

Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club Appalachian Hiker

www.tidewateratc.com



October 2012 - November 2012

Prez Sez

The transition from summer to autumn seemed different this year. Instead of the usual "slide into fall" with a pattern of hot humid days intermixed over weeks with cooler ones, we experienced a definite weather change within a tight 24 hour period. A front came through leaving summer on one side and fall on the other—certainly a welcome and lasting reprieve from the brutal summer! With autumn here our thoughts and efforts turn to TATC Fall Maintenance of October 12-14. This too will be different. In addition to our usual trail maintenance work, we will be reroofing Harpers Creek Shelter thanks to an L.L.Bean grant that covers cost of materials. John Davis, our assistant trail supervisor is overseeing the project—from selecting and transporting roofing materials to the cow pasture, to making arrangements with the U.S. Forest Service for backpacking everything to site. Inmate labor will be available if deemed necessary. Bruce Julian and Milton Beale are organizing an advance party to arrive early in order to remove the old roof a day or so before maintenance weekend.

On another subject, your president, Ned Kuhns, Phyllis Neumann, Nancy Rinkenberger and John Davis attended an ATC Leadership Conference last month where we learned much about the challenges of volunteer organizations: attracting and maintaining members across five generations with their wide diversity of values, qualities and motivations. The presentation included insight into how to create effective marketing messages, ideas for recruiting, and techniques for managing different generations of volunteers. As club leadership is passed on to a new generation of volunteers it is important to understand the differences for a smooth transition while keeping club knowledge and traditions intact.

TATC has begun an effort to recruit through youth outreach and we have had some success through social media; however, we have a ways to go. For example, at the September general meeting the 52 attendees were asked to identify their generation by a show of hands.

(Continued in next column)

Ninety percent of this small sample fell into the three oldest generations (ages 48-87) with the largest group identified as Trailing Edge Boomers, ages 57-66. The board of directors is working on a survey to reach all members in order to know more about the makeup of all TATC members and to employ lessons learned about targeting recruitment according to what attracts the various generational groups.

Wishing you happy trails and a pleasant autumn filled with rewarding volunteer work.

Jim Newman
President
president@tidewateratc.com

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(banner photo by Mark Ferguson)



Visit our website at
www.tidewateratc.com

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Membership

Welcome to the new and returning members: Lorrie Ames, Michael Schindler, Robin Hayhurst, Christina Laws, Linda Flannery, Jane Ann Skirta & Kevin Hospodor, Al & Connie Motley, Robert & Ruth Whitley, Mark & Dalia Metzger, Lisa Billow, Sandra Vakos, Gisselle Gavidia, and Gary Hollers.

Mary Hormell

Membership Committee Chair
membership@tidewateratc.com

A Paragraph for Maintenance

Our annual Fall Maintenance Weekend is a well-attended (usually 60+) event, based at the Williams Branch Picnic Area at Sherando Lake U.S. Forest Service Campground on October 12-14 (Fri-Sun). Some people try to arrive during the day on Friday to set up their tents or car-camping for convenience, but others who work on Friday may leave Hampton Roads later, but should arrive before the gates at Sherando are locked at 10 PM. Some may shun the tent or car-camping to support the local economy by getting a motel room somewhere in Augusta or Nelson County-----or maybe at Love, VA, at "Royal Oaks."

This is our major Fall effort to get the largest possible segment of our club membership to help in maintaining our sections of trail assigned to us by the U.S. Forest Service/Appalachian Trail Conservancy/National Park Service. We'll have rosters laid out for specific teams to tackle various parts of our assigned trails---both on Friday night and early Saturday morning-----so that you can indicate the level and type of activity that appeals to you, and capitalizes on your skill set (or sawyer certification).

We'll gather together at about 7:30 AM on Saturday morning at the cooking/dining shelter at Williams Branch Picnic Area to sort out into the teams on the rosters, to do some preliminary safety briefing, to pick up the teams' tools for their specific assignment, and to organize into car-pooling to get to the trailheads. At the trailheads, we'll have a more specific briefing on the use of tools taken for our team, through a Job Hazard Analysis, which we'll all endorse, to supplement the waiver form of the team roster. We'll have our self-provided lunches with us, and continue work in the afternoon, leaving enough time in the afternoon to get back to Sherando to clean up a bit, and then enjoy the club-provided Saturday night dinner, followed by a potluck of contributed desserts.

Some people will then gather around the campfire, or retire early to their tents or vehicles, some will drive back to Hampton Roads, or to their motels. And some will want to stay to finish up on Sunday some work that wasn't completed on Saturday. Others will stay in the local area to get some of the Fall's apple harvest at a local orchard, or hike some trails. If you can, please come out and join us!

Mark Connolly

TATC Trail Supervisor
trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com

Re-Roofing Harpers Creek Shelter

Our club has received an L.L. Bean Grant coordinated through the Appalachian Trail Conservancy for material costs in replacing the roof on the Harpers Creek Shelter. John Davis, TATC Assistant Trail Supervisor, has scheduled some limited number of volunteers to arrive early for our Fall Maintenance Weekend to specifically to work on removing the cedar-shingled roof on the shelter, and then doing the installation of the replacement roof felt and cedar shingles purchased through the grant.

Volunteers for this work will probably camp at Harpers Creek in lieu of Sherando for a night or two---except for partaking of the Saturday night dinner at Williams Branch. We hope to have the roof replacement accomplished by the end of the Fall Maintenance Weekend.

Mark Connolly

TATC Trail Supervisor
trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com





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2013 TATC Calendar Events Needed!

Please provide your calendar dates for the 2013 TATC Calendar by October 15, 2012. Include dates for scheduled trail maintenance trips, local trails trips, hiking trips, cabin trips, educational classes, etc, for the 2013 TATC Calendar. Please email your dates to my email address shown below or call me at 363-8464 if you have any questions.

