activities into our current lesson plans or we can build a lesson around the science activities. We are in the development stages of integrating science on a daily basis here at Tremont. We would appreciate any feedback or ideas on how to coordinate our science and research with what you are doing in the classroom.

We have a great staff that is looking forward to working with your school this upcoming year. Please feel free to call or e-mail me with questions concerning your school's trip to Tremont especially in regards to integrating science into the program. I am especially excited about providing these new opportunities for you and your school, as well as the beauty and magic of the Smokies.

LOOKING AHEAD

Register now for these upcoming programs! Register early because they are filling fast!

See our brochure, webpage: www.gsmit.org or call our office for more details.

FALL NATURALIST WEEKEND OCTOBER 12 - 14

Autumn is a magical time of color and change in the "Place of Blue Smoke." Spend a weekend studying the natural and cultural history of the park with a special focus on the Cherokee. Learn to see the natural world through the eyes of the Cherokee as special guests share their culture, philosophy, language, stories, and crafts. Explore topics such as edible and medicinal plants, tree and shrub identification, birds, earth skills, games, and stories. Program lasts from Friday supper to Sunday lunch. Cost: \$140. One hour of graduate credit is available for an additional fee.

AUTUMN BRILLIANCE PHOTO WORKSHOP OCTOBER 19 - 22

What better place to improve your photography skills than in the Smokies during the peak of fall leaf color? Join us for the weekend as photographers Willard Clay and Ruth Hoyt team up to share the splendors of fall in the Smokies. Field sessions and lectures will cover the use of light, composition, landscape photography, close-ups, and how to find the "right" picture. The program will combine natural history interpretation with photographic technique and is designed for intermediate to professional photographers. Program lasts from Friday supper to Monday mid-morning. This workshop fills quickly, so register early! Cost: \$385

MASTER'S PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP NOVEMBER 2 - 5

This nature photography workshop is designed for professional or advanced amateur photographers with extensive experience. Willard Clay and Stan Osolinsky will team up to work on high-level skills through field assignments and critique. This is an outstanding opportunity to work with two experienced professional photographers. Program lasts from Friday supper through Monday breakfast. Cost: \$800. Before signing up for this workshop, please speak with the instructors to determine if the class is appropriate for you. Contact the Institute for details.

NATURE OBSERVATION & TRACKING NOVEMBER 9 - 11

Spend a weekend developing your skills to recognize and interpret the clues left behind by the wide variety of creatures that live in the Smoky Mountains. Explore animal sign, stalking and movement techniques, and nature awareness and observation skills. Much of the time will be spent exploring the park and interpreting what we find. Instructor Wanda DeWaard, who has been sharing tracking skills since 1983, will be joined by several guest presenters. Program lasts from Friday supper to Sunday lunch. Cost: \$140. One hour of graduate credit is available for an additional fee.

GEOLOGY OF THE SMOKIES NOVEMBER 9 - 11

Join us for hikes and field trips to investigate different geological aspects of the park. Walks to waterfalls, coves, folds, faults, and interesting formations will reveal the earth processes and unique geologic history of the Smokies. We'll relate the rocks to the biological world and environmental concerns in the park. Program lasts from Friday supper to Sunday lunch. Cost: \$130. One hour of graduate credit is available for an additional fee.

VOLUNTEER WORK DAY NOVEMBER 17

Come join us for our annual volunteer work day. We will have a number of projects lined up and will put those who are willing to work, no matter what your skills. Please send in a registration form or call by October 26 so we have an idea of how many to plan for.

2002 PROGRAM BROCHURES AVAILABLE SOON

Dates for 2002 programs have been set and brochures should be available by November. Call for information or to register early for a 2002 program!



Be a Friend of Tremont

At Tremont user fees pay for a significant percentage of our operation but to accomplish what we dream of we will need your help.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

ANNUAL FUND

ENDOWMENT FUND

For students who have been shut up in classrooms for all their lives this is best thing that ever happened. Tremont gives children chances to learn things outdoors that they never had a chance to before. Teachers also have the opportunity teach students the importance of things they may have never experienced before or even thought about before. It provides a unique opportunity to live in and learn about national parks. Many important things are taught here that are not found in books. - Miss Elsie Burrell

Designate which fund you would like to contribute to and mail donations to:

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

9275 Tremont Rd. Townsend, TN 37882

865-448-6709 mail@gsmmit.org website: www.gsmmit.org

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

PROGRAM REGISTRATION FORM

Please fill out a separate form for each person
registering.

NAME (as you want it on your name tag)

ADDRESS _____

_____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

e-mail _____

age (if under 18) _____

Program title

Program date _____

Amt. enclosed _____

Return to: GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS



INSTITUTE AT TREMONT
9275 TREMONT ROAD
TOWNSEND, TN 37882
or fax to: 865-448-9250

To register by credit card call: 865-448-6709

Minimum deposit for a three-day program is \$50, and for all other programs is \$100. The balance is due 60 days prior to the program. Cancellations received in writing 60 days prior to a program will receive a 75% refund. Cancellations received less than 60 days prior to the program will not be refunded.

DONATIONS

Thanks to all of the following !

FROM 5/16/01 TO 8/2/01

Financial Contributions

Tutt Bradford Wayne Clements
H. R. De Selm Robert Dowbiggin
Wanda and John Duncan
James Heinrich Gregory Hnedak
Sarah Hoyle William Hudson
Paul Keidel Lois Klein Bonnie Mattaeus
John and Harriet Smartt
Patricia Twilla Westville High School
Friends of the Smokies
Great Smoky Mountains Natural History Association

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FROM 5/16/01 TO 8/2/01

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GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE
AT TREMONT

IS OPERATED IN COOPERATION WITH
GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

PROGRAM CALENDAR

STAFF

teacher/naturalists

Adam Barnes
Bethany Hanna
Jennie Lee
Mickey Larkins
Jeremy Lloyd
Crawford Paylor
Reagan Richie
Mike Vacek
Karen White
Ryan Young

interns

Sarah Folzenlogen
Rachel Jensen
Bradley Sale
Kelly Stegall
food service
Sam Crowe
Jackie Davis
Lori Flanagan
Billie McCarter
Lois Tipton
Sue Tipton
Toni Vann

international intern

Anya Marysheva

sci/ed specialist

Paul Super

ATBI assistants

Erin Henegar
Meredith Jagger

sr. teacher naturalists

Jason Barschdorf

Charlie Muise

school program director

Bill Klein

special program director

Amber Parker

grounds and facilities

Sean Flanagan

registrar

Lainie Frye

sales

Linda Vananda

office manager

Kathy Burns

executive director

Ken Voorhis

SEPTEMBER

21-23 Teacher Escape Weekend
30 - Oct 5 Fall Elderhostel - Hiking

OCTOBER

12-14 Women's Backpack
12-14 Fall Naturalist Weekend
19-22 Autumn Brilliance Photo Workshop
19-21 Fall Adult Backpack

NOVEMBER

9-11 Geology of the Smokies
9-11 Tracking Workshop



January

20-27 Wilderness First Responder

February

13-15 Wilderness First Responder Refresher
22-24 Environmental Education & the arts

2002 program dates are now available.
Program brochures will be mailed out in
January but available in November.

Contact us for information on any program.
Information is also available at our website:

www.gsmit.org

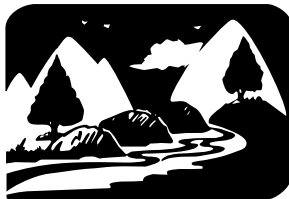
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