

Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club

Appalachian Hiker

www.tidewateratc.com

Prez Sez

Well, Fall is finally here. It seemed like summer would never end. Trail maintenance work has produced wonderful results both locally as well as out on the AT. The cabin projects are starting to wind up. Of course there are many more projects out there, and the list is almost endless. However, our club is also about fun and fellowship. With that said, I am encouraging each and every one of you to go out and enjoy the outdoors. Of course, I would be off message, as the politicians would say, if I did not tie it in somehow to the club. I am encouraging you to hike, backpack, kayak, canoe, etc... but to consider doing it as a club activity. Yes, you can lead a club activity. Our club is noted far and wide for the variety of activities we offer but that only happens when our club members come forward and lead an activity. It is not hard and in fact a great deal of fun. If you are interested please talk either to me or to Phyllis, our VP and Hikemaster. We would love to get you started on your way, sharing what you love to do with your fellow members. See you on your next activity.

Mark Wenger (Animal)
TATC President
president@tidewateratc.com



December 2008 - January 2009

TATC Elections

In accordance with Article VIII, Section 2. of the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club (TATC) Bylaws, the Chairman of the Officers Nominating Committee is required to notify in writing in the December Newsletter, the results of the Committee search for candidates for office. Members of the Nominating Committee were: Mark Wenger, Chairman; Mary Hormell, Rosanne Scott, Jane Martin, and Ned Kuhns.

Nominations for 2009 are as follows:

- President - Phyllis Neumann
- Vice President - Mark Connolly
- Secretary - Laura Bontems
- Treasurer - Bill Lynn
- Trail Supervisor - Scott Hilton
- Assistant Trail Supervisor - Bruce Julian
- Counselor - Sandy Butler

Other nominations may be accepted from the floor at the January Membership Meeting, Wednesday, January 14, 2009. All interested members in good standing are eligible and welcome to apply for service to the club. Elections that evening will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Article VIII, Section 4. of the Bylaws.

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Membership

Welcome to the following new and renewing members:

Roger and Jennifer Scheffel, Cynthia Teagle, Frank Prochazka, Michael Horrell, Robert Liles, Harold Doss, Cindy Wong, Vladimir & Anna Karpov, Tina Rowan, Shelly Norris, Gene Monroe, and Wiley Wilson

Mary Hormell
Membership Committee Chair
membership@tidewateratc.com

(banner photo by Mark Ferguson)

TATC Club Officers

President	Mark Wenger president@tidewateratc.com	253-0056
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Counselors

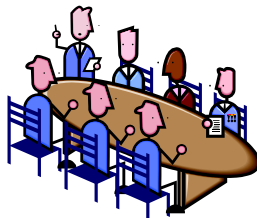
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Bob Giffin rprep@tidewateratc.com	495-7002



Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club 2008 Annual Trails Report

The Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club contributed 3412 volunteer work and travel hours to the Appalachian Trail this year as reported to the ATC. This includes 216 hours devoted to the AT and connecting trails on National Parkland and 3196 hours for the AT and connecting trails on Forest Service land. Non AT hours reported to the NFS included an additional 214 hours spent on the St Mary's Wilderness trails. Total hours for the club: 3626

MAINTENANCE

Work trips to maintain the AT and other trails were scheduled throughout the year. These included our regular Fall and Spring AT maintenance weekends, plus the spring walk thru, and one trip to St Mary's Wilderness. Numerous weekends and weekdays were devoted to the Tye River relocation project.

Activities

April AT survey trip

Work parties surveyed the club's section of the AT and Mau-Har trail in preparation for Spring Maintenance in May. 15 TATC members participated. For a few days afterward, several members stayed and worked on clearing blowdowns and brush from the first half of the relocation project in preparation for work to start this year. The first half had been built in years prior but had not been maintained.

Spring Maintenance

Spring maintenance 16-18 May included clearing and general maintenance near Reeds Gap, Harpers Creek, Tye River, Mau-Har Trail, and Maupin Field. 54 TATC volunteers, including 4 minors, participated. Work parties repaired the treadway and one switchback on the AT above the Tye River and from Reeds Gap to Maupin Field and also cleared brush and waterbars on the AT from Maupin Field to the summit of Three Ridges. Two teams worked on the Mau-Har Trail to clear numerous blowdowns. Two old blowdowns were cleared and treadway repaired north of Harpers shelter. Other work parties focused on clearing blowdowns at Maupin Field, cleaning the shelters and campsites at Harpers Creek and Maupin Field. Mike Mureddu and crew provided a tasty meal for the workers on Saturday evening.