Jane Martin
Calendar Committee
calendar@tidewateratc.com

Photo Contest Winners

The Winners of the TATC 2012 Photo Contest are:

- #1---**Kari Pincus** for her creative perspective on the TATC Cabin
- #2---**Mal Higgins'** striking Final Mile to Mt. Marcy
- #3---**Dottie Abbott's** inspiring rendition of Men Working

Thanks to all those who participated. If you were unable to attend or couldn't find those pictures the night of the General Meeting, it is not too late to submit photos for possible inclusion in our calendar. We need them by October 15th. The 2013 TATC Calendars will be unveiled and for sale at our Holiday Party.

Jane Martin
Calendar Committee
calendar@tidewateratc.com

Hiking Odds and Ends

Hunting Season – Before you plan a Fall, Winter or Spring hike you should ALWAYS check hunting data in your area. In addition, you should wear either an orange blaze hat or upper body clothing to make yourself visible to hunters. In general, hunting in Virginia is from October 6, 2012 to January 5, 2013. There are other viable dates: Sept. 29, 2012 is Youth Deer Hunting Day; hunting for antlerless deer continues to March 30, 2013; Youth Turkey Hunting Day is April 6, 2013 and Spring Turkey season runs from April 13-May 18, 2013. Always check!! During 2002 and 2003 two AT hikers on National Forest Lands were mistaken for deer and seriously injured by hunters. The hunters were prosecuted but that won't make you feel any better if you've been shot!

2013 Biennial Conference – The 2013 ATC Biennial Conference will be July 19-26, 2013 in Cullowhee, NC. Mark your calendars and check out <http://www.appalachiantrail.org/who-we-are/events/2011/07/26.atc-cullowhee-2013> for details. Perhaps your business would like to become a sponsor of the Biennial. For sponsorship information, contact Cullowhee2013sponsorships@gmail.com

AT Vanity Plates – Let everyone know you support the AT community by purchasing an Appalachian Trail license plate. Visit <http://www.dmv.state.va.us/exec/vehicle/splates/info.asp?idnm=AT>.

TATC Newsletter Articles - Do you have an article that you would like to submit for inclusion into a club newsletter? The topic of the article should be either a club event, an outdoor activity or an adventure trip. If you do want to submit an article, or articles; then please send a file with your article to newsletter@tidewateratc.com (most file formats are acceptable). The TATC Newsletter is published every two month, and the deadline for articles is usually 7 days prior to the end of the preceding month before the next publication date.

Tidewater has some great photographers!! Here are a couple of opportunities that may interest you:

2013 ATC Biennial Photo Contest – For the first time, the ATC's 2013 Biennial Conference will include a photo contest and exhibit. Entries must be photographs taken since April 1, 2011 and submitted by April 1, 2013. Photos must be either taken from or on the Appalachian Trail. Photos will be juried with the final judging by a noted photographer. Winning photographs will be displayed at the Biennial. For complete rules email 2013photocontest@appalachiantrail.org and include '2013photocontest' in the subject line.

AT Journey Photos – If you have some stunning AT photos you would like published in AT Journeys, the magazine of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, send them (2 mb or larger) to editor@appalachiantrail.org.

The Kindness of Strangers (Instant Karma's Gonna Get You!)

By Bob Adkisson

Everyone's heard of 'Trail Magic'.

Here, pretty much, is an example of 'River Magic'. And instant karma, too:

Late last Sept. I set out to paddle my canoe down the Hudson River, about 190 miles from Fort Edward, N.Y. (40 miles north of Albany) to N.Y. City. An extended spell of exceptionally wet, gray weather made the trip even more (shall we say) *challenging*.

The first two days of the trip were especially wet, muddy, and difficult, a combination of both the weather and the after-effects of a hurricane's flood the previous month. Also, this section of the river was dammed, used as part of the Lake Champlain Canal; canoes were allowed free passage thru the 8 huge locks that accompanied each dam, but still, it complicated and slowed things considerably. From Albany down to N.Y. City, as most people probably aren't aware, the Hudson River is tidal; the water level fluctuates a couple of feet, twice a day.

Another potential complication: my 2nd day on the river I realized I was missing 2 rather important things-- my driver's license and a credit card, last seen at a motel the day I launched the boat. I had a fair amount of cash on me, and a 2nd credit card, but of course I was worried. At a visitor's center in the town of Waterford, where the Erie Canal joins the Hudson River, I borrowed someone's cell phone (since it's near impossible to find pay phones anymore, especially ones that work) and called the motel. No sign of my things there.

I could only hope that I'd mislaid the 2 items somewhere inside my car, as I'd tried to organize and pack the 378 things that typically accompany me on a long canoe trip (it's a wonder I remember to bring paddles and a sleeping bag!). Four days later I found a pay phone and was reassured to learn no one had been charging anything on the missing credit card.

I spent one zero mile day in my tent, because of rain and lightning. The following afternoon I had to get off the water, stand forlornly in a downpour, and wait out another electrical storm. Two days after that, with a cold front pushing down from the north (accompanied by more gray skies), I paddled thru the Hudson Highlands and past West Point; a few miles downstream I camped practically beneath the beautiful and dramatic Bear Mtn. Bridge (which the A.T. uses to cross the river). The following day the sun was finally out, bright and wondrous, but now the strong winds were from the south; I battled whitecaps (as well as an incoming tide at least half the time) and had to earn every inch. The best thing about this day was a really nice campsite discovered just before sun set, in an undeveloped state park (I was directly across the mile wide river from 'Sing Sing', the state prison in Ossining, N.Y.!).

The following night, with the skyline of Manhattan in view, I had no choice but to camp right next to a hiking trail in N.J.'s Palisades Park. Close to finishing, I had trouble getting to sleep this night— I was both unsure exactly where to end the trip (because of weather delays my time was now running short), but more worried about the missing driver's license, my only real form of identification: would I be able to take the train out of N.Y. City (back to my car in Fort Edward) without it? Would I have the same problem at the Port Authority Bus Terminal? Questions I couldn't answer nagged at me.

