

Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club

Appalachian Hiker

www.tidewateratc.com

Banner Photo by Mark Ferguson

June 2021 - July 2021
48th Edition, 3rd Issue

PREZ SEZ

On May 28th, Governor Northam lifted most COVID mask requirements in Virginia. Social distancing and social gathering limits are apparently also being eliminated.

And, are we ever glad!! After a year of not seeing each other in person, TATC members want to talk to each other face-to-face and catch up. SO with the coming of the Governor's pronouncement, an idea arose. Steve Clayton was the inspiration. Judy Welp and Sharon Salyer are the energizing spark plugs. The idea is a June General Meeting in-person, outdoors, and with food (if you bring it). Details follow below, but do mark your calendars for June 9th.

Also, to keep all members in the loop, we're going to try a hybrid meeting. That means an in-person meeting that is also on Zoom. It's an experiment that may or may not work, but even if it fails, we'll try again and again until we succeed. We intend to use Zoom to link with members who can't make our events because of work or distance or other circumstances. Standby for an e-blast containing details. (A hint: if you are attending the in-person meeting, please bring a fully charged mobile phone if you have one.)

Despite the COVID restrictions, TATC had a successful, and fun, spring maintenance trip. Kudos to Britt Collins, Trail Supervisor, and John Sima, Assistant Trail Supervisor, for their meticulous preparations, detailed instructions to participants, and tool distribution worthy of a military operation. Trail crews achieved their objectives without mishap. The weather cooperated, not too hot, not too cold, and no rain. Even with the COVID restrictions still in place, trip participants enjoyed the opportunity to work with each other and get our job done. Dinner Friday and Saturday night, though not shared, was followed by a chance to catch up and make new acquaintances.

Special thanks go to Pete Burch. Pete cleared much of the area at Williams Branch where the maintenance crew stayed, got the water and toilets turned on, and otherwise made the place very habitable for the oncoming TATC crews. He was able to do all this because of the trust that the U.S. Forest Service places in Pete following his years of volunteer service at Sherando and its associated trails. Many thanks, Pete.

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Also special thanks to Jim Sexton for taking on privy cleaning at the Harpers Creek shelter area. It's not glamorous, but it's critical for the health of the trail community. Many thanks to you, Jim

Kathryn Herndon-Powell from the ATC, joined us on May 15th and put in a full day with Britt Collins' crew hacking at overgrowth with a swing blade. As a former Konnarock trail crew leader, Kathryn is an old hand at this kind of work. Saturday evening, she admitted to having fun and was impressed by TATC members' camaraderie and effectiveness.

Articles and photos in this newsletter describe the spring maintenance activities, all of them reveal TATC members having fun doing what they love to do - tend the trail.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy recently granted TATC permission to copy articles from and link to their magazine, called A. T. Journeys. We appreciate ATC's gesture as our newsletter can now draw on their resources for interesting and informative articles about the AT. We got permission just in time to share an A. T. Journeys article that I'm sure all TATC members will want to read. As you may know, our very own Jim Newman was named by the Virginia Region Office (VARO) of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy as their Volunteer of the Year for 2020. Here's the link: <https://appalachiantrail.org/leadership/james-newman/>

Well deserved tribute, Jim. Thank you for all you have done and are doing for TATC.

Our members give remarkable amounts of time to trail maintenance both in the Hampton Roads area and at the A.T., and we tend to know about and recognize what the maintainers do. However, a cadre of our members work behind the scenes to keep TATC functioning. In this and subsequent newsletters, I want to bring to your attention the work of members who keep the wheels on for TATC.

This month it's Mal Higgins. Mal is well known to many members as an inveterate cold weather camper, hike leader, trail crew boss, and cabin maintainer. Many may not know that Mal is a talented, senior attorney who provides the Board with carefully researched and reasoned legal advice. Recently, Mal undertook a search for a new insurance provider after our prior insurance firm proved unsatisfactory. Mal spent many hours negotiating with a potential replacement company and minutely evaluated their proposals. In the end, we got a better deal financially and a more comprehensive policy that covers the cabin and TATC field operations. Our hats off to you, Mal.

Most TATC members live in the Hampton Roads area, but after years, and in some cases decades, of travel to Nelson County feel a strong connection to a place some 200 miles from our homes. It's also a county we share with the Old Dominion ATC and the Natural Bridge ATC.

A. T. Journeys recently carried an article highlighting the work of our three clubs. The article also links to descriptions of hikes in the area. Link: <https://appalachiantrail.org/explore/communities/nelson-county-va/>

A Nelson county link (www.nelsoncounty-va.gov) is included in the article. It contains a wide range of information about the county. My favorite page is the Food Services guide: <https://www.nelsoncounty-va.gov/directories/business-directory/> which lists restaurants.

By the way, try the French Press in Waynesboro after a weekend at camp. Seriously good coffee.

