

Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club Appalachian Hiker

www.tidewateratc.com



October 2011 - November 2011

Prez Sez

Another summer fades into memory as we look forward to the colors and adventures of fall. This past summer will be a tough act to follow considering the fun and success of *Virginia Journeys*. That was truly a stellar event and one that will long be remembered as a highlight for the Virginia clubs. August was a bit eventful as well, though in a different way, with an impressive earthquake and Hurricane Irene. The earthquake left most of us in Tidewater unaffected but Irene cause a fair amount of trouble on the peninsula. Multiple trips to New Quarter Park have been necessary to clear some hefty blowdowns and repair damaged trails. TATC has increased its presence in the local trail scene under the guidance of Local Trails Chairperson Bill Buck. In addition to the many state, city and county parks we already maintain, we have added Newport News Park and the Noland Trail to our repertoire. Local Trails trips have a powerful impact on the local community informing folks of our presence and our mission. Not only do we provide a valuable service to our neighbors, we also spread the word about the AT and good stewardship of the land. Perhaps, we gain a few new members (and strong backs) as well!

Hopefully, you have made plans to attend Fall Maintenance at Sherando Oct. 14th-16th. Mark and John will have plenty for us to do so come ready to swing those pulaskis. If pulaskis aren't your pleasure then perhaps you'd like to assist Chef Dottie as she prepares an Oktoberfest Feast for us Saturday evening! Everyone should plan to bring a dessert to share. Maybe there'll be some strudel?

Fall also means it's time to start planning ahead for the annual TATC Elections to be held in January. Jim Newman (vicepres@tidewateratc.com) is establishing the Nominating Committee so please contact him if you would like to assist in the election process or perhaps even run for office.

The Pretlow Library will be holding its annual book fair in October which has necessitated moving our general membership meeting to Wednesday October 26th. Please note the change and plan to attend on the new night. We have a great speaker scheduled and perhaps we can share some tall tales from Sherando!

(Continued in next column)

Keep Saturday December 10th open as that will be the TATC Annual Holiday Party to be held at WHRO. We're hoping to have some great entertainment that night as well!! Bring a covered dish (entree, appetizer or dessert) to share. Cost is \$5 per person. Looking a little bit further ahead we are planning a gala TATC 40th Anniversary Celebration to be held next Spring. The Planning Committee should have a location and a date for the event soon. Plan to attend this important milestone event!
Be safe! Have fun!

Phyllis Neumann
president@tidewateratc.com

Table of Contents

Prez Sez	1
TATC Club Officers and Committees	2
Membership	3
January Election Campaign	3
TATC 40 th Anniversary Celebration	3
BRMS Ad	4
TATC 40th Anniversary T-Shirt Design Contest	5
TATC E-Mail Roster	5
Merchants Mill Pond	5
TATC Holiday Party	6
Virginia State Parks Photo Contest	7
Minute for Maintenance	8
TATC Calendar Deadline	8
Trail Closed	9-12
Appalachian Trail Museum	13
Schedule	14-15
Merchants Mill Pond - Photo by Bill Rogers	16

(banner photo by Mark Ferguson)



Visit our website at
www.tidewateratc.com

TATC Club Officers

President	Phyllis Neumann	president@tidewateratc.com	566-4584
Vice President	Jim Newman	vicepres@tidewateratc.com	867-6688
Treasurer	Tim Smith	treasurer@tidewateratc.com	423-8189
Secretary	Helen Buonviri	secretary@tidewateratc.com	613-0751
Trail Supervisor	Mark Connolly	trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com	623-0764
Assistant Trail Supervisor	John Davis	assistantts@tidewateratc.com	366-6628

TATC Counselors

Counselor	Chris Sexton	counselor-cs@tidewateratc.com	484-2827
Counselor	Sandy Butler	counselor-sb@tidewateratc.com	872-9271
Counselor	Nancy Rinkenberger	counselor-nr@tidewateratc.com	623-0334

ATC RPC Representatives

ATC RPC Rep	Ned Kuhns	rpcrep-nk@tidewateratc.com	552-0292
ATC RPC Rep	Mark Wenger	rpcrep-mw@tidewateratc.com	253-0056

TATC Committee Chairs

Cabin	Bob Adkisson	cabin@tidewateratc.com	627-5514
Cabin	Greg Hodges	cabin@tidewateratc.com	439-1552
Calendar	Jane Martin	calendar@tidewateratc.com	363-8464
Education	Bill Rogers	education@tidewateratc.com	484-6001
Hikemaster	Jim Newman	hikemaster@tidewateratc.com	867-6688
Historical	Bob Adkisson	historical@tidewateratc.com	627-5514
Land Management	Bob Giffin	landmgt@tidewateratc.com	495-7002
Local Trails	Bill Buck	localtrails@tidewateratc.com	846-1125
Membership	Mary Hormell	membership@tidewateratc.com	627-2392
Merchandise	Margaret Julian	merchandise@tidewateratc.com	484-0975
Newsletter	Jim Sexton	newsletter@tidewateratc.com	484-2827
Outreach	Mark Wenger	outreach@tidewateratc.com	253-0056
Programs	Dottie Abbott	programs@tidewateratc.com	363-9562
Timekeeper	John and Jane Oakes	timekeeper@tidewateratc.com	467-9633
Tool Boss	Bruce Julian	toolboss@tidewateratc.com	484-0975
Webmaster	Jim Sexton	webmaster@tidewateratc.com	484-2827

Publication Information

Title: Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club Appalachian Hiker
Issue Date: October 2011 - November 2011
Frequency: Bimonthly
Address: Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club, P. O. Box 8246, Norfolk, VA 23503-0246
37th Edition, 5th Issue
Price: Free

Membership

We are 400 members strong! Welcome to our new and returning members: Wes Warr, Susan Norton, Cynthia Gardner, Robert Wilhelm, Robert and Karen Lorey, Bud Hornik, Tom & Rosanne Howard, John Kluchonic, and James Bollengier.