I had 2 choices of where and how to end the trip: 1. stop early the next morning on the N.J. side, about a mile upriver of the Geo. Washington Bridge; hide the canoe and most of my gear in the woods, then walk up to the bridge, cross it into the city and, about 3:30 that afternoon, Amtrak could take me north, to within half mile of where I'd left my car, or 2. do as I'd originally planned and paddle the length of Manhattan, taking out at a marina near the Statue of Liberty; leave my boat there, secure; next day ride a ferry over to Manhattan and take Amtrak north.

But, either way, the monkey wrench could be: no identification, no train ride. (And no bus ride either?) And then, there I'd be, in the middle of huge, impersonal N.Y. City, with no way out, with the city's infamous indifference dismissing me and my puny little problem with— 'hey, rules is rules. ***It's not my problem!***

At sunrise I ate a small, hurried breakfast, packed, and got on the water. I slowly rounded a minor point and, a few miles ahead, the complete span of the Geo. Washington Bridge revealed itself. Beneath the same gray clouds I'd endured nearly the entire trip, it was a welcome sight; a long, tough trip was nearly over. I snapped a photo and paddled on.

But....what was that splashing in the river up ahead? I changed course a bit and headed for it, watching as an unidentified raptor dove again and again at something struggling in the water. As I neared, the falcon (I am all but certain it was a peregrine falcon—I'd read how they'd returned to the cliffs of the Palisades) broke off its attack and left. The animal in the water, I was surprised to find, wasn't a pigeon but a wet, bedraggled, and exhausted blue jay, one willing to accept any help that was offered. I scooped it up with one hand and put it in the canoe, then aimed the boat for shore.

I got a photo of it sitting in my hand, glad to be alive and having found a friend. I released it in the woods, where I trusted it would dry off, get warm, and recover in peace.

About 3 miles later I pulled into shore again, halfway between 2 riverside parking areas. There was a small beach, backed by an 8 foot high stone wall; a hiking trail ran along the top of the wall, but just beyond that a densely wooded hillside rose up steeply. More important, I'd noticed here a set of steps, from the beach to the top of the wall, and a tiny stream coming down the slope.

I made the decision: **the trip ended here.**

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I went up the steps and entered the woods, scouting a place to hide my things. The boat, I found, could be left 60 feet uphill, in the muddy gully formed by the stream, while the gear would fit neatly into a nearby hole, beneath some tree roots.

Satisfied, I returned to the boat and the task at hand: quickly picking out what to take with me, consolidating and hiding the rest.

I was interrupted by a noise, "Ahem", from above and behind me.

I turned to see 2 women, in their early 70's, standing on the edge of the trail, looking down at me inquiringly. "Sorry, we didn't want to startle you, we were just wondering where you came from, what you are doing?"

I had a hundred things pressing on my mind; trying to focus, to work as fast as possible getting my gear out of sight, the last thing I needed were distractions, interruptions, complications.

At the same time, it was an immediate relief to put all that aside and enjoy the moment, to claim my voyage and announce, out loud, its official end. I had, after all, accomplished 98% of what I'd set out to do, and these 2 lady hikers were simply curious. After 12 days of near isolation, this was the world of people calling me back, into the fold.

I briefly described my trip to them, even told them my secret-- that I was getting ready to leave all my belongings up in the woods (before taking the train back to my car, upstate).

I couldn't believe it-- they immediately offered to help me hide my gear!

And, not only that-- Sarah, who lived only 3 miles away, motioned to her friend (Merle), said she was about to drive half way to Albany and could give me a ride!

Dumbfounded, I thanked them, but, as for the gear, it was best I handle that myself (there was a lot of poison ivy and mud involved, plus I wanted to disturb the area as little as possible). As for the ride.... I told them about my lost Id. and my worries about Amtrak. I said I really wanted to take the train-- all the way to Albany it was never more than 100 yards from the Hudson, and for the return trip I longed to sit and enjoy the view (I'd *earned* it).

Merle said she'd be glad to help me out with a ride, for me to think about it; the 2 of them were going to continue their walk half mile south-- they'd be coming back in about 30 minutes.

After they left I man-handled my old, battered canoe up into the mucky ravine, where I locked it to a small tree. Two trips were required to get all my bags (clothes, food, sleeping bag, tent, etc) up the slope and into the hole beneath the tree roots.

Doing all this, I reconsidered the extraordinary offer of a ride-- as much as I wanted to hike triumphantly into N.Y. City, it made so much sense to let someone help me, to simply say yes to the offer. In Kingston, near where Merle lived, if having no Id. proved to be a problem, I could easily hitch hike the remaining hundred miles back to my car.

When the women showed back up I told them I'd changed my mind—I'd go with them. Like the blue jay a few miles upriver, I was glad to be plucked from the water and rescued, to have found friends.

I had one more item to hide (a large cooler), then I needed to change into a clean set of clothes; I told them I'd be along in 5 minutes.

Half mile upriver, at the parking area, they took pictures of me with my camera and theirs, with the Geo. Washington Bridge and the city skyline over my shoulder. Then we drove to Sarah's house, where I met her husband and was offered breakfast. Soon, with a light rain falling, Merle and I headed north on the Palisades Parkway.

Merle was, as Sarah had said, an avid paddler herself, though it was something she'd come to later in life. Our time together flew by as we talked about the many rivers (and lakes) we had both paddled (in the Adirondacks, Maine, Montana, the Everglades, the Boundary Waters, Arkansas), and the adventure books we had both read and enjoyed. It was remarkable, how many similar experiences we'd had, how we even shared viewpoints on things like cell phones in the wilderness. She led canoe trips for Outward Bound, mostly out of the N.C. school near Linville Gorge; my introduction to canoeing, backpacking, and rock climbing had been at that very same school, back when I was 19.

