

Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club Appalachian Hiker

www.tidewateratc.com



December 2015 - January 2016

Prez Sez

This is my last newsletter essay in the capacity as your president. First let me wish all of you the very best of holidays and the brightest of new years. I am so very proud of all the accomplishments of the club in the last year. Membership continues to diversify and stay strong in numbers. After a lull, more people are volunteering and getting involved. Our section of the Appalachian Trail has never looked better; as well as the many other trails and items we take care of such as our wonderful cabin. The club continues to be very active with fellow clubs, agency partners and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. We had one of the strongest showings at the recent Biennial outside of the host club. All this points to a vibrant and dynamic organization and that is due entirely to each and every one of you willing to participate in some way or fashion. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you each do and your commitment to the future. Thank you for allowing me to serve you these last two years. Looking forward, we have a wonderful slate of officers, who I have no doubt will build on what has happened and far surpass what I and others have done and that is as it should be. Thank you all.

Mark Wenger
TATC President
president@tidewateratc.com

TATC CABIN AVAILABLE

For information on the TATC Cabin contact: [Bob Adkisson \(757-627-5514\)](mailto:Bob Adkisson) or (cabin@tidewateratc.com)

Membership

Are you receiving the TATC blast e-mails? If not, please e-mail me and I will add your e-mail to our list.

Welcome to these new members: Jay Connolly, Richard & Janice Irby, Lynwood & Kris Wayman, Fred & Fran Adams and Keith Forbes.

Mary Hormell
Membership Chair
membership@tidewateratc.com

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(banner photo by Mark Ferguson)



Visit our website at
www.tidewateratc.com

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Publication Information

Title: Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club Appalachian Hiker
Issue Date: December 2015 - January 2016
Frequency: Bimonthly
Address: Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club, P. O. Box 8246, Norfolk, VA 23503-0246
41st Edition, 6th Issue
Price: Free

A Minute and a Paragraph for Trail Maintenance

Our recent Fall Maintenance and Family Camping Weekend on October 16-18, 2015, had a record 95 people participating either in trail maintenance for our almost eleven miles of A.T. assigned to TATC and associated trails, or in preparing our Saturday night club-sponsored buffet. That was a lot of boots on the ground! I'm proud of the outpouring of effort that was shown by this turn-out, and pleased that we had such good Fall weather to enjoy as we worked, and enjoyed the various views from our trail.

That completes our 2015 calendar-year's worth of maintenance by the club on our assigned trail. We look forward to 2016, when we expect to continue to keep our assigned section of trail safe, inviting, and rewarding to hike or backpack. Our expected dates for 2016's maintenance events are:

- Spring Walk-thru: May 7, 2016.
- Spring Maintenance & Family Camping Weekend: May 13-15, 2016.
- Swing Blade & Lopper Festival: July 9, 2016.
- Fall Maintenance & Family Camping Weekend: October 14-16, 2016.

Please plan to join us for these events, and support our Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club as it tries to live up to its name.

Mark Connolly

TATC Trail Supervisor

trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com

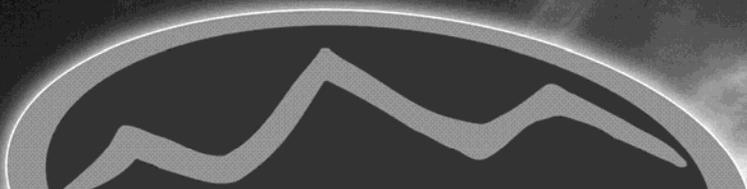


TATC Elections

TATC will hold elections at the next General Membership Meeting on Wednesday, January 13th. Listed below are the nominees for club offices:

- President - Juliet Stephenson
- Vice President - Greg Seid
- Treasurer - Ed Welp
- Secretary - Judy Welp
- Trail Supervisor - Jim Newman
- Assistant Trail Supervisor - Mark Connolly
- Counselor - Phyllis Neumann





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Spring or Fall It's Still Clean *By Bruce Julian*

On November 1st, Eleven Volunteers met at Little Island City Park, where all groups going into False Cape State Park meet. There were 5 Women and 6 Men who showed up for the 9 mile bus trip into the park. On this trip, we had Diana Ramsey, Nancy Pruden, Faye Bailey, Mark Connolly, Mike McCarthy, Milton Beale, John Gillikin, with Jane & John Oakes and Margaret & Bruce Julian. We met at 2:00 P.M. and we were on our way in by 2:30 P.M., along with all the food and gear that we would need for the 5 day trip. Because of the distance that you travel through Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and then the six miles, half-way through the False Cape State Park, you always need to bring everything that you need; so that you don't need to run back out to pick-up forgotten items. Once we get to False Cape, who wants to leaves anyways, it is a little paradise with the Atlantic Ocean on one side and Back Bay on the other side, with large Sand Hills covered with Loblolly Pines and Live Oak Trees, tucked away in the Southeast corner of Virginia.