A.T trail maintenance gets lots of notice, but what we do locally makes hiking and just walking safe and enjoyable in our Hampton Roads communities. The latest application for our services is from the Virginia Beach government. They asked Dave Plum for help with the Pleasure House Point area (where the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has its large facility). Dave advanced the request to the Board. The Board agreed for a two years commitment. We will reassess thereafter.

Dave is looking for volunteers for his June 17th trip so get in touch with him if you are interested at localtrails@tidewateratc.com.

Speaking of volunteers, TATC has a great need for them. Our two 50th anniversary committees need people. The chairs of the Outreach, Education, Merchandise, and Programs committees are vacant. More about these needs at the General Meeting.

Well, that's it for me. Thanks again for all you do to maintain our communities' outdoor resources.

Happy trails (with a bow to Roy and Dale),
Lee Lohman - President TATC

Minute for Maintenance



We had a successful Spring Maintenance Weekend, May 14-15, 2021.

Thanks to our dedicated TATC volunteers, we were able to clear a few down trees, hang some signs, clean up the shelter areas, and also take care of the vegetation along Three Ridges. In the evenings we were able to relax, sit around a fire, and get to know each other. Thank you again for all your hard-working and dedication to the trail. We look forward to seeing you on the trail in the next few months.

More photos from this event are included in the Photolog section of this newsletter.

Many thanks to Kathryn Herndon-Powell from the Virginia Regional Office (VARO) of ATC for helping out and spending such a perfect day on Three Ridges with Britt's crew!

Upcoming A.T. maintenance events this Summer:

Lopperfest 2021 Part 1 - July 16-18, 2021

Where: Camping at the CCC Kitchen in Sherando.

Why: We will be clearing any vegetation overgrowth on the Three Ridges trail and taking care of any necessary maintenance in Saint Mary's Wilderness.

Who: 20 TATC Volunteers

Lopperfest 2021 Part 2 - August 13-15, 2021

Where: Camping at the CCC Kitchen in Sherando.

Why: We will be clearing any vegetation overgrowth on the Three Ridges trail and doing our walk-thru for Fall Maintenance.

Who: 15 TATC Volunteers

Respectfully,

Brittany Collins

Trail Supervisor

trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com

Local Trail Maintenance Outing at Pleasure House Point on June 17th

Pleasure House Point Invasive Species Attack

This is a call for volunteers to join up and help the City of Virginia Beach clean out some invasive plant species and vines in one of the City's newest environmentally sensitive park. We will be working with City Parks and Recreation staff to rid a portion of the park of nuisance plant life that is strangling several beautiful live oaks and pine trees along the most visible area of the park. This is the section along Shore Drive between Marlin Bay Drive and the shared use path bridge over the creek. The City will be providing debris trailers to place the cuttings in. All we need to do is prune, lop and drag the items out to the containers.

We need 24 volunteers to show up and join the fun. No experience is necessary. The City staff will be helping us identify what items are to be lopped and removed. Preliminary work hours are 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, unless we finish early. FREE on-street parking is available on Marlin Bay Drive which is right around the corner from the work area.

Masks will NOT be required if you are fully vaccinated for COVID-19.

Wear long pants and long sleeve shirts to protect from the briars, heavy duty gloves and sturdy closed toe shoes. Hats and sunscreen are optional. Also bring plenty of water to stay hydrated. Who knows, there may even be an opportunity for lunch or ice cream at the end of the effort?

Let's show up and let the City see what TATC members can accomplish in a short period of work.

Contact localtrails@tidewateratc.com to sign up or get more information.

Free Entrance Days in the National Parks

Come experience the National Parks! On four more days in 2021, all National Park Service sites that charge an entrance fee will offer free admission to everyone. Mark your calendar for these entrance fee-free dates in 2021:

August 4: One year anniversary of the Great American Outdoors Act

August 25: National Park Service Birthday

September 25: National Public Lands Day

November 11: Veterans Day

<https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/fee-free-parks.htm>

National parks are America's best idea, and there are more than 400 parks available to everyone, every day. The fee-free days provide a great opportunity to visit a new place or an old favorite, especially one of the national parks that normally charge an entrance fee. The others are free all the time. The entrance fee waiver for fee-free days does not cover amenity or user fees for activities such as camping, boat launches, transportation, or special tours.

The annual \$80 America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass allows unlimited entrance to more than 2,000 federal recreation areas, including all national parks that normally charge an entrance fee. There are also free or discounted passes available for senior citizens, current members of the military, families of fourth-grade students, and disabled citizens. Learn more about the variety of passes offered by the America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass series.

Grand Reopening 2021

It's hard to believe that it's been over a year since we've met together as a group. To celebrate our grand post COVID-19 reopening, we will be holding our June general membership meeting and social outdoors at Portsmouth City Park, on June 9, from 5-8 pm. To make this gathering extra special, we will be hosting a gear swap meet to rehome unneeded equipment which has turned up during your COVID-19 cleaning purges. These are the items that would normally have been on the "free" or maybe the "\$1 table at our annual auction. In other words, this is not our auction and no exchange of \$\$ is permitted. Items for giveaway will be put on display as members bring them, but cannot be selected until 7 pm so the early birds don't get all the best bits. This is a BYOP (picnic) event, but please feel free to bring a dessert to share. We will meet at the covered double shelter near the water.