Too soon we pulled into the Kingston bus station.

Comparing the bus schedule to Amtrak, the train was by far the better option. Merle was more than willing to drive me to the train station—10 miles away, on the other side of the river.

Turns out it was no problem, in tiny Rhinecliff, buying a ticket without a driver's license.

Speeding north, I watched thru the window as 3 of my riverside campsites flew by.

Just after dark, and yet another storm, I detrained and walked the wet streets of Fort Edward to my car. In the small dim parking lot (situated between the police and fire department headquarters) I quickly checked a few obvious places but didn't find my missing license or visa card. I drove on to Albany and got a well deserved motel. Funny thing, half way thru the process of checking in, the issue of no Id. came up, and they almost didn't rent me a room. But my other card had already cleared and so, what the heck.

Next morning, in the light of day, I found the 2 missing items.

A leisurely breakfast, a fast drive south, and by noon I was back in Palisades Park, walking half mile down the footpath to reclaim my boat and gear, mercifully undiscovered there in the poison ivy protected woods.

It was actually sunny this day, with no wind, and I couldn't resist paddling a mile over to the northern tip of Manhattan, slipping into the channel that separates the island from the rest of the state.

Then, it was time to paddle back, load up, and head homeward, thankful for the kindness of strangers—sometimes found where you least expect it.

Katahdin: Greatest Mountain Day Hike

By Mal Higgins

Katahdin is Maine's "sacred" or "greatest mountain", so named by early Native Americans, and the "Big K" to many through hikers. Located in Baxter State Park, in north central Maine, near Millinocket, it is the 5267 foot high northern terminus of the long and winding 2180 plus miles of the Appalachian Trail. Indeed, it is Maine's highest mountain and is maintained by the Maine Appalachian Trail Club.

On a recent late August visit to Maine, we (Svetlana Kononov and I) decided to climb it, without the extra 2175 mile walk on the A.T. to get there. What could be easier than a 5.1 mile ascent with 4000 feet of elevation gain along this picturesque and noteworthy trail? Yes, uphill. Yes, rocky. But not bad. Or so it seemed.

The first step is to obtain a day use parking permit online from the Baxter State Park Authority, sufficiently far in advance of the date you desire, if you intend to enter the park by car. Each trailhead has limited parking and when those spaces are full on the early morning of the day of your hike, the park gate will admit no more cars. \$19.00 gets you a permit to print out before your arrival. The gate to BSP is about 17 miles from Millinocket. Arrive before 7:05 a.m., because after that your reservation is released. We arrived at the gate at 5:45 a.m. showed our permit, and drove a narrow gravel road to the trailhead of the A.T. at Katahdin Stream Campground, eight miles later. Locally, in BSP, the A.T. is known as the Hunt Trail, named after one of the early route makers. There are other trails to the summit from other sides of Katahdin, but I wanted to be on the A.T.

I've hiked Katahdin before, twice—in 1997 and in 2004. The 1997 hike lives on in TATC folklore as the hike from hell. I knew we needed lots of water, so Svetlana and I were packing four liters each. We're talking weight here. By days end, we had each drunk three liters, and I'd given away disposable bottles to two other hikers who had opted for lighter loads with less water, but were looking sadly at drained bottles. We ascended beginning at 6:05 a.m. We wheezed our way to the summit six hours later (yes that's right!—six hours). Technically, the summit high point is called Baxter Peak, as Katahdin itself is a giant "massive"—a granite monolith of several other slightly lower peaks, all carved by glaciers.

As we climbed steadily but not too steeply in the forest, we benefited from the cool, slightly overcast morning, traversing Katahdin Stream, and enjoying the view of Katahdin Stream Falls. It was shirt sleeve weather. As we climbed we were overtaken by seriously fit, bearded (well, the men were, not the ladies), through hikers. We even met several coming down, including "Skunk ape", who had climbed in the dark to be on the summit to finish his through hike at sunrise.

I appointed myself to be the through hikers official greeter. I would eagerly engage them with the following colloquy: After verifying that he/she was indeed a through hiker, I'd congratulate them. Next, I'd ask about their trail name, or "handle". Then, a few other pleasantries, such as "when did you start?" [Most started around the middle of March.] Next, an exclamation or two along the lines of "Man, how does it feel to accomplish this?" But I could not rest with that.

While the hiker's gaze grew reflective as he pondered the question, I'd ready the final one. So, I'd say, "What's next in life for you?" A startled look followed; an unwelcome question in this moment of reverie. Svetlana suggests that it was cruel to alert the through hiker that this awesome phase of his life was over. But, as I pointed out to her, it was for their own good to start thinking about the imminent return to the civilian world, the ho-humness of day hiking, and the persistent question "What does it all mean?"—just in case 2180 miles had not yet given them the answer.

Somewhere just past "Cave Rock"—a lean-to of huge rocks that prior hikers had disgustingly turned into a "leave a trace" above-ground privy—and about 3.7 miles up the trail, we left the tree line behind and encountered the dreaded Hunt Spur. This spiny ridge is nothing but large boulders and rocks, and is ominously steep. The trail tortuously traces its path in, around, over and through this maze. In places, iron rungs have been driven into the rock to provide a handhold or foothold. Even though the trail is well blazed by M.A.T.C., the route sometimes seemed to disappear as we heaved and lunged ourselves over the top of boulders. With at least one false summit, it lured us on, and when we topped out and gazed ahead after a half mile of quadriceps burning, we arrived at the "Gateway."

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From the Gateway, we were now on a relatively flat, gently sloping shoulder of Katahdin, devoid of trees, and consisting of a rocky granite base and alpine vegetation. This is known as the "Tableland." For the first time, we spied the famous summit above us, slightly more than a mile away, and could make out the famous Katahdin summit sign and the tiny figures of hikers moving toward it and on the summit. The A.T. here on the Tableland is actually marked by wooden stakes and cord strung between the stakes on both sides of the trail to prevent hikers from moving off the loose gravel and small rock surface and damaging the fragile alpine plants. There were lots of ripe blueberries and what appeared to be a type of wild cranberry. The cord was no barrier, although I stepped carefully on bedrock, to reach some prime blueberry bushes.