On this volunteer trip; we painted, cleaned, cut limbs, pressured washed, nailed, raked, hiked and ate. In the Environmental Education Center (EEC), where we stayed, we had some great meals each day prepared by different volunteers for each meal. You need to eat well to work hard, and we did. On our first day of work, we had a little rain in Paradise, so we headed to the Visitor Center (VC) to do some painting inside, some cleaning and then we oiled the rocking chairs on the front porch. It may not be Spring Cleaning but that's what we did for our VC, because we sometimes get as many visitors in the Winter as we get in the Summer, so we want to look good year-round. The second day, the rain stopped, so we worked outside washing windows and screens in the VC.

We had divided into two groups, with some going to the pump house to pressure wash and paint the building, which turned out looking great. The third day we sent two Volunteers back to the VC to finish up on some of the work that wasn't done on the day before, and the rest of the group picked up rakes, loppers and hedges trimmers to do some Trail Maintenance. We started with the Maple Leaf Trail, 0.7 miles long from Back Bay across the park to the Atlantic Ocean. This trail gives visitors a chance to see the different ecosystems with the tall Pines and the Hardwood Trees changing over to shorter bushy Pines and Live Oak Trees, with dark dirt changing to all-white sand within the short distance of the 0.7 mile trail.

The next trail was the South Inlet, where Visitors hike the 0.3 mile out to a platform which overlooks the waters of Back Bay. After our Lunch Break, we headed towards the Cemetery Trail. It is one of the most used trails in the Park, starting where the park tram makes it most Southern stop. Visitors can hike 0.5 miles to the Church Site, where for over 80 years, the people of Wash Woods attended Church. School Groups also use this trail to enjoy hiking through the park and out to the ocean. The next and final trail we worked on was the Maritime Trail where the Cemetery Trail ends. This 0.7 mile trail is all sand, with areas of Live Oak and Pine Trees, going by one of our tallest platforms, where when you are on top of it, you can see a view of Back Bay and you can see miles and miles of the Ocean. After our Breakfast on Thursday, two of our group drove back to the VC, to do one last job while the rest of us packed their our gear and cleaned the EEC. It was another great time for all of us Volunteers, and we enjoyed our stay at the old Swan Hunt Club (the EEC). We are looking forward to our next stay and we would like to say "Thanks" to all of the Park Staff.



Sherando Maintenance Weekend - October 2015

By Mal Higgins

The semi-annual TATC maintenance weekend was held this year October 16-18, 2015, with base camp at the Williams Branch picnic site inside Sherando USFS Campground. The weather was perfect with high temps in the low 60s and nighttime temps in the high 30s. Not a drop of rain. The tent camping on the grounds was as good as it gets: a nice carpet of dry leaves, no dew, chilly but not freezing, and the night sounds of the forest.

The weekend maintenance efforts are focused on tough projects on TATC's 11 miles of the Appalachian Trail, but maintenance efforts also extended to the Mau Har Trail, Bald Mountain Trail, St. Mary's Wilderness, the White Rock Gap Trail near the TATC cabin, and a variety of collateral jobs. These include major cleanups of the club's two shelters, Maupin Fields and Harpers Creek, where trash is removed, fire pits cleaned out, privies cleaned, and any discarded detritus is bagged and hauled out.

Under the able leadership of Mark Connolly, Trail Supervisor, Bruce Julian, Tool Boss, and other members who had faithfully performed maintenance on their assigned sections throughout the year, job tasks sheets were assembled and the Sherando campers signed up for the jobs. In the meantime, Counselor Stephanie Stringer and a devoted group of helpers organized a fantastic "potato bar extravaganza" for Saturday night.