Programs in June hosted by ATC and the Wilderness Skills Institute

Rescuing the Planet: The Appalachian Trail's Role in Worldwide Conservation

On June 10, ATC will be hosting the next in our series of public programs, this time with Tony Hiss (author of Rescuing the Planet) and John Griffin (from the Chesapeake Conservancy). The focus of the program will be on Tony's new book and the role of the "Appalachian realm" in the larger global climate action movement. You are invited to join us for this online event, June 10, 2021, at 7 p.m. Event details and a registration link can be found at: <https://appalachiantrail.org/news-events/rescuing-the-planet-discussion-2021/>

Tools to Build Partnerships for Public Lands

Join an online learning session at the Wilderness Skills Institute June 23 from 1-3 p.m.

Discover the basic framework to successful partnerships for public lands. The session includes attracting and maintaining traditional and non-traditional partners. Presenters plan to share case studies and take-away resources for participants. Register for this course and others at WSI: <https://wildernessskillsinstitute.org/2021wsi/>

Best wishes,

Sara Haxby

Senior Conservation Coordinator

Appalachian Trail Conservancy

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www.facebook.com/ATHike

www.appalachiantrail.org

A.T. Volunteers now have a new training webpage! Find a variety of self-paced online training, as well as associated resources for A.T. stewardship. www.appalachiantrail.org/training.

USFS Anti-Harassment Policy

The U.S. Forest Service has a detailed Anti-Harassment policy that also applies to volunteers. TATC's Group Volunteer Service Agreement with the Forest Service requires us to inform members of the Forest Service's Harassment Reporting Center number. That number is (844) 815-8943. The link to the USFS policy page is <https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/anti-harassment-policy>

40th Anniversary Interview Videos

Here's a link to a YouTube video created for the 40th Anniversary event: https://youtu.be/m_0DUPHI2v0
A little background: This video was created by Rosanne using the club's laptop & video camera. The in-person interviews were conducted at Rosanne's house in one day (with the exception of Margaret Crate); Rosanne has clips of other members that did not make it on the video, as the video had to be edited for timeliness. Enjoy!

Public Invited to Celebrate New Appalachian Trail Community

"The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is thrilled to celebrate Bennington, Vermont, as the newest A.T. Community partner helping to protect and promote the Appalachian Trail," said Julie Judkins, Director of Education and Outreach for the ATC.

TATC Help Wanted

TATC Volunteer Coordinators and TATC Volunteers needed to set up and work the TATC display/information table at local Outfitters and Events. Volunteers will talk to visitors about our activities and projects, answer questions and provide them with educational materials. This is a great opportunity to introduce new people to our organization. We will need at least two people for each shift. It is easy and fun!
Contact newsletter@tidewateratc.com if interested.

New Webinar Series - Wilderness and Appalachian National Scenic Trail

Sharing a cool webinar series. Free registration is required. <https://wildernessskillsinstitute.org/2021wsi/>

These live discussions are being presented by our "Local" Wilderness Skills Institute (not to be confused with the National Wilderness Skills Institute that you may have also heard about)

Happy Trails!
Plinio Beres
Volunteer, Partnership & Service Coordinator
George Washington & Jefferson National Forests
Glenwood-Pedlar Ranger District
p: 540-291-2188
plinio.beres@usda.gov

Harpers Ferry Visitor Center - Reopened Thursday, May 27, 2021

Guests will be welcomed again to the ATC Visitor Center at Harpers Ferry with modified operations and COVID-19 safety protocols. The Visitor Center will be open Thursday-Monday from 9 a.m.- 5 p.m. and will be closed Tuesday-Wednesday and on Major Holidays.

<https://appalachiantrail.org/our-work/about-us/contact-us/harpers-ferry-visitor-center/>

46Climbs 2021 Signups are LIVE!

Join us in the mountains and valleys on September 3-12 for another worldwide movement to...

- 1). Raise life-saving funds for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.
- 2). Change the way the world views mental illness and suicide through positive action, making for an environment where those in crisis feel more able to reach out for the help they need.
- 3). Set aside time, away from distractions, to honor those we have lost and those we haven't.
- 4). Show the world that they are not alone.

You can join TATC's team by selecting [Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club \(TATC\)](#) when signing up.

Register for the 7th Annual 46Climbs National Event and be part of this remarkable community! Donate \$25 or more to register, and participate as an individual or a team. Choose any mountain/trail or group of mountains (large or small) and climb/hike anytime between September 3rd – 12th. You will receive a 46Climbs package – a dry fit t-shirt and a sticker. The first 1,200 participants will also receive a bandana. When you reach the summit, take a picture wearing your shirt or holding up your bandana and post it on social media (Facebook, Twitter or Instagram) with the hashtag #46Climbs. During the event, watch as the pictures and stories flow in from all over the country and beyond!

Perhaps climbing/hiking isn't your thing or you are unable to participate, you can still help! Please consider making a donation to help conquer suicide.