The wind was blowing at maybe 15 mph. Clouds were swirling up from the valley and crossing the Tableland. The sun struggled. Would it turn to rain and showers? The Tableland is not a place to be caught in a storm. A through hiking couple approached us from the direction of the summit. This couple had blown by us earlier, serious, not responding much to my questions, intent on the goal. Now, a bit more relaxed, they paused, and even smiled. The friendly woman had what appeared to be a tiny toothpick as a nose piercing, and she and her hiking companion helpfully suggested that the remaining climb was only about 15 minutes. I knew it would be more time, but muttered silently to myself. Yeah. If you just hiked 2180 miles; if you have iron springs for legs; if you have a stick in your nose.

We hiked on, frequently pausing, and close to an hour later, we completed the final mile and arrived at Katahdin's summit. The "Sign", oh, that mystical, weathered, brown sign. The holy grail for the northbound through hikers. "Katahdin—Northern Terminus of the Appalachian Trail"; "A Mountain Footpath Extending Over 2000 Miles to Springer Mtn Georgia". We spent about 50 minutes on top, enjoying great 360 degree views to the valleys and lakes below, while gray mists swirled occasionally around us and we chatted with an ever changing crowd of perhaps 15-20 folks arriving from various trails. We met Aurelia, an endearing little blonde 6 year old girl, who had climbed with her Dad on the A.T. to the summit. We chatted with another through hiker or two. I restrained my questions. We were reluctant to leave.

As we turned to start the long hike back (we made it to the car in a blazing four hours, 45 minutes), we faced the reverse descent of the Hunt Spur and its torturous route. Now, it was knees screaming for mercy. Aurelia and her Dad, and some other teenage girls, politely passed us, Aurelia chirping away about how much fun it was. She was right. Back at the car about 6:00 p.m., Svetlana and I paused a minute to look up. Katahdin was gleaming in the setting sun.

Program Schedule for TATC General Meetings

Held on Wednesdays, 7:00 - 9:00 PM at the Mary Pretlow Library, 111 W. Ocean View Ave, Norfolk

- October 10th - Nancy Rinckenberger - Dog Sledding
- November 14th - Trail Awards
- December - Holiday Party



What's in the Box? (And Other Cabin News)

By Bob Adkisson

At the TATC Putman Memorial Cabin there is a fairly new, well built wooden box, stored in plain sight on top of a spare bench beneath the steps to the sleeping loft. Steve Babor (former cabin chairman and handy-man-of-all-trades) built the box, replacing an old wooden wine box I had brought up years earlier. The box is used for storage—it says right on top, **MAPS & STUFF**.

I have a feeling many cabin renters never bother to open it up at all, or explore its contents that deeply, so I will try here to pique your interest—

The main thing of interest (and it should be stored on top) is the Cabin Log Book, a 3 ring binder where cabin renters can write about their cabin stay, or look back and read what others have written about theirs (the main reason I think a lot of renters never open the box: sometimes months go by and no one writes in the book!) The cabin has been in rental use now for 29 years; the current log book goes back only about a dozen years or so. Still, it is fun to sit and spend some time reading through it, especially on a rainy day.

Digging deeper, you will find several books that have been donated to the cabin. The latest addition is a series of 3 books under the title Back Roads, each a compilation of newspaper articles written by Lynn Coffey, a local woman (though originally from Florida). The books are full of stories and pictures of her beloved mountain neighbors, with some of the history of the area woven in. You can get a taste of what the area used to be like, 100 years ago, how the people lived and worked. Also new is a book from the Images of America Series, titled The Appalachian Trail in Virginia, by A.T. thru-hiker Leonard Adkins. This is a history of the A.T. and the maintaining clubs told mostly in photographs; there is even a photo of our cabin (before it had a front porch). Several of our club members are pictured in the book.

Other books include: the Pulitzer Prize winning Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, which takes place just north of Roanoke and mentions the A.T. once or twice; The A.T. in Bits & Pieces, about girl scouts hiking the trail; Follow the River, an historical novel, the true life ordeal of a woman captured by Indians near Radford, Va. in the 1700's; Ed Abbey's classic Desert Solitaire, an exploration of the western U.S. and his adventures there as a part time park ranger and fire look out; and A Walk in the Woods, by Bill Bryson—the funniest book about the A.T. that I've read.

There is even a book titled Log Cabin Cooking.

In addition, there are some small nature guide books-- about rocks, lichens, trees and plants, and two coffee table type books about the A.T., both loaded with color photos—one is by National Geographic, the other is aerial photos of the trail from Georgia to Maine.

Also included in the box are several magazines or newsletters-- from the Wilderness Society, the Chestnut Foundation, A.T. Journeys, Outside, and Blue Ridge Country, as well as large booklets about Virginia State Parks and P.A.T.C. Cabins. There is a Blue Ridge Parkway Travel Planner too, and a A.T.C. member handbook; even a few old copies of the TATC Newsletter.

Of special interest is a reprint of Norfolk resident (and A.T. thru-hiker) Earl Swift's trip paddling the length of the James River, and also a 4 part history of the Blue Ridge Parkway, which appeared a few years ago in the Virginian Pilot newspaper, marking the road's 75th anniversary. Also reprinted, from an article in Outside magazine, is the well written story of club member John Donavon's last hike (on the Pacific Crest Trail); a couple of John's former hiking buddies, members of both TATC and ODATC, are interviewed and quoted in the article.

There is lots of local information too, about Waynesboro and Charlottesville, Nelson County and Shenandoah Nat'l Park—including maps of the same.