I joined a group consisting of John Oakes, Nancy Rinkenberger, Sandra Canepa, Bruce Davidson, Michael Camlet and Juliet Stephenson to tackle the Mau Har Trail. We drove in on the fire road to Maupin Field, and spent the next six hours on the Mau Har. We had only one moderate sized blowdown tree to cut and clear with our cross cut saw, as it turned out, and reached the lower falls of Campbell Creek mid-day. Campbell Creek was full of water, the continuing runoff of Hurricane Joaquin and its associated weather. Fall colors of the trees were muted golds and yellows. I have never seen the creek so full, and the various falls provided a number of scenic, gushing water-courses. We saw a number of campers who had established their tents in the woods near the creek.

On our return, we lingered at Maupin Field, waiting for Ned Kuhns to catch us. Ned had gone out on the Mau Har on an Appalachian Trail Conservancy project to survey, itemize and list manmade improvements such as water bars, stone stair work, bridges on the various trails. The idea apparently is to develop a dollar figure that would represent a replacement cost of the trails. Sounds voodoo to me!

Back at Sherando, potato chip hour began at about 5:00 as maintainers returned to Williams Branch. About 6:00, Stephanie brought the crowd to order and launched the ravenous mob, swelled to a count of about 80 people, with the admonition to "don't take all the bacon if you are in the front of the line". By the time I reached the potato bar, the bacon was gone, but there were so many other toppings it didn't matter. Together with a nice salad, the meal restored the carbs burned up in the maintenance effort.

Sunday was a day for hiking for many of us and another day of maintenance for Bruce Julian, Mark Connolly, John Oakes, Milton Beale, Nancy Pruden, and others. They headed up the A.T. to take out the "mother of all blowdowns". Two hiking groups formed up to hike our section of the A.T. from opposite directions and key swap in the middle. Our hiking group—Bruce Davidson, Jim Newman, Sandra Canepa, Jack Shepherd, Steve Clayton, Ed Welp, Duncan Fairlie, Judy Doty, Bob Mooney, Christine Woods and me—got a slightly late start from the Tye River A.T. trailhead due to the tyranny of technology. I struggled to master the trick of how to cause Ned Kuhn's RAV 4 tailgate to automatically power close. No luck with all permutations of buttons, key fobs, and advice and attempts by others. We finally consulted the owner's manual and found a "power off" switch in Ned's glove compartment. Ahhh, we shut it the old fashioned way.

Our group hiked the club's full section of the A.T., about 11 miles, north from the Tye River and up over Three Ridges. We reached the blowdown crew, who had already accomplished the first cut through with their cross cut saw, and were working on the next cut. Feeling slightly guilty, I wished them well and with Bruce's help, we clambered over the blowdown and scuttled off. We heard later that the "mother of all blowdowns" was no match, and now the A.T. is clear.

(Continued on Page 7...)

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Later in the day as we were nearing the summit of Three Ridges, we swapped car keys with a second group of hikers led by Ned, which was southbound on the A.T. from Reid's gap. Also on Sunday, Bob Adkisson and Juliet Stephenson were leading a shorter hike of 4-6 miles elsewhere. We didn't linger with Ned's group, and moved on up to the summit. Pausing for a bit of lunch, we were greeted by a hunting dog wearing a radio transmitter on its collar. It was really thirsty and Sandra produced her Gore-Tex cap, turned it inside out, and we filled it with water, which the dog gratefully drank. Our phone signal was too weak to reach the owner, whose name and phone was on the collar. Sandra kept the number that we wrote down, called the owner later, and learned that the owner who lived near Three Ridges retrieved his dog Monday.

As we hiked along we encountered a small group of three or four hiking buddies who we had seen on the Mau Har Saturday. One of them, a young man named Ethan, had literally walked in from Reid's Gap barefoot on Saturday, walked the Mau Har barefoot evidently, and was hiking barefoot on Sunday too on the A.T. Amazing! We chatted with him and he said he'd been doing it for many years, but admitted that the two days of hiking had made his ankle muscles sore. We saw him and his buddies down near Reid's Gap at the end, and he had donned some very light weight runner "socks". Yes, a concession to shoes.

As we wound our way from Maupins Field to Reid's Gap we savored the late afternoon sunshine slanting through the trees and the final walk out to the cars. Jim was part of our faster hikers, and his group awaited us. We made the short drive down state route 664 to Sherando, where Chris and Sandra joined the Pisones for one more night in the woods. Williams Branch was empty and silent, beautiful in the setting sun, so different than the night before. The rest of us said goodbye and pointed our cars home to Tidewater. What a fun and strenuous weekend.