Tye River AT relocation

July 3 to August 11. Though it was warm and muggy most of the time, a little over .6 mile of new trail was carved out of the hillsides. With help from the Konnarock crew, SCA group, numerous club members, and Forest Service assistance, this one is in the books. Nancy Rinkenberger and crew fed everybody on two Saturdays including ice cream! Nearly a 1000 club hours were spent on this. Thanks to all who participated in this effort.

Summer maintenance

This trip was cancelled to allow more time to be devoted to the relocation project, but Sandy Butler and friends did spend a few days camping at Harper's and trimming the brush from there to the summit of Three Ridges.

Fall Maintenance

Fall maintenance 17-19 October consisted of a total of 48 TATC volunteers including 2 minors. In addition to the work parties on the AT, Mau-Har Trail and cleaning shelter and camping areas, one work party went to the Bald Mt trail in the St. Mary's Wilderness to clear blowdowns, clear trail overgrowth and reroute a short section due to a washed out stream bank. Nancy Rinkenberger, Nancy Babor and company provided an excellent meal on Saturday evening. On Sunday 10 folks hiked up to where the new section of relocated trail starts above the Tye River and had an official ribbon cutting ceremony. Thanks to all the club members who helped on this project since 2001 to make this happen, especially this past summer to finally wrap this up.

2009 PROJECTS

Installation of 3 bear poles at Maupin Field.

2 weeks with the Konnarock crew rehabilitating a section of AT near Hanging Rock. July 2-6 and July 9-13

TRAINING CLASSES

There is a wilderness first aid class being held April 25-26 at the Konnarock base camp. Additional classes held throughout the year, see the ATC website for more offerings.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott Hilton
TATC Trails Supervisor
trailssupervisor@tidewateratc.com

Fall Trip to False Cape State Park November 17-20, 2008

By Bruce Julian

Our trip started at Little Island City Park on Monday the 17th. The sun was coming up in the Southeast with the winds blowing 5 to 10 mph out of the West. It looked like the week would be good for our jobs that we had planned to do. Everyone showed up early, and by 9:01 a.m. we were driving out of the parking lot toward False Cape. As we drove through Back Bay Wildlife Refuge, there were Swans, Canadian Geese, Mallards, and a few Snow Geese. There was one little deer standing beside the road as we drove by, and it just looked up at the bus and then started eating again. During the 4 day trip we saw eight Pigs, ten Deer, one Rabbit, and one Bald Eagle. Richard spotted the Eagle flying over the platform that we were working on Monday afternoon.

We had ten volunteers on this trip. This was the largest volunteer group that we've had in the 3 years since I've been leading them. There was Jane O., Sandy B., Margaret J., Phyllis N., Richard T., Mark C., Brian R., Ed M., Milton B., and Bruce. We reached the Environmental Education Center (EEC) in about 40 minutes after driving the nine miles through the Refuge and halfway through the State Park. Everyone worked together to move our gear off the bus and inside in a few minutes. Now the wind was blowing a little harder, as we were next to Back Bay with no trees between the water and us. We put away our gear and filled-up the refrigerator with all of the good foods everyone brought with them. On all of these trips, no one has ever lost weight even with all the hard work we do. As this was the Tuesday Group, extended trip, Phyllis had brought ice cream and we baked our own brownies, on two different nights.

The first job was to put a top rail around the platform we had built the year before and replace seven of the older steps. We picked up all of the lumber and tools needed for this job and drove to the job site. Half of the group, led by Sandy and Ed, started on the steps replacement and the other half, led by Bruce and Milton, started on trying to put the top rail on. We worked until about 1 p.m. and then stopped for lunch to eat our PB&J's, and tuna with crackers. After lunch, we worked until 4:30 then went back to the EEC. Some wanted to rest and others wanted to go for a hike through the park before supper. Each day, we would eat our evening meal around 6:30, pm, then clean up the kitchen. Afterward, some would watch Dancing With the Stars, and others would go for a night hike to see the Stars.

The second day we went back to the Platform and finished what was left of this work. This was about 12:00 noon, so we drove back to the EEC for our lunch and to get out of the 20-30 mph wind. After lunch, even with the strong winds, we opted to go to the beach to take down three Osprey Platforms. The hard part was to try not to tear down the sand dunes but still get the platforms down. Brian carried the ladder. Milton carried a hammer. Bruce carried a chainsaw. Mark and Richard came along to help hold the ladder. The work group wended their way to the top of the dunes. Cutting the platform from the pole then nailing a board onto the pole for a perch, we would then head back down the same way we had came up. After taking down all three poles, it was getting later and colder, so we drove back to the EEC for our group meal and another night hike.