Yes, MAPS: there are lots of them!

I periodically rummage thru the box and try to put everything in some semblance of order; trail maps, along with the Pedlar District (of the Geo. Washington Nat'l Forest) hiking guidebook, are kept in a large zip lock bag. There are detailed P.A.T.C. hiking maps for both Shenandoah Park and for our section of the A.T., as well as southward. If I am not mistaken, we have the A.T. covered, from the James River north to Front Royal!! These maps show all of the trails in places like the St Mary's River Wilderness and around Sherando Lake, as well, of course, the area around the club cabin (see P.A.T.C. map # 12).

There are some ancient county road maps too (though you might want to always have on hand your own copy of the Virginia Gazetteer Map Book, by DeLorme).

While staying at the cabin, if you don't have your own maps or guidebooks, feel free to use the ones in the box—take a great hike, drive on some back roads, don't get lost, and return the borrowed items when you are done. The same goes for the books—read them to your hearts content, but **PLEASE** don't take them home with you.

(Continued on Page 11 ...)

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Of even greater interest perhaps are some cabin historical materials, copies of stuff from the files of the Historical Committee. Read about how the club researched and studied the idea of building some sort of cabin (or fixing up one that was falling down), and then, with the help of a generous gift from the Putman family, ultimately bought land and built its own stone cabin near the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Nelson County, Virginia, about 3 miles distant from the section of the A.T. we maintain.

There are even a few miscellaneous photographs from years back, club members (like Otey Shelton) working on the cabin.

For a box that only measures something like 14 x 18 x 16 inches, it sure holds a lot!! Next time you are up there, take a look inside, read a book or a magazine, study a map, learn about some of the area's history, where to go and what to do and how to get there.

And.... Don't be shy—write about your thoughts and adventures in the log book.

As sometimes happens in the dry months of Autumn, the cabin's spring is only trickling. Renters may need to pack in their own water this October and November.

The Cabin Committee used some of the money donated to the club (in memory of the late John Donavon) to buy a brass plaque for the picnic shelter, dedicating it to him. It will be put in place during the Sept. Cabin work trip, along with a new wooden sign for the Putman Cabin itself. The original cabin sign (from about 1980), made I believe by Jacque Jenkins son Scott, is showing its age and needs to be replaced.

I am also sad to report the demise of the nearest public phone to the cabin. The phone that had been mounted on the outside wall of the office building for Royal Oaks Cabins is no more; it will not be replaced. Likewise the indoor public phone at the gas station / store about 2 miles north of the entrance to Sherando National Forest campground. I also checked around in Waynesboro itself recently (I even asked the man at the desk of the YMCA-- 200 yards from where most of the A.T. thru-hikers camp when they stay in town-- if they had a phone or if he knew of any) and the conclusion is: there are NO PUBLIC PHONES any longer in all of Waynesboro (if you know of one, please pass along its location!).

The only public phone I know of, the closest one to the trail club cabin, is in Sherando campground, in the small vending machine building next to the bath house at the lower lake. Even then, there is a roll down metal door mounted on the front of this building, and a lock, so probably during the winter months this building is shuttered and the phone inaccessible. This phone is about a 3 1/2 mile hike, via the White Rock Gap Trail, from the cabin, or about a 10 mile drive (*if* the Parkway is open, *if* the gates to Sherando are open, and *if* the building / phone is accessible—I emphasize the 'if' because, in the winter time, these roads may be closed because of snow).

If you don't own a cell phone, you are simply out of luck. And of course, cell phone service within a few miles of the cabin is either non-existent or spotty (which hey, I consider a blessing: the thought of someone sitting in the cabin talking on a cell phone actually makes me sick to my stomach, or at least sick at heart. I hope the day never comes and, if it does, there will be a new cabin rule: no cell phones allowed at the cabin during work trips—they have to be left in the cars, at White Rock Gap).

SIDEBAR: One summer a dozen years ago, about 10 p.m. on a Sunday night, I was exhausted from working all day with the Konnarock Crew and ODATC, and I stupidly locked my car keys, along with the key to the cabin, inside my vehicle there at White Rock Gap. A cell phone wouldn't have been of much help, since there is no reception in the area. I had a choice of walking about 2 miles to Rusty's Hard Times Hollow hiker hostel and seeing if I could find a blanket there in the bunkhouse, spending the night and dealing with the situation the next day, or walking 200 yards farther, to the Royal Oaks public phone, and calling AAA for help. I did the latter, waiting an hour for the wrecker to show up, drive me back to my vehicle, and open the car for me. I didn't get back inside the cabin till about 1 a.m. that night.

Sadly, the prevalence of cell phones has caused the venerable public phone to go extinct, thus reducing overall service and choice for everyone.

Just a reminder: there is now an emergency cabin key on club property. If, like me, you lock your key inside your car, or lose it somewhere, or forget to take it with you to the mountains, you can try calling me, or Greg Hodges (cabin committee co-chair, who has his cell phone on him most of the time), and inquire as to its location—your weekend might be saved after all (this key, had it been there at the time, would have helped me that Sunday night—at least I could have entered the cabin, gotten some sleep, and gone to summon help the next day.

Another loss to the area: I just confirmed that Greyhound no longer has bus service to either Waynesboro or Staunton, Virginia. The nearest place to the cabin to catch a bus is now Charlottesville, about 40 miles distant.

There is taxi service in Waynesboro—you could take a 30 mile taxi ride to Charlottesville, and then the bus back to Tidewater from there. All by itself though, the bus ride seems a bit pricy—a one way ticket from Norfolk to Charlottesville runs about \$57. At least one other club member (Mason Newsome) and I have, in the past, taken the bus to or from Waynesboro while visiting the cabin. Now this too is more difficult. I would think this loss of bus service is a disservice to A.T. hikers as well, what with Waynesboro being a major trail town, a place where numerous people jump on or off of the trail.