Roots and Wings

Greg Seid & Rosanne Cary

It's all hands on deck! Rosanne Cary and Greg have teamed up to spearhead the effort to drive membership and everyone's help is needed. Many who have been with the club for many, many years have given so much to this club and the time has come to raise a new generation to carry the flag.

So how do we get there? The basic concept is for members to do one recurring activity each year. Members can go it alone or team up with a partner. Activities can be a partial day, day, weekend or extended trip. Most folks can easily do a weekend or less so that's where we are asking members to focus their chosen activity. Activities can be as simple as a class on knots to an extended backpacking trip. Each member would decide on an event they can sustain year after year as long as possible.

We want to have this ironed out by the end of February 2016. For transparency and to negate the duplication of effort, there will be an excel spreadsheet on the back table at each club meeting so you can add your activity, update and/or see who is doing what. We'll also include this information in our club newsletter but be sure to close the action by getting your activity information to Juliette who will insure it gets on the club calendar for meetup and our club website as the time draws near.

As far as events go, the sky's the limit. You can search the internet for parks for just about any type activity and go from there. If you've never led an activity then please get with someone who has. It's not as difficult as it might seem. You may choose to start with something easy like a class or an activity in the Hampton Roads area. There will also be a list of suggested activities at each meeting on the back table.

The current generation of trail maintainers have given this club roots...now it's time to bring in new members and give them wings

WHEN THE DOLLY IS NOT SO JOLLY AND THE PAINS OF THE PLAINS

By Mal Higgins

What could be more enticing than a fine, October weekend in the Roaring Plains Wilderness and Dolly Sods Wilderness in the Monongahela National Forest of West Virginia? That's what I was looking forward to the first weekend of October, an extended trip on October 2-5, 2015. I envisioned the bright red blaze of wild blueberry bushes, the yellow and gold hues of all the deciduous trees, the gurgle of the South Prong of Red Creek, the rush of Roaring Creek, and the vast panoramic views from the Allegheny Front, the Flat Rock Plains, the Roaring Plains and the Canyon Rim Trail. Well, I didn't get much of that! Hurricane Joaquin and another weather front moving in from Canada had a different plan.

As the departure time approached on Friday, our original group of seven TATCers dwindled down to three as the weather forecast never varied: rain and lots of it. The reasons for our reduced numbers were variations on the theme "It's raining and I don't want to get wet". Smart! But, Bruce Davidson, Juliet Stephenson, and I rolled out of Tidewater with a "what the heck; maybe we'll get lucky" approach. After all, we were all weather hikers. We drove without incident in a solid rain the entire way to Dolly Sods Red Creek Campground, dispelling our hope that we would get lucky. Arriving, we found only three of the twelve campsites had occupying tents, so campsite availability was not a problem. We set up our own tents in the rain on the hard packed site. Tent pegs were difficult to push in to the ground, which with the rain seemed to have turned into modified concrete. Bruce rigged a tarp over the picnic table, adding a homey touch and the promise of a slightly protected cooking area.

It was foggy, rain coming down, and visibility was perhaps 50 yards, lending a mysterious, quiet feel to the place. No birds, no human chatter, no campfires—just stillness and rain. After the long ride we were anxious to hike before it got dark and we went for a day hike on the Blackbird Knob Trail nearby inside Dolly Sods. The trail winds through some nice forest areas and also open, rocky meadows with large boulders. There were no views, but places where we knew there would be a view in better weather. As we walked and splashed along, we got a bit wet from the persistent rain, but the spirit of the outdoors was upon us. We returned to our tent site, fired up our stoves, ate our evening meal, and joked about what a pleasant evening it was. The tarp did a nice job of keeping the worst of the rain off us. Darkness fell early, and by about 7:00 p.m. it was time to turn in for the long night ahead. Sigh, so many hours to lie there.

I had resealed the seams on my decades old Eureka tent last summer and I had misplaced confidence in the tent's waterproofness. As darkness fell, the wind picked up appreciably and the sides of the tent sagged in badly on top of Bruce and me. Bruce complained of water dripping on his face from somewhere in the tent ceiling. I noticed that my Thermarest air mattress was on top of some water on the floor of the tent, and the sagging tent walls were touching my sleeping bag. Juliet was in her nearby tent. I slumbered somewhat fitfully. About 10:30 Juliet announced to me from outside that her tent and sleeping bag were soaked and she was going to get in the car but needed me to unlock it. As I fumbled in the tent pocket for the car key, I could not find it. Turning on my flashlight, I discovered that Bruce had already moved to the car while I was asleep. I was abandoned in a wet and leaking tent!

