

The man agreed to go back with Chuck. After he and Chuck had a leisurely lunch, they headed back to the cars. Part way down, the man stumbled and fell a few feet off the trail. Chuck scrambled down and determined that the man had not broken anything. However, he informed Chuck he had lost his glasses. Chuck went back up, and finally found the glasses. Returning to the man, he was unable to help pull him back up on the trail, so he suggested he get on his hands and knees so Chuck could push him from behind. That worked. They returned safely to the cars to wait a couple of hours for the rest of us to return. Then the rains came. Chuck and his charge ducked under a nearby picnic table, but the slates were too wide apart, letting in the rain. Then Chuck spotted a rhododendron thicket, where they were dry until the rain broke through. At this point the man remarked "Could anything get worse?" and Chuck quickly replied, "Yes, my next two bad hair days".

The second day's hike to Wesser Bald, only 4 miles round trip, resulted in another gentleman pooping out after less than a mile. Chuck escorted him back without incident.

On our way to the third day's hike from Clingmans Dome to Newfound Gap, 8.5 miles, Chuck lamented that while I had hiked 12 miles the past two days, he had been able to hike less than 3 miles. We also prayed that if a similar problem occurred on this day, it would happen during the first ½ mile on the asphalt path to the tower on Clingmans Dome. And our prayers were answered. A lady from Ohio (in training to do the entire AT), within the first few minutes, was unable to make her camel water pack work, or adjust her hiking sticks. Then, after she finally arrived at the tower, I advised her she would have to go back to the cars, accompanied by, not Chuck, but, fortuitously, a nearby National Park ranger. Chuck finally got to hike the entire hike!

I nominate Chuck Rosen as "Sweep of the Year".