Please remember to notify me if you move. Your newsletters are not forwarded by the Post Office!

Mary Hormell
Membership Committee Chair
membership@tidewateratc.com

January Election Campaign

With the arrival of fall comes the bylaws-prescribed procedure for election of TATC officers. The timeline and procedures are as follows:

- September: Formation of a nominating committee whose responsibility is to secure at least one person willing to be nominated for each open position. This time, needed nominees are for the positions of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Counselor. Mary Hormell, Dewey Phelps, Nancy Rinkenberger & Bill Rogers are firm committee members. A fifth member is needed and a chairperson designated by month's end.
- November: The nominating committee announces nominees at the general meeting.
- January: Election of officers at the general meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor before balloting.
- March: New officers assume duties; counselor for a three-year term; all others, one year.

For forty years this organization has carried the flame of leadership in fulfillment of our ATC responsibilities and we will continue to do so. Be part of this legacy. Come forward! Help us continue a good thing. Revised job descriptions are posted on the website, www.tidewateratc.com

Jim Newman
Vice President/Hikemaster
vicepres@tidewateratc.com

TATC 40th Anniversary Celebration

Did you know that TATC turns 40 next year? TATC plans to celebrate with a BIG party-location and date to be determined soon.

The 40th Committee is in the process of gathering information in order to recognize certain individuals during the event.

Are you a 2000 miler?

Are you a "Met and Married" (M&M)?

Are you in contact with any former members-specifically those involved in the club's early years?

If you fit into any of the above categories then please contact Phyllis Neumann phyllisneumann@hughes.net .



BLUE RIDGE

mountain sports o brms.com

Be kind, have fun & do the right thing.



Travel Like a Pro

Shop By Appointment

Preparation for a trip is essential, but time to prep can be hard to come by. Before you travel abroad or hike the trail for a couple of days, call your local Blue Ridge shop and schedule an appointment with one of our knowledgeable staff members.

- ★ Let us outfit you for your international trip
- ★ Take time to be properly fitted for boots
- ★ Need to gear up for that thru-hike? Give us a call.

Hilltop North Shopping Center, VA Beach • 757-422-2201
Peninsula Town Center, Hampton • 757-838-1970

patagonia®



TATC 40th Anniversary T-Shirt Design Contest

TATC turns 40 next year and to commemorate this event, we are holding a T-Shirt design contest! The design must be original, must be designed by a club member and must incorporate the club logo. The theme is the 40th Anniversary of TATC (1972-2012) and must somehow include this milestone in the design as well. The winner will be announced at the 40TH Anniversary Gala to be held next spring (date and location TBD). More details to follow.

TATC E-Mail Roster

We are attempting to establish a master e-mail list of our membership. This list will be used for official club business only, will never be shared with any other organization or individuals and will be used only to notify TATC members of important changes in scheduling or to notify members when the newsletter is available on the website for viewing. It will **not** be used to notify members of routine events or activities. This is completely voluntary but we urge all members to help us establish as complete a list as possible. Long time TATC member, Steve Ralph, will be compiling the data into a spreadsheet and making it available to the Board of Directors. You may forward your e-mail address to him at ralphs44@cox.net. **Please include "TATC" and your name in the subject line.**

If you have any questions please contact Phyllis Neumann president@tidewateratc.com

TATC Social Media Sites

www.MeetUp.com/Tidewater-ATC-MeetUp

Join the group in order to see full information about and post comments on listed activities

Facebook.com

Search: Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club

By clicking "Like It" on a particular item, more people learn of our club

Merchants Mill Pond - 2011-09-02

by Bill Rogers

Hurricane Irene dumped enough rain that the park was closed (both trails and pond) for several days. Finally on Saturday Cartier, teenaged daughter of a friend, and I headed south to the pond. Cotton fields along the road were just beginning to show the very first vestiges of white. In the Corapeake area we drove through a plume of smoke from the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge fire. But we drove out of this before reaching Sunbury.

Turning off Rt 158 onto SR 1403 we headed for the boat launch area on the south side of the pond. We were the only vehicle there. After offloading the canoe, and on loading paddles and such, we pulled our craft over to the pier and in we climbed. The day was mostly cloudy, but bright cloudy - good for paddling and not overly warm. There was but an occasional, gentle breeze on the pond.

We wandered hither and thither, enjoying the utter peace and quiet of the environment. Of other water craft there were no signs. Slowly we wended our way up to the mouth of Lassiter Swamp and headed into this Edgar Allen Poeish world with its marvelous reflections. The water was indeed high. Several times we followed the wrong current to dead ends. But persist we did, until a blowdown blocked our way. Here we did the proverbial 'U-turn'. We had passed high ground on our left and made for this, looking for a beaching spot. Finding one, we went ashore to sit on a suitable log for an early noon repast. Cartier spent much of her time observing little critters in the water and catching baby frogs.