On the third day, the wind was blowing out of the North about 30 to 40 mph. We had to decide on working in the wind putting up water gauges out in the water, or cutting a Safe Zone Break in the woods at the North Carolina line. It only took about 30 second for everyone to decide which job we would tackle on this day. We worked on the Safe Zone Break until about 1 p m and then headed back to the EEC for lunch. After lunch, we tried to work on installing a Binocular at one of the Park's platforms but with the wind and cold temperatures, we then opted to stay inside and rest.

The last day was our free day, the winds were blowing out of the West, Southwest, and the temperature was going to be in the 50's. After our big breakfast of French Toast made by Jane, we loaded up into the truck and drove South where Bruce had set up one of his famous compass courses. After dividing the group into A Team, and B Team, with a short class on the do's and the don'ts of a compass, Bruce turned them loose. He then drove to the finish line, which was the platform we had been working on the day before. Each team had to find five bottles that were place along the route. The race was on for the prize, a box of Chocolate Turtles, which went to the winning team that found their five bottles and got to the platform first. A team headed East, while B team headed West. With all the wind and rain in the park for the past two weeks, some of the bottles had came untied from the trees where Bruce had placed them. This made it a little harder for each team to find them, but being the true TATC'ers that they are, both teams found all five bottles and finished the course. A Team did finish just a little bit before the B Team, (about 40 minutes), but all had a good time. Hopefully, they all learned something about the compass. We still had time for another hike up to Snow Hill, were we took some group pictures, and then headed back to the EEC for our lunch. The time had come to pack everything back into the bus and head out of the park. Everyone said they had a good time and wanted to come back next year. We got back to Little Island City Park about 2:00 p m and said our good-bye's. I will have another trip sometime in the spring of 2009, and hope to see you then.

TIDEWATER APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

Saturday, December 6, 2008

6-11 p.m.

WHRO STUDIOS

5200 Hampton Blvd, Norfolk

Dinner will be potluck, so please bring your favorite entrée, salad, appetizer, dessert or any combination of these. \$5.00 will be collected at the door to help cover expenses. Come dressed for holiday fun, games door prizes, and music.

Entertainment will be provided by a local band,
from 9-11 p.m.

Questions? E-mail Nancy Babor at: social@tidewateratc.com



Nightscape 2008-10-10

By Bill Rogers

With the owner's permission, I'm camped next to a meadow. I have Three Ridges to the East, a low ridge to the North, the massive Priest to the West, and a tree-lined stream at my back. I had stopped at the Crossroads Store in North Garden, Virginia for a most marvelous corned beef on rye for lunch, fully an inch and a half thick, replete with lettuce, tomato, and mayo. There I also purchased a chicken salad in a Kaiser Bun, and a quite selectable-delectable looking chocolate éclair for supper. Sinful, I know.

Stretching after my long drive, I take a pleasant walk, finding golden rod, tiny white asters, and bits of autumn color. One or two bright purple thistles dot the landscape. Two waist high logs in the meadow attest to selective lumbering on the ridge above. The stream disappears for yards at a time, leaving naught but a dry, rock-strewn streambed. Then it magically reappears for a short distance before disappearing once more.

I sit on the truck's tailgate, enjoying my feast, as the last of the late afternoon sun lights Three Ridges, and places the Priest in silhouette. The Hanging Rock edifice is plain to see. Crows caw. Blue jays scream. A song-bird twitters. Yon sparrow hawk hunts for its dinner over the meadow as I enjoy the scene. My T-shirt is covered with a long-sleeved shirt as the sun dips behind the mountain, bringing autumn's chill to the air. Crickets and other insects provide a sylvan serenade as I dine. The Eclair is enjoyed leisurely and with decorum.

Comfortable in my deck chair, I sit quietly enjoying the tranquility, the scenery, and the quietude. A few filmy cirrus clouds, and spoke-like contrails, decorate the sky as my surroundings sink into partial darkness. I say partial, because a three-quarter moon has lifted over the tree tops just to the South. Each pebble, rock, blade of grass, and tree leaf is plainly visible.