NELSON COUNTY, VIRGINIA DESIGNATED AN APPALACHIAN TRAIL COMMUNITY™

Press Release

Nelson County, VA (September 20, 2012) – The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) will celebrate the official designation of Nelson County, Virginia as the newest Appalachian Trail (A.T.) Community™ on October 17, 2012, from 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., at the Nelson Center located at 8445 Thomas Nelson Hwy, Lovingston, Virginia. This event is free and open to the public.

The designation will begin with guest speakers including Mark Wenger, executive director/CEO of the ATC and Laura Belleville, director of conservation for the ATC, as well as local representatives from Nelson County.

“The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is proud to celebrate communities that are helping to protect and promote the Appalachian Trail,” said Julie Judkins, community program manager for the ATC. “These new partnerships will increase local stewardship of public lands, support community initiatives for sustainable economic development and conservation planning as well as support healthy lifestyles for community citizens.”

After the ceremony, guests are welcome to snack on local apples donated by Drumheller’s Orchard and beverages while they view a slideshow of photographs of the A.T. near Nelson County and of local trail clubs doing trail maintenance.

The ATC will also host “ATopoly”, an activity for all ages to learn more about the A.T. and Leave No Trace principles.

A variety of local outdoor clubs and organizations will have informational booths set up during the event as well.

The Appalachian Trail Community™ is a new program of the ATC, the nonprofit responsible for management and protection of the A.T. Launched in 2010, this program recognizes and thanks communities for their part in promoting the A.T. as an important local and national asset.

EVENT OVERVIEW

Nelson County, Virginia A.T. Community Designation

Date: October 17, 2012

Time: 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Location: Nelson Center

8445 Thomas Nelson Hwy

Lovingston, Virginia 22949

Program Schedule:

A.T. Community Designation Ceremony (1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.)

Activities (2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

– A.T. Slideshow

– “ATopoly”

Information Booths (2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

– Appalachian Trail Conservancy

– Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club

– Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club

– Old Dominion Appalachian Trail Club

– Blue Ridge Mountain Sports of Charlottesville

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The ATC was founded in 1925 by volunteers and federal officials working to build a continuous footpath along the Appalachian Mountains. Stretching from Georgia to Maine, the A.T. is approximately 2,180 miles in length, making it one of the longest, continuously marked footpaths in the world. Volunteers typically donate more than 220,000 hours of their time doing trail-related work each year, and about 2 to 3 million visitors walk a portion of the A.T. each year. This year also marks the 75th anniversary of the completion of the A.T.

For more information about the Appalachian Trail Community™ program, visit www.appalachiantrail.org/atcommunity.

About the Appalachian Trail Conservancy

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy's mission is to preserve and manage the Appalachian Trail – ensuring that its vast natural beauty and priceless cultural heritage can be shared and enjoyed today, tomorrow, and for centuries to come. For more information about the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, visit www.appalachiantrail.org.

Contact: Angie Sheldon
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Tel: [540.953.3571](tel:540.953.3571)
Email: asheldon@appalachiantrail.org

TATC Informational Notes

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

www.Facebook.com

Search: Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club

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

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 Scott Hilton at 757 625-6052 or sdhilton@hotmail.com with information for publication.

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, 2012, Sunday - NEW QUARTER PARK MAINTENANCE

Phyllis Neumann 757-566-4584, phyllisneumann@hughes.net

Meet at 9:00am at the inner parking lot of New Quarter Park, 1000 Lakeshead Drive, Williamsburg, VA 23185 (<http://www.yorkcounty.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=4626>)for some light maintenance on the trails that TATC built several years ago. Bring snacks, water, gloves and appropriate footwear. Tools will be provided. There are some excellent overlooks to view the marshes and Queen's Creek. Expect to see some wildlife. Eat out afterwards. Contact Phyllis to sign up!

October 5-7, 2012, Friday-Sunday - BIRDING AT KIPOPEKE STATE PARK.

Martha Holmes, 451-0261

"Twitchers" of the TATC put your money down now for a lot of bird-watching fun the first week-end of October while staying at a lodge at Kiptopeke State Park. The lodges are new and have 6 bedrooms, a full kitchen, full dining room and at least 2 baths. The sleeping arrangements vary with each bedroom with 2 queens, 2 doubles, 2 sets of twins, etc.. The park is located a few miles north of the Bay Bridge Tunnel. Why the rush to reserve? There are 7 lodges 6 of which have already been reserved so I need payment in the next couple of weeks and it has to be non-refundable because I have to put up the money in order to keep the lodge reserved. Look up the Eastern Shore Birding Festival and you will find a myriad number of activities, many of which are free. To reserve your spot in the lodge, please send me a check for \$42.00 per person (if we have 16 people and more if we do not) made out to Martha Holmes. Please phone rather than e-mail, for my address. P.S. "Twitchers" is British for bird-watchers.

October 10, 2012, Wednesday 7:00 PM - TATC GENERAL MEETING

Mary Pretlow Library, 111 W. Ocean View Ave, Norfolk

Jim Newman, 867-6688 jimnewman55@cox.net

Business meeting and recognition of new members and guests. Program will be dog sledding on the boundary waters.. Last chance to hear about the fall maintenance plans.

October 12-14, 2012, Friday-Sunday - FALL MAINTENANCE WEEKEND

Mark Connolly, 623-0764, trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com

This is our weekend for performing the trail maintenance for which our club was organized and was assigned responsibility for a section of the Appalachian Trail. We will have a day of work on Saturday, followed by a club-sponsored dinner on Saturday night at our base camp at Sherando Lake US Forest Service Campground. Tools will be provided. This year, we have taken on an additional task to put a new roof on one of the two shelters that our section of the A.T. features. The Harpers Creek Shelter is the beneficiary of a grant from the L.L.Bean company to assist with the cost of materials to replace the cedar shake shingle roof on the shelter. But our club will provide the volunteer labor. We'll need some folks to go up earlier in the week to help remove the old roof to be ready for the transfer of the new materials to the shelter area, and to install the new materials on the roof during the weekend. Since we've had a couple events of trail maintenance since our Spring Maintenance Weekend, we hope that the need for trail maintenance will be lighter in demands, except for some cutting back of vegetation encroaching on the trail profile. If possible, come on Friday to set up your tent to be ready to work on Saturday morning. But the gate for Sherando closes at 10 PM and re-opens at 6 AM. Bring gloves and car-camping equipment and food for meals other than Saturday night's dinner.