<https://46climbs.com>

THE EARL SHAFFER FOUNDATION
Celebrating thru-hiking and long-distance hiking since 1948

**READ OUR
SPRING 2021
NEWSLETTER!**

READ AND ENJOY
Articles and poetry about Appalachian Trail history and long distance hiking

SUBMIT YOUR OWN
Want to be featured in our next newsletter? Send in your art, photographs, or writing!

MUSIC, VIDEOS, & MORE
Listen to Earl's music and watch his original slideshow presentation online!

Scan to read! 

Visit [**www.EarlShaffer.org/newsletter**](http://www.EarlShaffer.org/newsletter) to read or download!

The graphic features a collage of images including a mountain landscape, a book cover titled 'THE EARL SHAFFER FOUNDATION', and a small photo of a person hiking. The text is arranged in a clean, modern layout with a mix of bold and italicized fonts.

VARO Volunteer of the Year

Reprinted from ATC Trailways News



James Newman
May 2021

James Newman was recognized by his peers in the Virginia Region (VARO) of the Appalachian Trail (A.T.) in 2020 as their Volunteer of the Year.

Newman has been a member of the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club (TATC) since 1984. Following his retirement as a high school principal, Newman has been providing an enthusiastic interest and dedication to the A.T., the TATC, and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). All the while, he has been garnering support from TATC members who have elected him into the leadership positions of Vice President and hike master from 2009 – 2011, followed by President from 2012 – 2014. When it seemed as though no one was willing to volunteer as TATC Trail Supervisor, Newman stepped forward and has currently been serving in that key position since 2015.

As an active leader and participant in every endeavor he pursues, Newman has accumulated many hours of volunteer service, particularly by getting out on the Trail and maintaining it. Newman is a certified cross-cut sawyer and actively participates in Konnarock volunteer work crews as well as with the Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS). He has actively organized, managed, and supervised the maintenance of the TATC's A.T. section from Reid's Gap to Route 56 at the Tye River Bridge. This includes performing "walk-thrus" of the section to scope out the specific maintenance work needed to be accomplished during the TATC's two major work weekends. During these major work weekends, Newman has also helped to ensure group safety by developing and providing innovative safety briefings prior to performing the work, which may explain the accident free events that take place.

Faced with a continuous shortage of volunteers and after recognizing the need for additional work in the hard-to-access Trail sections; Newman organized and led a "Lopper and Swing Blade Festival" during the summer growing season that helped to keep the Trail in the best possible condition while also attracting newly interested volunteers. Newman has also had success actively pursuing outreach initiatives with the goal of attracting young and new members to the TATC. By conducting Trail related presentations and displays at local parks, as well as at other local outdoor tabling events he works to encourage others to get involved with maintaining the Trail. Newman has also co-ordinated with U.S. Navy commands recruiting personnel from the U.S. Naval Academy to work with SAWS on significant A.T. projects.

Newman has also initiated a multi-organizational effort to organize the removal of 105 hazard trees from the Maupin Field within one day. Newman is the TATC's representative assisting the Appalachian Trail National Scenic Trail Park Office (APPA) and the ATC with their Wayfinding project.

More recently, this past Fall, after postponing TATC maintenance trips due to the pandemic, Newman was successful in organizing a Fall Maintenance Trip within COVID-19 safety guidelines that resulted in the installing of new fire rings and campsites at Maupin Field. Though a team effort, like with many of his accomplishments, Newman was the driving force in getting things accomplished.

PRESS RELEASE

ATC Updates COVID-19 Guidance for Long-Distance A.T. Hikes

MAY 11, 2021

Appalachian Trail Conservancy Updates COVID-19 Guidance for Long-distance Hikers, Announces Re-opening Dates for Visitor Centers

HARPERS FERRY, W.Va. (May 11, 2021) – Today the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) announced updated guidance for hikers on the Appalachian Trail (A.T.) during the COVID-19 pandemic, removing its recommendation against long-distance hikes that require multiple stops in nearby communities. This update was issued in light of the widespread availability of effective COVID-19 vaccines, as well as the recent announcement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) classifying outdoor activities like hiking as posing significantly lower risks for spreading the virus, even among small groups of both fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people.

In a post released on its website, the ATC listed multiple changes to its guidance, which had been in place since March 2020. These updates include classifying a “thru-hike” of the A.T. — where a hiker attempts to travel all 2,193.1 miles of the Trail within a twelve-month period — as a safer activity, particularly for those who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. The ATC will also restart its recognition program for hikers who have completed a full thru-hike of the Trail, which was paused during the pandemic to avoid incentivizing multi-state travel during the pandemic, including stops for resupply in dozens of trailside communities. Miles hiked on the A.T. during this pause — between March 31, 2020, and May 11, 2021 — will not be counted toward 2,000-miler recognition by the ATC.