The Priest, the ridge to the North, Hanging Rock, Three Ridges, Chimney Rock, and trees, turn to black silhouettes against the sky. The few clouds and contrails overhead gradually turn light orange, then a deep burnt orange as the sun retreats farther and farther behind the western horizon. Soon a bright spot appears to the right, and even with, the peak of the Priest. 'Tis a planet. As cloud color disappears a few of the brighter stars appear, fighting brilliant moonlight. Its journey complete, the planet sets.

Three stars in the Big Dipper's handle give me enough to confirm North. Another three stars in the Little Dipper, then Cassiopeia, back up North's direction. Cygnus, the swan, very high overhead, flies down the invisible Milky Way. Orion, the Great Hunter, relaxes on his side just above tree tops to my south. A farm dog barks continually - warning the Moon to keep its distance. The insect chorus continues.

I crawl into my sleeping bag to continue my pleasant sky watch. During the night I hear a low, rumbling growl. It's close, very, very close. Ahhh, 'tis naught but my tummy doing its job. Two a.m. finds me up and about, taking a cool stroll under the bright moon. The dog is still voicing his threats. Mayhap the pooch is a changeling, or a transformer. By now he must be a little horse.

From the comfort of my sleeping bag I watch the moon retreat over the Priest's summit and disappear. Slowly, very slowly; the sky darkens. More stars appear. Farm dog ceases his endless barking. The insect hum softens, then, with the lowering temperature, gradually disappears. I sleep, and sleep well.

Kayak trip to Mobjack Bay

Henry Robertson

Mathews County is surrounded on three sides by waterways that include a dozen creeks, a river, and four bays. It protrudes eastward out into the Chesapeake Bay with the Mobjack Bay to the south and Hills Bay, Godfrey Bay, and the Piankatank River to the north. This is obviously an area well suited for water sports.

During warm weather there always seems to be some kind of boat attached to the top of my car. I'm not sure how it happens so I just accept it as a sign that I should be in the water. Recently, on an unusually warm Sunday, I received a call informing me that my brother was going to be moving to a bayside home. It occurred to me that this would certainly be an excellent time to pay him a "visit".

Since the location of his new abode is rather obscure on any maps that I possess, he suggested that I meet him in downtown Mathews. This is a quaint little town, typical of the middle and upper peninsulas – ten blocks long and three blocks wide. And like its sister towns, it has some excellent local restaurants with real home-cooked food. (Note: this is a TATC trip report so food has to be mentioned at least once.)

Well after a drive that would leave the best International Orienteering Federation members turning in circles, we finally arrived at a little strip of houses situated right on the shore of the Chesapeake Bay. As this is also the headquarters of the mosquito equivalent of the CINCLANTFLEET we made haste to get from the marshy side of the property to the beach side.

Once we were in the water all was well with the world. The "shallows" in that area extend out several hundred feet and have a mostly sandy bottom which makes it great for getting used to a new boat or practicing wet entries. One can spend hundreds of dollars on protective gear intended to keep the paddler dry (and stylish), but when I'm in a boat I expect to get wet. Of course when the water and air temperatures drop below 60F, then it's another story.

We decided to head south and visit the New Point Comfort Lighthouse which is now abandoned. Quite a bit of good information about the lighthouse and that part of the bay can be found at the following website - <http://www.newpointcomfort.com/home.html>. The short version is that it is approximately sixty-three feet high, was built between 1802-05 (third oldest on the Chesapeake Bay), was deactivated by the Coast guard in 1963, and restored in 1981. However, over time the keepers' house was lost and the strip of land connecting it to the mainland has been completely eroded away by hurricanes and strong currents. Today, it stands on a small island with rock breakers on the bayside and a sand bar to the shore. Over the last six years another effort has been underway to raise funds for a cosmetic facelift. It's a great place to paddle when the winds are moderate and one can easily pass through the shore side channel if you are uncomfortable with the bay side breakers (see chart at <http://www.charts.noaa.gov/OnLineViewer/12238.shtml>)

On the day we were out the winds were whipping up from the west. This meant that along the Chesapeake Bay shoreline things were pretty quiet and calm as we were protected by the land mass of the peninsula. We watched as the large container ships passed on the far side of the bay making their way to and from ports in Maryland. Of course, pelicans and seagulls were en masse on the island and were taking advantage of the currents around the shoals to devour as many fish as they could stuff themselves with. It reminded me of a TATC group Sunday "brunch" after a long hike. I wonder if their membership is active.