After an hour or so of watching and listening to frogs and other critters we embarked for the return journey. The white tail of an eagle was seen vanishing into the forest. Other feathered friends included Canada geese, a black duck, some mallards, and a host of wood ducks in dribs and drabs squealing their plaintive calls as they flushed. Fish leaped and rolled, and various sized turtles plopped into the water at our approach. Of the alligators we saw no sign.

But we did pass three craft heading for the swamp. Later we followed another back to the boat ramp. There the other paddlers loaded firewood from their vehicle in preparation for a mosquitoey (is there such a word ?) night, whilst we hauled out and made ready for the journey home. And yes, we stopped at the Visitor Center so Cartier could view the exhibits there. It had been a pleasant, relaxing, excursion.



TATC HOLIDAY PARTY

Join the fun at the annual TATC Holiday party!

DATE: Saturday December 10, 2011

TIME: 6PM-10PM

PLACE: WHRO

5200 Hampton Blvd, Norfolk, VA

**BRING: Potluck dish to share: entree, appetizer, salad or dessert
\$5 per person**

ENTERTAINMENT TBD!!

Contact: Phyllis Neumann (phyllisneumann@hughes.net) for more information.



Virginia State Parks 75th Anniversary Photo Contest

In conjunction with Virginia State Parks 75th anniversary, DCR is sponsoring an amateur photography contest. Prizes totaling more than \$8,000 will be awarded to winners in each category and the photographer will have their work used in various Virginia State Parks brochures and advertising for all to enjoy. Share your love of photography and Virginia State Parks by entering this contest.

Link: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/photocont.shtml

Eligibility - The 75th Anniversary Photo Contest is open to any amateur photographer except DCR employees and their immediate families. The photos must be taken in a Virginia State Park within the past five years.

Categories:

1. People and Nature
2. Flora
3. Fauna
4. Seasons
5. Camping, Hiking and Picnicking

Kids Viewfinder Contest - the same five categories will be used for a photo contest for those 15 and under as of Oct. 1, 2011.

How to Enter

Each photographer may enter up to three digital images per category. Prints and slides will not be accepted. All images submitted must have been taken in any of the 35 Virginia State Parks in the last five years.

First you'll need to subscribe to the Virginia Outdoors website . Then you click here to upload your photos. For each photo, list the category into which it's being entered and include details on how and where the photo was shot. Digital images should be submitted at the highest resolution in the original JPEG, TIFF or RAW file. Digital images that are grainy or pixilated will not be considered. Manipulation of exposure, cropping and some color correction is acceptable. It is not acceptable to remove or add features of an image.

High quality scans of non-digital photographs are acceptable if they meet all other requirements. Files submitted must be at least 2,048 pixels wide (3.2 megapixels). All photographs of wild animals or plants should be done so in their natural settings.

Photos will be judged based on technical skill and artistic ability. Winning photos are those that show the photographer's skill in composing an image and using a camera. Take lighting, depth of field, sharpness of focus, color balance, composition, framing, camera angle, originality, and choice of subject matter into account.

A panel of judges will be selected to make the final determination. All decisions are final. Digital images must be submitted Sept. 5, 2011, through Oct. 31, 2011. Winners will be notified by Dec. 1, 2011



A Minute for Maintenance: The October 14-16th, 2011 Fall Maintenance Weekend at Sherando

This year's TATC Fall Maintenance Weekend, October 14-16, 2011, is our last advertised big effort this year to do what our club was organized to do-----maintain a section of the Appalachian Trail----under an agreement with the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy as a volunteer club. We have an assigned section of trail that is somewhat less than eleven miles, between Reeds Gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway (where State Route 664 crosses) on the north end, and Route 56, which is the south border, also marked by the Tye River, that separates our section from that section maintained by the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club (NBATC) and The Priest, the next mountain south of our Three Ridges Wilderness Area.

As usual, we'll meet at the (U.S. Forest Service) Sherando Lake Family Campground, located south of Sherando, Virginia on Route 664 (Mount Torrey Road). A map with directions is available for download/printing at the TATC website <tidewateratc.com>. We should tell the personnel at the gate that we are volunteers with the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club and that we expect to spend our night(s) at the Williams Branch Picnic Area. They will then wave you on without charge if you assure them that you know where you are going. The picnic area is accessible at the outside of the tight right turn that slopes down to the "self-pay" kiosk and the low water bridge near the lower lake and beach area at Sherando. If you get down to the self-pay sign, you've missed it, and you can turn around and go back up the slope to that turn and turn right, instead of following the road to the left. Be warned that the Sherando gate closes at 10PM at night, so it's a tight squeeze for people attempting to work a full day on Friday and get into Sherando.

Some people drive extra early on Saturday morning, or stay somewhere else on Friday night nearby if they anticipate not making the 10PM closure. If you arrive on Friday, you can get a good pick of the sites to car-camp, maybe considering the distance from your tent to the flush toilet bathroom or to the dining shelter that we'll use for Saturday night for our big club-sponsored dinner. The theme for this Fall is "Oktoberfest," a Teutonically-inspired meal of wurst and tater and sauerkraut and salad and potluck desserts. Dottie Abbott is our chef, and will be supported by a team of assistants to craft a meal we'll appreciate when we return from our trail work on Saturday afternoon. Also on Friday you can look over the rosters for the various team assignments, to choose a fit for your interests or abilities for our work on Saturday morning. We'll form up at a bit after 7:30AM on Saturday, to get a safety briefing and pick up tools to take with us. We'll figure out our carpooling and form up by team to get into vehicles.