“The ATC acknowledges the past year has required significant sacrifices both within and outside the A.T. community of volunteers, supporters, and hikers,” said the ATC in the post. “Many of us have lost friends and family. Some have delayed lifelong plans and aspirations — including postponing attempts to thru-hike the Trail — to better ensure they and those around them are at a lower risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19. We thank everyone who has taken, and continues to take, extra steps to help combat this pandemic.”

The ATC also announced reopening dates for two of its visitor centers. The ATC Headquarters and Visitor Center in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, will reopen with modified operations on May 27, 2021. The A.T. Visitor Center in Monson, Maine, located roughly 100 miles south of the Trail’s northern terminus on Katahdin in Baxter State Park, will open on June 2, 2021.

The ATC will also resume the distribution of A.T. 2021 backpack hangtags at these locations, which are provided to thru-hikers and eligible section hikers who have registered their hikes with the ATC via ATCamp.org and completed a brief training course in Leave No Trace backcountry principles.

While this updated guidance is yet another sign of improved COVID-19 conditions throughout the United States, the ATC notes that precautions should still be taken to help avoid spreading the virus both on and off the A.T. In addition to receiving a vaccine, the ATC encourages all hikers to carry a mask for when social distancing can not be maintained; to pack a tent or other personal shelter system instead of using the often-crowded three-sided shelters at various points on the Trail; and to follow CDC recommendations for protecting yourself and others, including when to avoid travel.

To read the full post and learn more about the ATC’s updated guidance, visit appalachiantrail.org/covid-19. For more information, please visit www.appalachiantrail.org.

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What Membership Means

Whenever I hear someone say "I'm not a joiner" it sparks my curiosity as to why. I found several bloggers who have written entire articles on this topic. Some feel that it's because they have an introverted personality or a fear of not fitting in. I can understand this, especially if one has had a bad experience with a group before. No one wants to feel awkward or ignored in a social situation. Others cite commitment or obligation as their reason. This is true; successful groups require people who are willing (but not coerced) to work in many capacities. We've all probably joined groups that lost our interest over a period of time, whether we outgrew the group or it outgrew us. Successful groups have these things in common: good leadership, flexible but defined goals, opportunities to contribute, and time to have fun.

Decades of sound leadership have made TATC a fiscally sound and progressive club that has positively impacted local trails and communities in Hampton Roads as well as a section of the Appalachian Trail. We are fortunate in that we have open communication with trusted board members with decades of club experience as well as newcomers with fresh ideas. A continuing roster of members who are willing to step up to leadership positions requires just this kind knowledge of the past and enthusiasm for the future of the TATC that has driven the club since its beginning.

Although the primary function of the club is to maintain our ten miles of the Appalachian Trail, we are also committed to assist in maintaining at least ten other parks and trails and the club cabin. A second but just as important function of the club is to promote the health and wellbeing of its members through education and promotion of outdoor activities. An online presence through our website and other social media provides access to helpful links and activity calendars to help members achieve these goals.

If you're still "not a joiner", consider this. TATC members are always on the lookout for ways to have fun. All members are encouraged to lead maintenance activities; head up hikes, bike rides, or paddling excursions to your favorite places; to assist with planning meetings and special get-togethers, and to promote the club. By the way, the friendships you will make by participating or assisting with these activities is a FREE benefit of membership that is truly priceless.

We have a new member bio; Jerry has been a member since May 6, 2021:

I am Jerry Dingus, I have lived in Newport News for the past 23 years. I am 61 and very much a novice hiker - While I have been walking most of those 61 years, I think of hiking as "backpacking in mountainous terrain." I love to walk the Noland trail, I was a runner for many years but I have little to no experience with mountain hiking, backpacking, or camping. I want to learn about and DO these things. I also like the idea of maintaining our section of the AT as well as trails at First Landing.

Cheers

Meet A Member

Tim & Lisa Hall (written from Lisa's perspective)



We were married August of 2010 in Rochester NY shortly after having moved to Virginia Beach. The summer of 2015, our 5yr wedding anniversary trip became a family vacation with our son Ayden to the Pacific Northwest. The profound beauty of the PNW had an amazing impact on me, I'd always been a nature/animal lover but Mt. St. Helens, Mt. Rainier, the Olympic National Park, walking bare foot in the Hoh River, my love of nature had been reignited with my loves right by my side!! (technically Tim was leading the way, he goes first, you know, just in case)

The next year for our anniversary I insisted (politely & lovingly of course!) we spend it (alone) in the Shenandoah National Park, it was the centennial anniversary year of the National Parks and I just wanted to be a part of that occasion, to be in one! I had heard of the Appalachian Trail but didn't know much about it (knew more, not a lot, about the Long Trail since I had lived in VT for a few) I wanted to check it out, so we did, walking past the first backcountry sign I'd ever seen sent a rush of excitement thru my body! We approached the trail for the very first time, it took hold of me, consumed me, I was HOOKED!!! I joked Tim we should hike the entire trail one day!! Yeah okay he replied & off we went exploring!