Once we rounded the point at the lighthouse, however, Mobjack Bay was in turmoil and we faced one to two foot chop. For those paddlers that don't mind a little water this is where the excitement begins. Although the wind is in your face it is great fun to rise over one row of waves and crash down through the next one. In recreational kayaks one has a difficult time paddling into the wind and against the current at the same time partially because of the inefficiencies in the hull design (however these are more stable for beginners) and the wind effect of your body and the boat's deck. However, it's worth every minute of hard paddling. Once you have played a while in this direction, turning around and "surfing" the waves back is a blast. There is no need to be concerned about danger here as the water is only three to four feet deep and at worst you'll get a little water in the boat or get yourself into the water.

A short distance around the point from the lighthouse there is a public landing and nature observation deck. This would be the primary location for those wanting to explore the lighthouse and this beautiful area. It has everything from big open waters to back creeks, white sandy beaches to small marshes and indigenous wildflowers, along with an interesting history that dates back to the earliest settlers.



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KEEN

A Novice's First Virginia AT Trip

by Kevin Du Bois

Aside from a snowshoe trip on a Vermont section of the AT in high school, I have not hiked the AT and it's been a long time since I backpacked or camped. That's why I joined the TATC – to recover and augment my backpacking skills. I'm planning a trip to Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons and want to get into mental and physical shape for that trip.

Frankly, I've been intimidated by the TATC club hikes, worried that I wouldn't be in shape enough or be geared up enough to hang with seasoned members. I joined the club in January of '08, took the Backpacking 101 Class that the club offered, have attended the Packing Light seminar at Blue Ridge Outfitters, and have slowly built up my gear arsenal. When a friend of mine invited me to go on an AT trip through the Priest Wilderness with only about 5 miles scheduled the first day and 5 miles the second day, I figured this was an ideal way to begin my on-the-trail learning curve.

Looking at the AT trail maps and, more importantly, the elevation sections, we decided on our route. We would drive up Friday after work and car camp at the Tye River. We found a shuttle driver from the AT Conservancy website that would ferry us from the Tye River to a state fish hatchery off Route 56 near Montebello (~2,700'). From there we would hike half 0.9 miles to the junction with the AT (at 3,454') and another half a mile to Spy Rock (3,680'), over Main Top Mountain (4,040'), and then on to the Priest Shelter – 4.6 miles total. The next day we'd summit the Priest (4,063') and then make our way down the mountain and back to the car at the Tye River – 4.8 miles total. With this route, we'd skip the difficult and long climb up the Priest – described in the Appalachian Trail Guide for Central Virginia as a "strenuous elevation change of 3,100 feet in four miles. The way we went, our climb to Spy Rock was about 1000' in a mile and a half and to the top of Main Top Mountain was another 440' in 0.3 miles. Steep but shorter. We would conquer the Priest going downhill.

We thought our planning was sound. But then the weather through us a curveball! Rain was forecast for Friday evening with an 80% chance of rain all day Saturday. What to do? We checked the weather again the day before our departure and the forecast had been clarified – rain Friday night and a 70% of rain on Saturday with clearing in the afternoon and nice weather on Sunday. We're going!

After a harrowing drive Friday night through rain and dense fog, we arrived at the Tye River and set up the big tent in the rain in record time. We put down our pads and unrolled our bags and fell fast asleep.

We overslept until 7 am and so we quickly packed up. The big tent was soaked so we decided to leave it standing with the hopes it would be dry when we returned the next day. We repacked our packs and got our shuttle ride at 8 am not bothering to bust out the Jetboil to make our oatmeal in the rain. At the fish hatchery, we spoke briefly with a guy who had gotten separated from his party, thought he got lost, and returned to the hatchery parking lot the night before. He was going to wait out the rain – we pressed on at 8:30. I know the climb was supposed to be a lot easier than going up the Priest, but was challenging enough to tell us we were not in good AT hiking shape. It was 0.9 miles climbing up the fish hatchery road (from about 2700') and another half mile climb to Spy Rock I felt a sense of accomplishment when we made it to Spy Rock and we shed our packs to explore. We found the lost guy's stag party at one of the Spy Rock camping areas and told them of his plans. They were packing up soaked sleeping bags and equipment. I heard somebody say something about a bad way to spend a birthday and that made the half drunk gallon of Southern Comfort make sense. These guys looked pitiful.