It poured all night. By morning, I had managed to remain somewhat dry on top of a very wet tent floor, and with a synthetic fill bag, I didn't lose heat. At daybreak, 7:00 a.m., I joined Bruce and Juliet who were contorted up in awkward, too short, seats of my car. Bruce said he hadn't slept in a car for 30 years! I feigned a good night's sleep to torment them. We all agreed we needed to cook some breakfast, break camp, and get moving on some kind of a modified hiking plan. None of us wanted to do our original plan to full backpack up into Roaring Plains remote areas, and campout two more nights to see all the anticipated fall colors and views. We knew the views were non-existent. But, in reality, I knew, too, that I didn't want to struggle all day in the relentless rain just to pitch a tent that night, and then do the same thing the following day.

We drove a few miles along Forest Road 19, exiting the Dolly Sods Wilderness and entering the area of the Roaring Plains West Wilderness. This wilderness was created in 2009 in the Wild Monongahela Act along with other wildernesses throughout the United States as part of the Public Lands Management Act of 2009, and lies to the south of Dolly Sods Wilderness. It is less maintained and has only four official trails—Flatrock Run, Roaring Plains, South Prong, and Boars Nest—which generally are only identified at their trailheads and have few to no other blazes. Some unofficial trails, such as the Canyon Rim Trail and the Tee Pee Trail, exist too, and were part of our original backpacking plan, now abandoned.

We commenced our (now) day hike at the east leg trailhead on FR 19 of the South Prong Trail. I've been on the west leg of the South Prong in other years, so this leg of the trail was new to all of us. We picked it because we determined we would not have the three stream crossings of the South Prong of Red Creek, something that could be quite dangerous with the heavy, week long rain from the storm fronts.

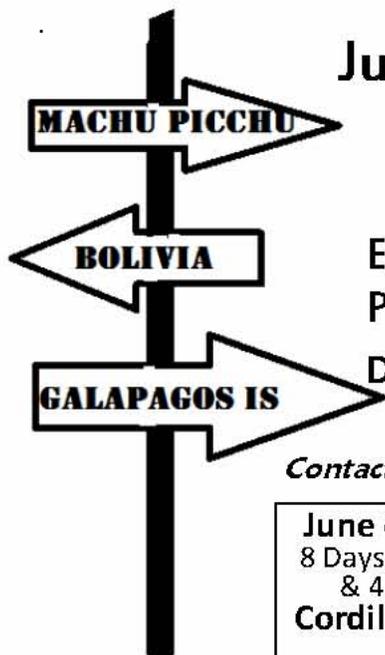
The east leg of the South Prong Trail begins with many feet of boardwalk across an upland bog, but when the boardwalk ran out it was essentially a small stream in many places. There were some red blueberry bushes, but zero views. Just rain and fog. The trail, compacted by time, created a channel that the surrounding lands drained into. We gave up trying to skirt the edges and rock hop, and just splashed along for miles. We had one unanticipated crossing of a small, unnamed stream coursing its way downhill, which added to our fun, but we could rock hop across it. The temperature was tolerable, probably mid-40s, but with our activity level we were comfortable.

Reaching another main Forest Service Road, FR 70, we completed our circuit loop back to the car on FR 70. We were amazed at the numerous places where water flowing down from the Plains was rushing in torrents off the slopes and through culverts under FR70, as it headed to the South Prong of Red Creek. It was late in the day and we had had enough in our 36 hours of "Almost Heaven, West By God Virginia".

Pretty well drenched, cold, and disappointed at the nasty forecast for more of the same, we ended this trip with a side trip to visit Seneca Rocks, twelve miles away. There, a reconstructed demonstration homestead, originally from the 1860s and owned by Confederate soldier William Sites, is fun to wander through. Numerous signs describe the food and medicinal values of the demonstration garden's vegetables. As darkness fell, we drove home. Hurricane Joaquin and the general bad weather on the East Coast meant that the Dolly wasn't so jolly, and the Plains gave us some pains.