2017 was a hard year, February my Father passed away, in March one of our cats had been diagnosed with cancer & had to have surgery, we got outside as much as we could, we still had Ayden in the house, participating in sports, school events, in August we did make it to Big Meadows (Shenandoah) for some hiking, that December our kitty passed away

2018 was going to be a better year, I knew it, it had to be!! In April my "brother in law" took his own life and two weeks later best friends of mine son did the same.... come May Tim had me out at Loft Mt Campground (Shenandoah again) we ended up walking past that same backcountry sign, back on the AT again, Tim looked at me and said "I think we can do it, what? the AT, the entire AT??!?"

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Yes, I think we can do it". He wasn't joking like I had joked him in 2016!! In that moment (knowing it or not) Tim turned all my grief into strength, the drive to keep moving forward, healing and the confidence to think I could actually hike the entire AT!! We pretty much became obsessed (in a good way) with the trail after that trip! July we found ourselves camping at Peaks of Otter day hiking VA's Triple Crown, after conquering Dragon's Tooth & Sharp Top Mt in the same day, I had so much confidence in myself and my ability (still new but learning, growing) getting stronger. On our way home we were discussing how there had to be an organization that took care of the trails, so I goggled it lol found the TATC, we joined while driving down the interstate back to Hampton Roads! The next month we went to our first meeting and a maintenance trip, next we did a cabin maintenance trip, we instantly became fast friends with so many wonderful people! We couldn't stop planning our thru hike, doing research, finding places to explore! We couldn't stay out of REI either! That August we ventured to the Great Smoky Mountains! Brought the boy and my mom this time but we still had an epic adventure in an amazing natural beauty!

For our 10 year wedding anniversary we climbed the 1st & 2nd highest peaks in Virginia!! Continued on in the Mt. Rogers Recreation Area & the Grayson Highlands State Park! Another epic adventure in the books!

Since joining the club, we've been on multiple trail maintenance trips, have both become certified sawyers (another incredibly proud moment!!), spent many nights at the clubs cabin, now for New Year's, we hike the clubs Three Ridges loop (we know all the good champagne hiding places are), we've completed multiple day hikes, a few section hikes, as soon as our son graduates I'll be able to be part of the Land Management Committee and we have a set start date for our thru hike!

Tim never thought he'd ever put a pack on his back again, after 21 years in the Army having to do road marches, take a knee with a big heavy pack on but now it's different, now he has to watch out for snakes for me! Bears too! Seriously though, it's different now, we share a passion, have a purpose, a goal, as a couple, we have become such different people together, now we have a collective love of nature, love for the trail and it's happening with the other by our side, now we can't imagine ever hiking the trail without the other one. People have asked us what would you do if the other couldn't finish, we actually never really talked about it out loud because it goes without saying the other would be there in some way shape or form!

The club has been a huge part of our appreciation, growth and passion for the trail, we've learned so much from so many different people, we've met and formed friendships with like-minded folks, we've gained lifelong friendships and it's only just begun!

I feel like I may have figured out what I want to be when I grow up!! ;) #trailmaintainerlife
Almost forgot! Start date for our thru hike (my dad's birthday) February 18, 2025!!

Post trail life =s full time RVer's / trail angels / trail maintainers

Happy Trails, Peace, Love & Mother Earth

Tim & Lisa Hall

Meet a Member

Phyllis Neumann

I joined TATC in 2000 looking for a group to do “outdoor stuff” with. I’d done a fair amount of hiking growing up in New York State (near Bear Mountain) but little to no backpacking or camping. I signed up for a backpacking trip to Dolly Sods at my very first TATC meeting and never looked back! That trip created deep friendships that bonded me to this club and convinced me that joining was one of the best decisions I had ever made. After Dolly Sods, I embarked on a seemingly endless cascade of TATC adventures: Trail Maintenance , Wilderness First Aid Training, Cabin Maintenance, Local Maintenance, Camp Horseshoe Ski Trip, James River State Park Canoe Trip, Multi-Club Event at Sherando, Portsmouth Island, AT Biennials, Konnarock Trail Crews, etc. etc. etc. By the end of 2001, I was running for Trail Supervisor (tequila was involved I believe) and thus began a 20 year tenure on the TATC Board of Directors holding several positions including President, Vice President, Counselor and RPC Representative. During my time on the Board I had the unique opportunity to influence club policy and see how other clubs functioned. I learned about our relationship with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the Forest Service and the National Park Service. And I got to “rub elbows” with such notables as Bob Proudman, Dave Startzel , Pam Underhill and Pete Irvine while sharing ideas at regional conferences. I have maintained sections of my own in St. Marys and on the Mau-Har Trail and have accumulated enough AT trail hours to be awarded the Golden Pulaski. In 2002 I inaugurated the “Chocolate Hike”-an Annual Event to this day. I am the club liaison to New Quarter Park where I lead semi-annual maintenance trips. And I co-manage the Tuesday Group with Ellis Malabad. As I reflect on these past 20 years I often wonder where the time went?