We scrambled up Spy Rock but unfortunately the rain and clouds blocked all the views. We made our way down, picked up our packs and continued our climb to Main Top Mountain. We were getting drenched by the rain but we were warm from the hiking. I was too warm and quickly realized on the way to Spy Rock that I had overdressed. I had quick dry pants and rain pants, a silk weight shirt, a polypro long sleeve shirt, a fleece sweater and rain coat. OK you vets, don't laugh too hard! I was not getting wet from the outside, but sweating like crazy and I did not want to take off layers in a full on downpour. My companions were not as lucky and they were getting drenched from the rain. On the way to Main Top, we started talking about alternative plans. I thought that if the rain stopped in the afternoon and we could build a fire at the Priest Shelter and dry some things out we could stick to the itinerary. My companions were very uncomfortable and wanted to hike all 11 miles back to the Tye and the car. I was worried about doing all those miles, held out hope for the possibility of a fire, but agreed to go with the majority decision.

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We made it to the Priest shelter around 12:30. It was wet. I don't know why, but I assumed the "code of the trail" or something would have a load of dry wood stockpiled by previous users of the shelter (sort of like at our club's cabin). There wasn't anything and the woods were soaked from the previous evening's and the day's downpour. By now, our boots were wet and socks were soaked. The water had wicked up my pants and my shirts were soaked with sweat. Water dripped off my saturated coat and hat/buff. My companions were worst off. Clothes and sleeping bags were soaked and without a chance of a fire and evening temps predicted to fall below freezing, we decided the only prudent thing was to keep going. We ate a cold lunch, donned our packs and headed back to the car at 1:10.

First we had to summit the Priest – up another 220' to 4,063'. The rain stopped at around 2:30 but the wind kept a steady sprinkle coming for another 45 min. or so. The steep descent from the Priest summit was very rocky and I was going slow – fearful of a twisted ankle. As we made our way down, we came across a beautiful overlook of the valley below. We took some pictures and wondered about how our hike would have been if we could have done it in the dry! Tired and sore and wet, we continued our controlled fall down the trail. We came across some salamanders reveling in the wetness of the leaf-strewn trail and we saw two large deer who were unafraid. As we made our way down, the trail got smoother, there were some level parts of the switchbacks, and we could open up our stride a little. We passed two pairs of hikers on their way up (God bless them!) and a single – all in shorts and T-shirts. One pair in particular was charging the climb and I just got my sorry a\$\$ out of their way as I watched in amazement! We had beautiful sun for about the last hour of our descent and that illuminated just how beautiful the surrounding woods were. But we were focused on going down. We heard the roar of the river, then some road noise, then we caught sight of the parking lot at the Tye. We made it back at right around 4 pm and one hiker was just leaving on his way up. Man, he better hurry to make the summit and a place to camp! It took us almost 3 hours to come down! We dumped the packs, changed into dry clothes, had some food and water, and took down the big tent. With the afternoon sun in full effect we took in the beautiful countryside scenery as we navigated back roads on our way to Charlottesville. We talked most of the way home about the trip and lessons learned. The trip was not fun, but it did speed the learning curve. Here's what this novice learned (no laughing allowed!):

1. Since we had the option, we probably should have waited out the rain and started hiking as late in the day as we could in order to make it to the shelter or campground by dark. That would have saved us a lot of misery and we would have been able to enjoy the views at Spy Rock and along the ridges we had labored so hard to attain.
2. I totally overdressed at the start of the day. I need to assess the effort needed for the trail section and dress accordingly.
3. Next time, I'm going to leave the utility tarp home – even if it may rain.
4. I'm soooooo glad I had trekking poles. They really helped me with the ups and downs!
5. I carried way too much food – doubling up on lunch and dinner portions and trail mix. I found that the hiking was an appetite depressant. We skipped breakfast and I wasn't even that hungry at lunch. Next time I'll be able to plan accordingly and save on food weight – the heaviest bag next to my tent and sleeping bag.
6. I wish I had studied the trail map (topo's) and x-sections to be able to mentally anticipate the climbs and downhill sections as I was on the trail. I think next time, I will laminate the trail section I'm going to hike each day and attach it to the outside of my pack so I can refer to it without taking the pack off or having someone else pull it out. Knowledge is power!
7. I should probably get some gators.
8. I'm never going to carry a heavy and expensive 35mm camera backpacking again. Anyone want to get me a pocketsize Cannon digital elph for Christmas?
9. I need to buy my own down sleeping bag and a waterproof stuff sack.
10. I need to start a movement that encourages AT hikers to stockpile some wood at or under shelters before they leave.