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Hike Safety during Hunting Season

December and January are a favorite time of the year for hunting. Here are a few simple steps that you can take to make sure you stay safe as you hike into this year's hunting season:

- 1. Be aware.** Know when hunting seasons start and end and about particular regulations that affect hunting. Some States forbid hunting on Sundays; some forbid discharging firearms for one hour after dawn and before dusk. Read up on federal, state and local hunting regulations. Be aware that bow hunting usually starts a few weeks prior to hunting with firearms in many areas. State Departments of Fish and Game or Natural Resources are good starting points for information.
- 2. Be seen.** A blaze-orange hat fights the chill and increases your visibility. An inexpensive blaze orange pack cover keeps gear dry and makes you hard to mistake for a deer! Since many hunters are out at dusk and dawn, be sure your vest has reflective panels to be seen in dim light.
- 3. Be smart.** Despite the best efforts of hunters, resource managers and hikers, some areas are not safe to hike in during hunting season. Talk to local hiking clubs to get the scoop on areas best avoided during hunting season.
- 4. Be heard.** If you hear hunters in the area, or hear shots, speak up. A loud "Hikers on the Trail!" will politely make everyone aware of your presence.



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.

TATC Board Meeting

Contact: Mark Wenger (253-0056)

When: December 1, 2015, Tuesday, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Where: Public Library: Mary D Pretlow Anchor Branch, 111 W Ocean View Ave, Norfolk, VA 23503 ([map](#))

Description: TATC Board Meeting to discuss general business. Guests Are Always Welcome!

TATC Holiday Party

Contact: Jim Newman (757-814-1467 or jimnewman55@cox.net)

When: December 5, 2015, Saturday, 7:00-10:00 PM

Where: Unitarian Church of Norfolk, 739 Yarmouth St., Norfolk, VA ([map](#))

Description: Each individual/family is asked to bring a food dish. Dinner at 6:00, entertainment & dancing 7:00-10:00. Adult beverages OK. Chris of Colonial DJs will return to furnish music & group dance instruction. \$5 at the door.

Wreath Making Project

Contact: Diana Ramsey (619-0540 or magnoliafarms@cox.net)

When: December 6, 2015, Sunday, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

Where: False Cape State Park, 4001 Sandpiper Rd, Virginia Beach, VA 23456, United States ([map](#))

Description: We will be gathering fresh greenery, pines and grape vine to make your very own fresh holiday wreath. All supplies are furnished, including a wonderful hot lunch for all to enjoy the afternoon. Limited space, \$25.00 per person will be collected on the bus. Meet at Back Bay Wildlife Refuge for the ride into the park at 9am.

TATC Board Meeting

Contact: Mark Wenger (253-0056)

When: January 5, 2016, Tuesday, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Where: Public Library: Mary D Pretlow Anchor Branch, 111 W Ocean View Ave, Norfolk, VA 23503 ([map](#))

Description: TATC Board Meeting to discuss general business. Guests Are Always Welcome!

Happy Hiker Hour

When: January 7, 2016, Thursday, 6:00-8:00 PM

Where: Smartmouth Brewing Co., 1309 Raleigh Ave., Norfolk, VA 23507 ([map](#))

Description: TATC Happy Hour Get Together, all welcome, no reservations required, just show up. 1100 square-foot Tasting Room. Stop by to socialize. Alcohol optional - non-alcoholic beverages are available.

TATC General Membership Meeting

Contact: Mark Wenger (253-0056)

When: January 13, 2016, Wednesday, 7:00-8:30 PM

Where: Norfolk Public Library: Mary D Pretlow Anchor Branch, 111 W Ocean View Ave, Norfolk, VA 23503, United States ([map](#))

Description: General Membership Meeting, Guests Are Always Welcome! Come a little early to socialize, purchase new TATC merchandise, and buy your 50/50 raffle tickets! General Business and Annual TATC Elections.



(Continued on Page 11...)

Activities Schedule

(Continued from Page 10...)

ANNUAL FREEZEREE 2016 NEW HAMPSHIRE: LET'S GET CHILLY!

Contact: Mal Higgins 905-9150

When: February 1-6, 2016 Monday-Saturday

Where: Franconia Notch State Park, White Mountain National Forest, Mt. Lafayette, Cannon Mountain, Lonesome Lake AMC Hut in New Hampshire "Live Free or Die"

(Map link) http://www.nhstateparks.org/uploads/pdf/FranconiaHikingMapAllWeb_2010.pdf

(Hut link) <http://www.outdoors.org/lodging/huts/lonesome/>

Cost: \$27.00 AMC member/\$33.00 plus tax non AMC member per night. See required registration information below. Space is limited.