I also wonder where I found the time to do all of this stuff! I learned how to be a leader and function as part of a team. I learned that no trail maintenance project or hike or completed backpacking/camping/canoe/kayak trip is truly finished until the ice cream (or pie). And I learned that no matter what the activity is, where it is, or if it rains, what truly shines and remains and lasts are the friendships that are made. Being outdoors is great, exercise is important, maintaining our trails and being good stewards of the land all matter--but at the end of the day, it's all matter--but at the end of the day, it's all about good friends. Phyllis Neumann



Where the Appalachian Trail Began

By Jordan Bowman, ATC Director of Communications

MAY 26, 2021

“Life for two weeks on the mountain top would show up many things about life during the other fifty weeks down below... There would be a chance to catch a breath, to study the dynamic forces of nature and the possibilities of shifting to them the burdens now carried on the backs of men.”

-Benton MacKaye

Long before Benton MacKaye wrote his landmark 1921 article, “An Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning” — the article that sparked the imagination of thousands and led to the construction of the A.T. — the idea for the Trail came to him in the most appropriate way possible.

The year was 1900 and, in the rolling Green Mountains of Vermont, MacKaye laced up his boots and began to hike.

A new century had begun, and the Second Industrial Revolution had transformed America. The population was booming, growing by more than 20 percent in just ten years. The expansion of factories increased the production of essential materials such as steel and provided millions of jobs, the majority focused in cities sprawling wider each year. Thousands of miles of railroads crisscrossed the nation, allowing for easier travel and material transportation and further expansion out West, eventually bringing an end to the American frontier. On the East Coast, the pace of industrialization seemed unstoppable, and the reach of urbanization began to stretch into the Appalachian Mountain range.

MacKaye had recently graduated from Harvard University and, along with a friend, set out to bushwhack through the thick Vermont backwoods. After traipsing over glacier-scraped rock and through the seemingly never-ending forests, MacKaye found himself at the peak of Stratton Mountain. There was no view from the summit, so MacKaye climbed a tree until he found one.



View from Stratton Mountain

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Stratton Mountain, located in the Green Mountain National Forest, claims a role in hiking trail history as the location where Benton MacKaye conceived the idea for the Appalachian Trail. Photo by David Warners.

Even a century later, the view from Stratton Mountain (now accessible from a fire tower at its peak) offers visitors a similar view to the one that inspired MacKaye's vision for the Trail. Photo by Jordan Bowman.

Even though he was already a seasoned outdoorsman who spent years of his life surveying the backwoods of New England, MacKaye was in awe of the beauty surrounding him, and a thought occurred to him that would change history.

"I felt as if atop the world, with a sort of 'planetary feeling.' ... Would a footpath someday reach [far-southern peaks] from where I was then perched?"

In that moment, the idea for the A.T. was born.

It was another 21 years before MacKaye's idea was revealed to the world. But from the spark of that idea — could such a trail even exist? — MacKaye began to understand the need for the Trail beyond recreation. Amid the turmoil brought about by a rapidly changing world and the long hours and dangerous conditions inherent to many of the era's factory jobs, MacKaye was convinced that spending time in nature would provide the relief — or as he framed it, the "optimism" — needed to meet life's challenges.

"First there would be the 'oxygen' that makes for a sensible optimism," he wrote. "Two weeks spent in the real open — right now, this year and next — would be a little real living for thousands of people which they would be sure of getting before they died."

To MacKaye, the A.T. was the solution. By providing an access point to nature within reach of America's most dense population areas, from Boston to Atlanta, millions would be given a way to easily find the optimism only provided by nature.

Yet even then, MacKaye knew that much more than a footpath was needed — conserving the natural beauty of the lands around the Trail was essential for ensuring this natural experience would remain for the benefit of future generations.

"The Appalachian Trail indeed is conceived as the backbone of a super reservation and primeval recreation ground covering the length (and width) of the Appalachian Range itself, its ultimate purpose being to extend acquaintance with the scenery and serve as a guide to the understanding of nature."

It is this wider goal — conserving the broader A.T. landscape so its natural beauty will continue to benefit us all — that guides the work of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) today.

Over the next several weeks, we will be exploring ideas about the natural beauty of the A.T. and its surrounding landscape, our continuing efforts to conserve these essential aspects of the A.T. experience, and the lasting impact MacKaye's words have had in ensuring the Trail provides the optimism we need for future generations.

Through the work of the ATC and its partners (and your invaluable support), we will fulfill a goal as important today as it was more than a century ago — when a young Benton MacKaye, perched high in the Vermont treetops, understood the possibilities of a footpath following the ridgeline of the Appalachian Mountains.

Your donation supports our work to conserve the natural beauty of the Appalachian Trail, helping ensure its one-of-a-kind experience will benefit us all for generations to come.

DONATE

Lead image by David Warners

Teamwork at Sherando - May 2021

By Mal Higgins

TATC rolled out its spring maintenance trip to maintain its section of 11 miles and two shelters May 14-15, 2021, under the newly elected leadership of Trail Supervisor Britt Collins and Assistant Trail Supervisor, John Sima. An estimated 30 or so TATC maintainers responded and camped at Sherando Lake's Williams Branch picnic area, with most arriving Friday night. The entrance is now controlled after hours by an electronic gate requiring entering a code to make the arm lift. Thus far, Sherando is only open to folks with reservations for overnight camping.