On Sunday, those who haven't had enough trail maintenance go back out again to clean up a couple tasks not finished on Saturday, while others take advantage of being out in Augusta or Nelson or Amherst County to pick up some of the Fall's crop of apples from a local vendor, like Flippin-Seaman's on Route 56, or drive the winding country roads to sightsee. The Rockfish River valley offers some local color; Waynesboro/Fishersville has some offerings. You can always drive a part of the Blue Ridge Parkway for Fall colors. Wineries beckon to some people. Some people will want to drive the Nelson County loop. Stop at the Wintergreen Winery or The Devil's Backbone near the intersection of Route 664 and Route 151. Enjoy the weekend! We hope to see you in Sherando!

Mark Connolly
Trail Supervisor
trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com



Attention All Hike Leaders:

We need the dates for scheduled events for 2012 which you want included in the TATC Calendar. You can send them to Jane Martin at calendar@tidewateratc.com.

Deadline is October 20th. We will also continue to accept photographs up to that date

Trail Closed

By Bob Adkisson

Are you a conscientious rule follower? Do you obey all signs and regulations? Would you turn your back on long made plans because some anonymous sign warned you off, took command of your life in ways you couldn't refuse?

If ever you read a sign that said, "ignore this sign", would your head explode, would you go into some type of self arrest-- because obviously, by simply, reflexively reading the sign, you have disobeyed it?

How do you ignore a sign, the power of words; their anonymous authority?

Most long distance A.T. hikers are young, kind of counter-culture, out for the time of their lives. They are not so much inclined to dot all their 'i's' and cross all their 't's'; they tend to feel invincible, rebellious, devil may care. They treasure their new found freedoms, see themselves as survivors, adventurers, the hurdlers of great distances and mountains, to whom most rules simply don't apply.....

That pretty much describes me back in the day, back when my hair was as long and as wild as some of the of long distance hikes I took, to places in the back of beyond, where backpackers dream of going.

In the first of four tales-- all related, more or less, by signs that read, "Trail Closed"-- come with me on a 100 mile hike thru the Teton Wilderness and up into the southeast corner of Yellowstone Nat'l Park. The only price of admission is to ask yourself—what would you have done if you stood there, in my shoes?

It was mid-Aug., 1979, and I was on a 9 week consolation trip, hitch hiking to and backpacking in various national parks and wilderness areas of the northern Rocky Mtns. It was a 'consolation' trip in that I'd hoped to instead spend about 6 months hiking as much of the Pacific Crest Trail as I could, but discovered at the last minute that I hadn't quite saved up enough money to afford it. What I did have, after taking 4 years to finally complete the Appalachian Trail (in 1977), was an overwhelming urge and passion to explore all of the wild and beautiful places in America, along with a certain hard won self confidence that I'd earned on the A.T. (the A.T. being not only one of the longest trails in the U.S., but probably the toughest).

Already a couple of weeks and a lot of miles into my adventure, I finished up a 3 day hike in Teton National Park, re-supplied, hitched a few miles east, and set off alone, on foot, into the sprawling Bridger-Teton National Forest and wilderness area. Throughout this trip it really hit home with me, the differences between hiking in the laid-back, wide open National Forests as opposed to the more regimented and controlled National Parks. You get some of that on the A.T. (in Shenandoah and the Smoky Mtns), but out west it struck me more, especially on this particular trip.

My first night out I camped near an impressive waterfall and miniature gorge on the Buffalo River. Next morning, after successfully finding a way down into the gorge and the base of the falls, it took me maybe half an hour, and some hemming and hawing, before I finally found a place (at the top of the canyon rim) where I could safely leap across the 60 foot deep gorge, from one bank to the other, and then back again, at a different spot.

Satisfied with that bit of acrobatic tomfoolery, I packed up and headed out, only to immediately spy grizzly bear footprints in the mud of the nearby trail, not 50 yards from where I'd slept.

When had he passed by, I wondered?

Up and over the continental divide I went, crossing Ferry Pass, seeing no one as I dropped down to the headwaters of the Yellowstone River. Still in the National Forest wilderness area, I camped beside the river, among the sagebrush and pine.

Third day out, I followed the river north, downstream all day; it wasn't much bigger than the Tye River at the A.T. footbridge. Tentless, that night I took shelter from a storm on the covered front porch of a long abandoned log cabin, a stones throw from the quietly flowing water.

The following day I headed west, up a side stream (Atlantic Creek) to an anomaly I'd discovered while perusing my maps back in Norfolk—Two Ocean Creek and Plateau. After a couple of miles of hiking uphill, I came to the point where a single small creek came tumbling down the slope from the north and, without fanfare (only a sign that recognized the peculiarity of the place), evenly divided in half! Half of it, Atlantic Creek, dropped eastward to join the Yellowstone River; that river would carry the waters north to its junction with the Missouri River; the Missouri wound its way southeast a thousand plus miles to join the Mississippi, which finally delivered all of its collected waters to the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean.

(Continued from Page 9 ...)

The other half of Two Ocean Creek (Pacific Creek) flowed westward, soon joining the infant Snake River for its long journey past the foot of the soaring Teton Mtns and across the parched lava-lands of southern Idaho, to where it joined the Columbia River in Washington state, broke thru the mighty Cascade Range and found the Pacific Ocean, right where Lewis and Clark had left it.