Description: Lots of snow, below freezing temperatures, high winds, icy trails, all uphill ascents! After all, this is winter. Experienced winter backpackers only. Four nights at Lonesome Lake Hut, operated on "winter, self-service" basis. Pack and cook own food. Snowshoes, and Microspikes or crampons required. Drive I-93 to Lincoln and spend night 1 in motel. Share rooms and cost of motel. Day 2 hike choice of peaks, and conclude day 2 by full backpack hike in to AMC Hut Lonesome Lake (Lonesome Lake Hut is just 1.6 miles from the trailhead) for four (4) night hut stay, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights [unheated bunk rooms (this means below freezing!); caretaker after 4:00 p.m.]. Day 3, Day 4, Day 5 local hikes out and back from AMC Hut Lonesome Lake, to include Mt. Lafayette (5260 feet, above tree line, highest peak in Franconia Range), Cannon Mtn. (4180 feet), Little Haystack (4840 feet) and other steep, icy, and treacherous peaks on Franconia Ridge. Day 6, Saturday, hike out and drive home. NOTE: To be part of the trip, you must not only contact Mal Higgins but register yourself for four nights using an Appalachian Mountain Club Group Booking Instructions page that Mal will send you by email attachment to sign up and pay. Depart 8:00 a.m. Monday, February 1, 2016, from parking lot, Virginia Beach side of Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel and drive to Lincoln, NH; return home Saturday February 6, 2016.

The Chocolate Hike

Contact: Phyllis Neumann (phyllisneumann@hughes.net)

When: February 7, 2016, Sunday, 9:30 AM-2:00 PM

Where: Mariner's Museum (100 Museum Drive, Newport News, VA <http://www.marinersmuseum.org>)

Description: Join your fellow chocolate lovers for this Pre-Valentine's Day Hikette on the Noland Trail. This revered annual event challenges participants to explore their wildest chocolate fantasies by creating culinary masterpieces for fellow TATC'ers to sample. Will you be able to tempt the shrewd and discerning palate of the completely impartial and honorable Judge? Here's how it works: Meet at the Mariner's Museum (100 Museum Drive, Newport News, VA, <http://www.marinersmuseum.org>) at 9:30 AM. Bring a chocolate confection (that you have created) for the Judge (that would be Phyllis) and your fellow hikers to sample. Then we'll hike the Noland trail (~ 3 miles) taking multiple breaks along the way to continue sampling the entries. At the conclusion of the hike, prizes will be awarded for the tastiest and most unique creations. And then we'll eat lunch afterwards! Contact Phyllis to sign up!

Club Activities and Opportunities:

- **Local Trails Maintenance:** If you would like to receive E-mail notification about TATC Local Trails Maintenance activities, please send an E-mail to Bill Buck at LocalTrails@tidewateratc.com requesting to be added to the Local Trails E-mail distribution list. Trail maintenance may include weed cutting, brush and tree trimming, removal of small blown down trees, painting of trail blazes, repairing walkways and creating trails. Other special projects may be performed, such as building water bars to prevent erosion, building and repairing foot bridges, as well as building benches and other structures. Skills used in these efforts are also useful for AT maintenance.
- **Tuesday Group** - If you would like to receive e-mail notifications of the Tuesday Group's local hikes, bicycle rides, and paddles taking place during the week (usually on **Tuesdays**) please send e-mail to Ellis Malabad malabad2@gmail.com requesting to be added to the "Tuesday Group" 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 want to check on availability, or want to make reservations.

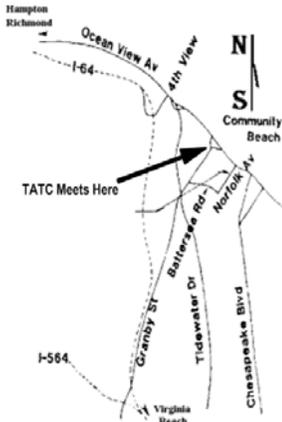
Information for Hike & Activities Schedule, TATC website listings and Meet up postings are collected & edited by the Hikemaster. Contact Juliet Stephenson at hikemaster@tidewateratc.com for publication.



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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 for 1.1 miles and turn right 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. Continue for 0.8 miles and turn left onto Granby St. and then directly right into the Library parking lot, meeting is held in Meeting Room # 2