Anyone wishing to impart additional knowledge, commiseration, or condolences can reach me at kevin.dubois@norfolk.gov



Headstones in the Cemetery

By Marilyn Horvath

A phrase from a good book I just read lingered in my mind as I thought of our trips to the cemetery down the hill from the club's Cabin. It read, "...place a headstone upon his grave. Have them carve his name so there is at least that much of a token that he lived". (this excerpt is from "The Last Days of Dogtown" by Anita Diamant)

The thought that our Cabin is the result of Douglas Putman's family's resolution to keep a remembrance of the fact that he lived, as well as the markers on the graves of the Coffee family, etc. leads me to wonder how and why we don't much stop to think of those who lived before our time, and the contributions they made.

Garrison Keeler's daily five-minute talk on Public Radio where he celebrates the birthdates and writings of authors who contributed something to our culture, reminds us that we didn't spring on our own, but that we are the product of thoughts and contributions of many who went before us.

The graves we like to visit were of people who struggled, in most cases immensely more than we will ever imagine. Undoubtedly their stomachs were hungrier than ours, their lives less comfortable, their hopes more desperate.

I like knowing I was able to honor my father's name, Joseph Daube, on a little plaque in the Cabin under a window that I purchased when the Cabin needed extra cash to complete its construction. My father lived in times that were less secure in so many ways than are ours of today. Yet his vision and leadership as a Boy Scout Commissioner in New York City in the early Boy Scout movement inspired many young boys of his time. I'm sure that thanks to Douglas Putman, he and others whose names are remembered at the Cabin, would all make good companions.

I still own the portable typewriter my father purchased and on which he wrote, night after night, on light tissue paper made special to be airmailed to the boys fighting overseas in World War II. He told them news of their friends and memories of the wonderful camping trips they had together.



2008 Local Trails Maintenance Report

by Chris Sexton

73 volunteers worked 909 hours on 12 different local trail maintenance trips.

Local trails maintenance trips were made to False Cape State Park, First Landing State Park, New Quarter Park, Sandy Bottom Nature Park, Merchants Millpond State Park, and Fisherman's Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Trip Leaders included Bruce Julian, Bill Lynn, Pat Parker, Brenda Sullivan, Jim Sexton, Chris Sexton, Steve Babor, Nancy Rinkenberger, and Phyllis Neumann.

Many of the hours were earned at two multi-day extended trips at False Cape State Park. Local trails awards were presented in May and November 2008. A local trails rocker bar patch can be earned with 12 hours of local trails. A certificate is earned at 30 hours. Certificates are awarded for each hundred hours worked. 16 TATC members were awarded the new local trails caps for cumulative 75 hours of local trails work.

Trip leaders and participants are always welcome to join the TATC's local trail efforts. If anyone is interested in leading local trails maintenance trips at new parks, please contact Jim or Chris Sexton.



Activities Schedule

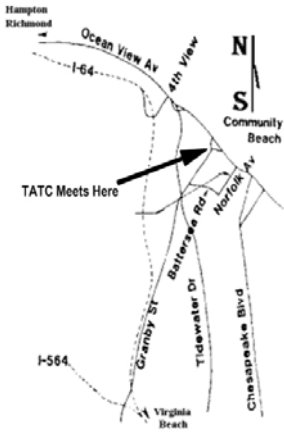
PLEASE NOTE: Most hikes are limited in the number of participants. The hike leader will take reservations on a first-come, first-served basis. You can include your name on the sign up sheets available at each meeting or call the hike leader. If you sign up for an activity and then decide not to participate, please contact the leader in advance.