A light rain fell as I snapped some photographs and watched as the various raindrops angled this way and that, trying to choose their fate-- which stream would they take, to which ocean would they flow?

I followed the narrow, little used trail upstream, onto Two Ocean Plateau. It was wet and misty and mysterious. I was aiming for what the map called a back country ranger station, right on the border of Yellowstone National Park, where a number of trails converged.

My intent, as I approached the cluster of large canvas tents, set amid high grass in an open forest of lodge pole pines, was to check in with the rangers, get my required backcountry permit, and hike a few more miles before dark; I wanted to camp beside the headwaters of the Snake River, just inside the Park boundary.

I found what appeared to be the main tent, set down my pack, and knocked on the closed canvas door-flap. A ranger opened the flap and motioned me inside, where a group of perhaps a dozen uniformed men packed the dimly lit space; sitting in a rough circle, balancing metal dinner plates on their laps, they were eating their evening meal. For someone as introverted as myself, someone who hadn't seen or spoken to another person in a couple of days, this was unnerving, intimidating, awkward—I was suddenly the object of all their attention; all eyes fell upon me, all small talk ceased. There I stood, having interrupted their meal, in need of their time and services, even though, of course, it wasn't my idea—it was their requirements and rules I was trying to follow, however unnecessary it seemed to me.

I told the head ranger I needed a back country permit and I laid out my planned route in the Park—that day, go 2 more miles over to the Snake River, the next day hike about 15 miles and camp at Heart Lake, then a 5 mile hike out to the park road, where I'd hitch hike to the Old Faithful area.

He nodded, then reached for his radio and tried to contact the ranger at Heart Lake.

I stood there, shifting my weight from one foot to the other, while he called, in vain, several times.

For some reason, the Heart Lake ranger wasn't answering.

I wondered why he needed to check with him in the first place, but didn't ask.

My presence there felt more and more awkward; I felt like I was imposing, keeping him from his meal, interrupting their end-of-the-day conversation. Plus, I still had 2 miles to hike, and the light was already beginning to fade.

The ranger shrugged fatalistically, as if to say, 'I tried, but he didn't answer', and all but instructed me what I should do—'why not just set up your tent somewhere close by, and in the morning I'll see if I can get hold of the ranger at Heart Lake, then we'll get you your permit and you can be on your way'.

How could I refuse? Did I really have any choice?

Bureaucracy comes to the backcountry....

Thwarted and torn, I nodded and backed out of the tent, went and fetched my pack. I walked 75 yards off into the dusky woods and obediently prepared to do as I was told.

(Continued on Page 11)



(Continued from Page 10 ...)

But, as I leaned over my pack and untied my sleeping bag, something inside of me welled up and rebelled, said to heck with this—this *isn't* what I wanted to do or *where* I wanted to camp!

Getting a permit had always been a quick (and to me a nearly pointless) formality, and yet here I was being held up, held hostage, all because, for some unexplained reason, someone didn't answer their radio at a place I wanted to camp two night from then.

And I simply couldn't do it, couldn't stay there, as instructed and expected.

I also couldn't, or didn't want to, go and disturb them again-- *insisting* on getting a permit and heading on that day, as planned.

Instead, I retied by sleeping bag to my pack and hoisted it; all but holding my breathe at the possibility of getting caught, I stealthily made a wide arc around the cluster of ranger tents, found the trail to the northwest, and hurried off, into the Park.

Two miles away, as darkness was settling in, I found an appropriately anonymous place to roll out my sleeping bag near the tiny Snake River.

Minutes later, just as I finished my simple dinner and eased down into my sleeping bag, a lone coyote (or was it a dozen of them?—it is so hard to tell) let loose about 50 yards away from me—yowling and wailing, yipping and barking for all it was worth.

Ahh, freedom, independence, solitude—the chills up and down my spine said it came with a price.

A thrilling price!

Next day there was a slight mist of guilt and 2nd guessing in the morning air, but (especially having just walked for 4 days in a National Forest wilderness area, where no permit or permission was needed) there was no way I was going to backtrack to the ranger station just to get a piece of paper allowing me to be where I already was.

I packed up and headed off toward Heart Lake. There was a ranger station there—what would be the big deal: I'd get my back country permit from the ranger who hadn't answered his radio the night before.

The trail strolled thru a slightly rolling landscape, an open forest of lodge pole pines. The weather was perfect. I walked a few easy miles, turned right at a trail junction, and continued on a couple more miles.

Suddenly I was brought up short, stopped dead in my tracks by a small, simple sign, a sign made from the bottom of a cardboard box and tacked to a tree.

The sign read, "TRAIL CLOSED".

That was it.

Out in the middle of nowhere, a handmade sign that basically said, 'turn around, go back'.

The questions flooded my brain: *what am I supposed to do?* Why is the trail closed? Who put up this sign? Is this a joke or a prank perpetrated by some hiker with a magic marker-- and how am I to know? The sign is unsigned—if the Park Service put it up, couldn't they at least have bothered to put their initials, NPS, on it? If the trail was closed, why didn't they inform hikers a couple miles back, at the trail junction? Why hadn't the ranger informed me of this the night before? Was that why he had wanted to call the Heart Lake ranger, to see if the trail was still closed—but hadn't taken a second to inform me of that possibility? Don't I feel like a fool?