October 26-28, 2012, Friday-Sunday – CABIN TRIP

Carol Hodges 439-3915

Enjoy an autumn weekend at the TATC cabin. A community meal will be planned for Saturday evening. The cabin can accommodate 12. Please call to reserve a spot. A fee of \$5.00 per person per night will be collected for TATC

(Continued on Page 15 ...)

Activities Schedule

(Continued from Page 14 ...)

November 2-4, 2012, Friday-Sunday - CABIN MAINTENANCE AND ORIENTATION

Bob Adkisson 627-5514 or Greg Hodges 439-1552

Come out for the weekend at the club cabin, do a little work and become eligible to rent the cabin. General repairs & getting wood cut for winter. Probably have some time to do hiking also. Give Bob or Greg a call for more info.

November 4, 2012, Sunday - BIKING THE CAPITAL TRAIL

Rick Hancock 619-5522 athiker80@cox.net

Meet at the Charles City Courthouse parking lot 9:30am

I'm announcing this ride early. Join me for a celebration of the first Thanksgiving in America. No we're not biking to Plymouth Rock, Mass The first Thanksgiving took place in 1619 in Virginia one year and 17 days before the Pilgrims landed. We will depart from the Capital Trail trail head at Historic Charles City Courthouse and bike to Benjamin Harrison Lake. Upon our return we'll stop at Berkley Plantation for food, drink, and plenty of fun. Costumed interpreters from the Colonial time period, ladies in hoop skirts, Civil War soldiers, Indians, carriage rides, and a host of activities will be taking place. Bring money if you want to eat. Directions to the trail head are: take I64 west to exit 242A Rt. 199 west exit. Follow Rt. 199 to Jamestown Rd. and crossover then continue to Rt. 5 west. Turn left onto Rt. 5 and follow to the Chickahominy River Bridge. Cross the bridge and travel 13 miles at Rt 155 on your right turn left onto Courthouse Rd. Follow the road a short ways to the Post Office turn left at the PO and look to your left you'll see the original courthouse. We'll meet there and depart at 9:30am. We'll bike about 20/25 miles total. You can bike less miles by not going down to the lake.

The trail is suitable for any type of bike, however the lanes leading to Berkley Plantation are dirt and loose stone. Narrow tires are not a good idea.

November 9-11th, 2012, Friday-Sunday - PORTMOUTH ISLAND CAMPING, NC

Gordon and Melinda Spence 464-5096 Seebeeg@aol.com

Meet at Howards Pub, Ocracoke N/C 7:00 PM. Overnight in Ocracoke, camp/motel-your choice. Saturday, catch boat to Portsmouth island. Explore island-village, USCG station. Set up camp on outer beach. Sunday, return to Ocracoke. Bring; shelter, food, water, camera, bug spray, \$25 for boat trip. Allow 5 hours to reach Ocracoke.

November 10th, 2012, Saturday - WINTER BACKPACKING CLASS

Nancy Rinkenberger 623-0334

Winter is hands-down my favorite hiking and backpacking season. In this two-hour class (9-11) we will look at cold weather gear requirements, techniques for staying comfortable while hiking and ways to sleep warmer. We will discuss potential winter injuries and how to avoid them. From 11-noon, I will look at your winter gear and suggest changes that may make your hike more comfortable. Please see related Meetup as those interested can take an introductory winter backpacking trip Nov. 23-25. Location and time for class below:

9:00 AM at the Church of the Epiphany, 1530 Lafayette Blvd., Norfolk, VA 23509

November 19th, 2012, Monday 7:00 PM - TATC GENERAL MEETING - *note date change*

Mary Pretlow Library, 111 W. Ocean View Ave, Norfolk

Jim Newman, 867-6688 jimnewman55@cox.net

Business meeting and recognition of new members and guests. Trail awards.

November 23-25, 2012, Friday-Sunday - WINTER BACKPACKING TRIP

Nancy Rinkenberger 623-0334

Work off that turkey and stuffing with a 2 night backpacking trip to Merchant Millpond. One day we can hike Lassiter Trail which is approximately 7 miles and the other day we'll canoe the Millpond. At night we'll sit around the campfire, roast marshmallows and swap stories of our Thanksgiving Feasts. If you have no experience with winter camping, I will hold a short class and gear check Nov. 10 (See related Meetup). Note: \$5 per person. Price is approximate. Site cost will be divided among participants. We will meet at the park N Ride, I64 and Indian River Rd, Virginia Bch, Va at 9:30 am and caravan to [Merchants Millpond State Park](#) 176 Mill Pond Rd, Gatesville, NC

December 8th, 2012, Saturday - TATC HOLIDAY PARTY

Jim Newman, 867-6688 jimnewman55@cox.net

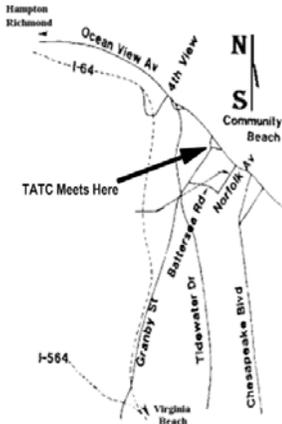
WHRO Hampton Blvd by ODU. More info to come.



Tidewater Appalachian
Trail Club
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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



Photo by Bob Adkisson