December 2, 2008, Tuesday	Mark Wenger 253-0056	TATC Board of Directors Meeting - 7pm at the new Pretlow Library 111 West Ocean View Ave, Norfolk. Open to all members.
December 6, 2008 Saturday	Nancy Babor 588-7501	Annual TATC Holiday Party - This annual event is not to be missed. The location this year will be at the WHRO Studios 5200 Hampton Blvd, Norfolk, VA. This will be a Pot Luck so plan to bring a covered dish: appetizer, main course, salad or dessert. Soft drinks will be supplied. This year we are asking everyone to LABEL THEIR DISH; so folks with special dietary needs will know what's what! There'll be entertainment by "Slackdog" and door prizes. Dress is as casual or as fancy as you want to be. \$5 fee at the door. Festivities start at 6pm.
Note: There is no general membership meeting in December!!!!!!		
January 1, 2009 Thursday	Bill Rogers 484-6001	27th Annual New Year's Day Hike - Sleep late - we'll not meet until 8:00. Bring lunch, beverage, camera, and suitable open-country wind clothes. Due to permitting restrictions, trip limited to a total of 10 hikers. For details call Bill, others will.
January 6, 2009, Tuesday	Mark Wenger 253-0056	TATC Board of Directors Meeting - 7pm at the new Pretlow Library 111 West Ocean View Ave, Norfolk. Open to all members.
January 14, 2009 Wednesday	Mark Wenger 253-0056	TATC General Membership Meeting - 7:00pm at the new Pretlow Library, 111 West Ocean View Ave, Norfolk. Program: General Elections
February 3, 2009 Tuesday	Mark Wenger 253-0056	TATC Board of Directors Meeting - 7pm at the new Pretlow Library 111 West Ocean View Ave, Norfolk. Open to all members.
February 11 2009 Wednesday	Mark Wenger 253-0056	TATC General Membership Meeting - 7:00pm at the new Pretlow Library, 111 West Ocean View Ave, Norfolk. Program: Roy Hutchinson, "Alone in the Woods". This program is designed to teach children how not to get lost in the woods & what to do if lost
February 14, 2009 Saturday	Phyllis Neumann 757-566-4584	The Chocolate Hike - What better way to celebrate Valentine's Day?! Meander the wooded paths of the Noland Trail at the Mariners Museum in Newport News and rejoice in nature, winter's peace and the many joys of CHOCOLATE!! Grab your sweetheart and your favorite sweet and join in this annual outing. Bring enough goodies to share because this isn't just another walk in the park. This is your chance to compete in the ultimate contest of confections, tournament of treats and marathon of morsels. You think American Idol is big? Well, this is BIG! A team of judges (or maybe just one) will decide on the most deliciously unique confection(s) and fabulous prizes will be awarded. Don't miss out. Meet at the Mariners Museum parking lot at 10:30am. Lunch afterwards for the true chocolate warriors.
LOOKING AHEAD.....ATC will be offering Chainsaw (March 21-22) and CrossCut Saw (May 1-2) Certification Classes to be held at Sherando. Class size is limited so if you are interested in becoming a certified sawyer please contact Scott Hilton (625-6052) to sign up!		
SAVE THIS DATE!!!!!! July 17-24, 2009 ATC Biennial Conference - hosted by Vermont's Green Mountain Club to be held at Castleton State College in Castleton, VT. VISIT www.vermont2009.org for more info		
Old Dominion Appalachian Trail Club. We work closely with our neighbor club in Richmond. Please go to the attached web site for some of their offerings: www.odatc.net		
Tidewater Weekday Local Trails Group. If you would like to receive e-mail notifications of late breaking local hikes taking place during the week please send e-mail to Ellis Malabad malabad2@gmail.com requesting to be added to the e-mail distribution list		
The TATC/Douglas Lee Putman Memorial Cabin is available for rent. You must be a member and first attend an orientation / work weekend in order to rent. The cabin can be reserved 8 weeks (56 days) in advance. Please call Bob Adkisson at 627-5514 if you have any questions, or to check on availability / make reservations.		
Hikes and Activities. Please call Hikemaster Phyllis Neumann at 566-4584 or e-mail at VicePres@TidewaterATC.com with all hike and activities information. If you e-mail then be sure to identify yourself by full name and that this is a TATC event. Sign up sheets must be returned to the Hikemaster after the event, and will be saved for a period of several years. You may bring sign up sheets to the board or general meeting following the event, or mail them to the Hikemaster.		



Tidewater Appalachian
Trail Club
P. O. Box 8246
Norfolk, VA 23503

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TATC Meetings are held at the Pretlow Library, 111 West Ocean View Ave, Norfolk, VA

From Peninsula: Take 64 East to 4th View Exit 273. At bottom of ramp, turn left at stop sign, turn right onto Ocean View Ave and follow over Tidewater Drive to Granby St. Take right onto Granby St., take next right onto A View Ave, and then immediately turn right onto Portview Ave., bear right around the Library into the Library parking lot, meeting is held in Meeting Room #2

From Norfolk and Virginia Beach: Take 64 West toward Hampton/Richmond. Take the Chesapeake Blvd. exit. Go to end of Chesapeake Blvd., then turn left onto Ocean View Ave. and take left onto Granby St., take next right onto A View Ave, and then immediately turn right onto Portview Ave., bear right around the Library into the Library parking lot, meeting is held in Meeting Room # 2