Which eventually brought me back to the original question: *what am I supposed to do?*

Standing there in my shoes, what would you have done?

I pulled out my map and considered the options. They weren't good, or very realistic. I was fairly low on food; obeying the sign, taking park service trails toward the nearest road, meant a lot of backtracking and roundabout travel; it meant skipping Heart Lake, an extra day of hiking, and many extra miles. That wasn't appealing at all.

But, at the same time, I didn't much see the logic or wisdom of the alternative-- taking the risk of bushwhacking to Heart Lake, and / or the road 5 miles to the west of it.

I decided (to me, it seemed a no-brainer) to stay the course, ignore the sign, and press on.

If nothing else, I could maybe prove the sign wrong, or at least discover why the trail was closed, get that much satisfaction from the situation.

I walked another mile with no change in the terrain or the trail or the forest.

Then I came to what I had to assume was the reason for the sign—a burnt out forest, for as far as I could see....

I'd never really seen such a thing: all of the pine trees were standing, but every limb and needle and trace of green was gone.

(Continued on Page 12 ...)

(Continued from Page 11 ...)

The ground was moon-like with dust and ash; nothing growing on the forest floor, nothing left to burn.

How long ago had the fire raged thru here—a month, a year?

It certainly didn't seem dangerous to be there now, to continue to follow the easily traceable trail as it wound thru the standing dead forest and up and around the ever so slight hills.

And so-- I continued, padded a mile thru this ghostly landscape, encountering only two downed trees across the trail.

Then, just as abruptly, I found myself back in the shady green comfort of a living forest.

As I walked along, safe and sound, and getting nearer to Heart Lake with every footstep, I looked but never saw a sign warning hikers coming from the opposite direction that the trail ahead was closed. A small observation, but it seemed somehow like a point in my favor.

In a few miles I could feel the cool breezes blowing off of the expanse of Heart Lake, and I contemplated what awaited me there. Surely the ranger from the night before had wondered what happened to me, had figured I'd probably gone on, and had radioed ahead. For sure, I thought, the Heart Lake ranger would be looking for me.

How much trouble was I in—entering the Park without the required permit, ignoring my instructions **and** the sign nailed to the tree.

Should I try and save myself the hassle, sneak into the Heart Lake camping area unseen, maybe bushwhack--ing the last half mile or so to it?

But then, before I knew what was happening, the trail did an unusual thing— it dumped me right out onto a narrow sandy beach—turns out, the last half mile to the ranger station (and the camping area), the trail followed the beach itself, with no where to hide.

And I swear this is true: the moment I stepped out of the woods and onto the beach, I spied a tall man in the distance, a man in what appeared to be a dark rangers uniform, with a smoky the bear hat, and the sun glinting off a badge on his chest. He stood there motionless, facing in my direction, as if awaiting my imminent arrival.

I immediately felt caught, doomed, and convicted. Not to mention, guilty as sin.

Half a mile away, I could see other people on the beach (people with, I'm sure, the proper permits, all stamped and certified), sunbathing or walking around carefree and happy. All but the man that, standing ramrod straight, I just knew was a ranger-- a ranger who, somehow, had determined the exact moment of my arrival.

There seemed nothing to do but trudge thru the soft sand towards him, to whatever fate awaited me. Like a moth drawn to a flame, with no chance now to slink off into the bushes and circle around him unnoticed, I approached.

The closer I got, the more his identity was confirmed.

Finally standing face to face, it was, ultimately, anticlimactic-- I readily confessed, and tried to minimize, my sins, but at the same time I sort of went on the offensive, asking about the unsigned 'Trail Closed' sign, why was it even there, why would the trail be closed when the area was no longer *on fire*? He said it was because they were afraid that the fire-weakened trees would fall and hurt someone.

I took that with a grain of salt—was he kidding?

All in all, he acted stern and disapproving, but there was no lecture or punishment, no demerit marks or lashings with a willow switch; he (figuratively speaking) took me in hand and led me a hundred yards to the camping area, pointed out where I should set up my tent (why did all the rangers assume I was packing a tent?), and then left me alone.

At some point too, I don't much remember, I guess he gave me a permit for my final 24 hours of being in the back country, then I was free and left to my own devices. Yippee!!

The first thing I saw in the camping area was something that I just had to have but couldn't: a gigantic set of moose antlers. How I coveted them, lying there in the grass, bleached white and about 6 foot across. But... I could just see myself trying to hitch hike home with them, or even just trying to get them to the nearest post office, where I could attempt to mail them back east. Good luck with that!

Since I had no tent to set up, I simply left my pack, grabbed my camera, a notebook and a pen, and hiked a half mile over to the geyser basin area; I sat on the warm earth, in a chilly breeze, near the steaming, percolating waters. I wrote a long letter to my 7 year old nephew, all about my latest adventures in the wild, wild west.

"Trail Closed"—yeah, like that was going to turn back an A.T. 2,000 miler!

Appalachian Trail Museum to Begin Work on Next Phases

GARDNERS, PA. – Funding raised during its second season of operation will permit the Appalachian Trail Museum to move forward with completion of its final phases of construction.

“Our goal all along has been to convert the entire building in which we are so fortunate to be located into exhibits and education areas,” said Larry Luxenberg, president of the Appalachian Trail Museum Society, and founder of the museum. “We can now do that thanks to the generosity of individual donors and grants from the Quimby Family Foundation in Portland, Maine, The Hershey Company in Hershey Pennsylvania, and the South Mountain Partnership and Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. A key component for us moving forward with the next phases was meeting a \$50,000 challenge grant, and that has been achieved.”

The Appalachian Trail Museum is completing its second season of being open, June from through October in 2010 and April through October in 2011. Since its grand opening on June 5, 2010, the museum has attracted more than 15,000 visitors, national media attention and acclaim and has become one of the top tourist attractions in Cumberland County.

Luxenberg said the 200-year-old, stone grist mill that houses the museum has been restored mostly by volunteers. In the first phase, the museum showcases and honors the legendary hikers who made the idea for a foot-path from Maine to Georgia a reality. The trail today is 2,181 miles long and crosses 14 states. It passes by the entrance of the Appalachian Trail Museum, and its midway point is two miles south of the museum.

Among the trail pioneers honored now with exhibits are Benton MacKaye who is credited with conceptualizing the Appalachian Trail, and Myron Avery who is credited with spearheading construction of the trail that was completed in 1937. One of the hiker shelters built by York, Pennsylvania, native Earl Shaffer is the museum's first feature exhibit. In 1948, Shaffer was the first person to hike the trail end to end. Other thru-hikers who are featured are Gene Espy who, in 1951, became the second person to thru-hike the trail, Grandma Gatewood, who, in 1955 at the age of 67, became the first solo woman thru-hiker and later became the first person to hike the trail more than once, and Ed Garvey of Falls Church, Virginia, who popularized long distance backpacking in the 1970s.

The museum also is home for the Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame which inducted its first six members in 2011.

“Exhibits in the next phases will continue to portray not only the history of the Appalachian Trail but also the essence of the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual human experience of the Appalachian environment and the culture of hiking,” Luxenberg said. “Among the exhibits in the second phase will be hiking and trail maintenance artifacts. We hope to have these in place for the beginning of our third season next year.”

Inquiries about becoming a museum volunteer or a sponsor or about making a donation may be made at the museum's website, www.atmuseum.org, and info@atmuseum.org.

The museum is adjacent to the National Historic District of Pine Grove Furnace State Park and the Pine Grove General Store. It also is near the Ironmasters Mansion (hostel). Both the store and the hostel are popular stops for Appalachian Trail thru-hikers. The museum is open from noon to 4 p.m. daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day and on weekends from noon to 4 p.m. from now to Oct. 31 plus Columbus Day.

About the Appalachian Trail Museum Society

The Appalachian Trail Museum Society, a 501-C-3 not-for-profit organization formed in 2002, organizes programs, exhibits, volunteers and fundraising nationwide for the Appalachian Trail Museum. The museum opened on June 5, 2010, as a tribute to the thousands of men, women and families who have hiked and maintained the 2,181 mile long hiking trail that passes through 14 states from Maine to Georgia. Located in the Pine Grove Furnace State Park in Gardners, Pennsylvania, the museum is conveniently near Carlisle, Gettysburg and Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. Additional information is available at www.atmuseum.org.

Media Contact:

JoE Patterson

Communications Committee

Appalachian Trail Museum Society

717-823-7556

Joseph.Patterson@e-LYNXX.com

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.

October 7, 2011, Fri DINE @ CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN / NAUTICUS FILM FESTIVAL

Ann & Tim Smith, 472-9238

Join Ann & Tim Smith for this dining event followed by a movie on the fantail of the Battleship Wisconsin. Meet at California Pizza Kitchen (MacArthur Mall) at 6:30PM, have dinner & walk to Nauticus for the movie *The Goonies* beginning at 8:30. Bring the family & some camp chairs for a unique evening. Concessions, including beer & wine, will be available for purchase aboard the Wisconsin. Reservations not required. Call Ann for head-counting if you plan to dine with the group or just meet at the mall after dinner to walk over to Nauticus together. Otherwise, meet us on the Fantail. No need to call on these options. Three dollar admission to Nauticus which opens at 7:45.

October 7-9, 2011, Fri-Sun BACKPACK BIG SCHLOSS / MILL MOUNTAIN TRAIL

Rick Hancock, 619-6001

Big Schloss is a granite rock face named by early German settlers. The tall cliffs reminded them of their homeland. Schloss is a German word of castle. Gather at Burger King, Rt. 17 & I-64 in NN, 7:00PM Friday. Overnight in Wolf Gap Rec. Area near Edinburg off I-81. See www.meetup.com/Tidewater-ATC-Meetup for more details.

October 14-16, 2011, Fri-Sun APPALACHIAN TRAIL FALL MAINTENANCE & FAMILY CAMP-OUT WEEKEND

Mark Connolly 623-0764

Our second AT Maintenance Weekend & Family Camp-Out of the year comes with a bonus: the spectacular beauty of autumn colors! Form-up at 7:45 Saturday morning at our free camping site (Williams Picnic area). There will be a club-sponsored meal Saturday evening. Remember to bring a desert for the Saturday evening meal. Other meals will be on your own. If arriving Friday, be aware that the entrance gate to Sherando is locked at 10:00PM. Bring usual camping items suitable for season. Inform entrance personnel you are a TATC volunteer. Tools provided.

October 22, 2011, Saturday BETWEEN THE WATERS BIKE TOUR

Vic & Margaret Pisone 481-2426

We will meet at 9:00 AM at the rest stop on the northern end of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Tour begins in the historic, waterfront town of Cape Charles. This event, sponsored by **Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore (CBES)**, is held on **Saturday, October 22, 2011** and winds through interesting historic towns and communities and along back roads to scenic rest stops and lunch that overlook the Atlantic seaside and the Chesapeake Bay. Route distances available: 25 miles, 40 miles, 60 miles, and 100 miles. Register online at cbes.org, \$45 by Oct 1, \$60 after Oct 1. We will be camping at Kiptopeke State Park Friday and Saturday nights with plans to kayak Friday and Sunday if anyone would like to join us. Reservation can be made at 800-933-7275 or online at ReserveAmerica.com

October 26, 2011, Wednesday TATC GENERAL MEETING (RESCHEDULED)

Phyllis Neumann, 566-4584

Business meeting & recognition of guests. Ed Freyfogle will present a program titled 4-Day Marches in Holland. He has done this event 9 times, just completing a hike in July.

Meeting has been rescheduled from our usual second Wednesday meeting time.

November 11-13, 2011, Fri-Sun TATC CABIN MAINTENANCE

Bob Adkisson, 440-8902

Participation allows TATC members new to the cabin to qualify for cabin rental. Planned work involves cutting and stacking firewood plus clearing the access road if time permits. Experienced chain sawyers are asked to bring a saw, fuel and ear protection. On the fun side, a possible community meal Saturday evening or dine out in Waynesboro. Possible hike Sunday morning. Everyone asked to contribute one item for the cabin (paper towels, small propane fuel bottles, etc. Bring sleeping pad/bag, work gloves/clothes and necessary food. The cabin is located less than one mile off the Blue Ridge Parkway south of Waynesboro. Call Bob for directions & possible ride-sharing. Meet at the cabin Friday afternoon or early Saturday.

Activities Schedule

Continued from Page 14 ...

November 12, 2011, Saturday FIRST LANDING STATE PARK TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Diana Ramsey, 619-0540

Light maintenance on Osmanthus Trail. Meeting time, 9:00AM at visitor center on trails side of park. Bring gloves, snack & water. Tools provided.

November 18-20, 2011 Fri-Sun EXPLORING PORTSMOUTH ISLAND ON NC OUTER BANKS

Gordon & Melinda Spence, 464-5096

This trip involves exploration of the southern-most island of the Outer Banks . We'll meet for dinner at Howard's Pub in Ocracoke at 6:30PM Friday night. Ocracoke is at the bottom of the outer banks. Allow 5 hours to get there as it involves a free ferry ride from Hatteras to Ocracoke. We can camp out or stay at a lodge Friday night and leave Ocracoke Saturday morning at 9:00 by taking a small boat to Portsmouth Island (\$20 round trip plus tip). The island is under the control of the National Park Service. Come with us to see what has been changed since the hurricane. The island road should be repaired by the end of September or first of October. Easy hike on Saturday but adventurers must be able to carry a backpack with tent, sleeping bag, food, and personal items for overnight camping. There is no drinking water supply on Portsmouth Island, so water must also be imported. Participants should be in good physical condition as medical help is not immediately available (there is cell phone service). On the island there are the ruins of a small village that once was a thriving community. A two-three mile hike is required to reach the beach camp site. Bring all the gear you'll need for two days. The boat returns to Ocracoke Sunday morning. Portsmouth Island and Ocracoke are two rare treasures to be experienced. Call Melinda Spence at 464-5096 for more info or to sign up.

Informational Notes

Old Dominion Appalachian Trail Club. We work closely with our neighbor club in Richmond. Please go to the following website for some of their offerings: www.odatc.net

Weekday Activity Group: If you would like to receive e-mail notifications of 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.

Local Trails Maintenance Opportunities: 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 Appalachian Trail maintenance.

Information for Hike & Activities Schedule, TATC website listings and MeetUp postings are collected and edited by the hikemaster. Contact Jim Newman at 757 867-6688 or jimnewman55@cox.net with information for publication.

Planning a hike or activity. If you have hike or activities information for a trip you'd like to lead, please call Hikemaster Jim Newman at 867-6688 to leave a message or e-mail at Hikemaster@TidewaterATC.com with all information to be inserted or updated. **ALL ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THIS SCHEDULE ROUTE THROUGH THE HIKEMASTER WHO FORWARDS SUCH TO THE WEBMASTER FOR WEBSITE UPDATES.** If you e-mail these items, be sure to identify yourself by full name and mention that this is a TATC event. Blank Sign-up sheets can be printed from the TATC website. **After the event, please return completed sign-up sheets to the Hikemaster, so they can be retrieved from file for a period of several years. You may take sign-up sheets to the board or general meeting following the event, or mail them to the Hikemaster: Jim Newman, 102 N. Fern Cove Court, Yorktown, VA 23693**

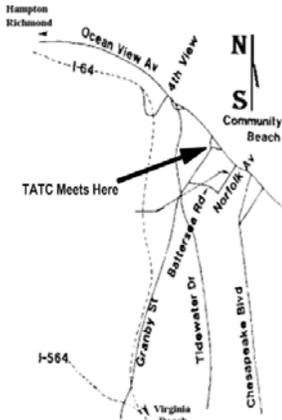
Visit our website for updated schedules at www.tidewateratc.com



Tidewater Appalachian
Trail Club
P. O. Box 8246
Norfolk, VA 23503-0246

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID
NORFOLK,
VA
PERMIT NO.
2135



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