Ned Kuhns led a contingent to enjoy dinner at Devils Backbone brewpub Friday night, while others enjoyed the evening's warm spring air and greeted folks who we hadn't seen in person in close to a year of suffering through the COVID-19 pandemic. With most folks vaccinated, and relaxed Virginia and USFS rules regarding assembling in groups, everyone was excited to regain the feeling of normality and group effort.

Britt and John and Jim Newman had led walk-thru scouting groups two weeks earlier and captured photos of the problem areas. So at Saturday morning's safety briefing by Britt, the day's activities were reviewed and Britt provided her very own gift packs of snacks to everyone. Teams were created to tackle the areas and the job assignments were illustrated by the photos on the sign-up sheets. John had brought the tools in his truck and retrieved more from the TATC storage box of tools staged at the CCC Volunteer Village area.

Six of us became the team to tackle three blowdowns on the upper reaches of Three Ridges, just below the set of switchbacks. Andy Grayson led another team to go even higher to swingblade and lop Three Ridges up to "Flatrock". Our blowdown team was Milton Beale, Bruce Davidson, Bob Adkisson, Lee Lohman, Svetlana Kononov, and me. We carpooled to the Fitzgerald apple orchard access and trudged up the former, old A.T. route to intersect the A.T. at Harpers Creek Shelter. More uphill and we arrived at the large 20 inch blowdown lying directly across the A.T.

After assessing the blowdown and setting escape routes and posting lookouts for other hikers, our team unsheathed the new saw gifted to the club by Paul Dickens. It was really sharp and the first cut on the uphill side of the blowdown breezed along with the judicious help of wedges. Then the removal plan took a new direction. As the cut was completed the entire uphill log, root ball and all, slid down and wedged beneath the lower piece, which was still sticking out across the trail. Now the trail was blocked at double height!

After we stopped laughing at our plan gone awry, we now realized it was not going to be an easy fix. We made a second cut on the downhill side of the log, and rolled that four foot hunk out of the way with a loud huzzah. We settled on a plan to roll the uphill piece of the log horizontal to the slope so it would roll down and off the trail with the help of gravity. Bob cut off a protruding root on the uphill side, and with a massive amount of grunting, pushing, levering we managed to get the log to swing around and roll. Yep, it rolled right on to the trail and stopped there. Where is momentum when you need it?

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More laughter. Now what? As luck would have it, a Boy Scout Troop from Gainesville, Virginia, came hiking southbound and arrived to help. With the assistance of three or four of the eager teens, we all once again applied major muscle power, pushed the log to the lip of the trail and over the side to the sound of satisfying crashing noises as it rolled to a stop off the trail. Success. We thanked the Scouts and leaders, restored the damaged trail edge, and continued our hike another quarter mile uphill. Two small blowdowns were fairly quickly dispatched over the slope and the A.T. was again fully clear.

We hiked back to the cars at the Fitzgerald orchard without more, stopping only at Harpers Creek to observe its condition and then proceed. A note on one of our car windows asked us to call a member of the Fitzgerald family. After Lee conferred with another member of the Fitzgerald clan who lives down slope along the orchard access road, Lee was able to take a drive down to Montebello and meet the note writer in person. She is a niece and heir of the recently deceased former Fitzgerald woman land owner, and Lee reports she was friendly and they have worked out access protocols for future use by TATC maintainers of the orchard "cow pasture" access.

Back at Williams Branch, all the other work crews reported success in their various duties on the A.T. from Maupin Field southbound up and over the Three Ridges summit, and clean up duties at both Maupin Field and Harpers Creek shelters. With no community meal planned for this weekend, many gathered at the Williams Branch picnic shelter Saturday night to tell their tales of the day.

TATC member Peter Burch was key to preparing the Williams Branch site for our arrival, opening the bathrooms, cutting the grass, blowing leaves, removing branches, and also stockpiling the picnic shelter with wood and even lighting the evening fires with his special Sherando sauce. The warm spring night led to some lively conversations.

Some maintainers had to drive home Saturday night, and others camped out a second night. A light rain arrived Sunday morning, so plans for a day hike were scuttled in favor of driving home. White dogwoods and mountain laurel in bloom, blooming purple "paulownia" trees, blooming violets, wild geranium, trillium, and the light green leafy color of the forest were all part of the beauty of the Blue Ridge this weekend.

A.T. VISTA INAUGURATION TO BE CONDUCTED IN 2021 AND 2022

BE A PART OF THE HISTORY



With the great news of vaccines for COVID-19, the planning team for the inaugural A.T. Vista has updated the program to provide for both a virtual experience in 2021 and an in-person experience for 2022. This expanded program presents a great opportunity to allow wide participation each year, and we seek assistance from your club members.

We know it has been since 2017 that we've been together to spend time on the trail, learn, and socialize together; however, the uncertainties involved in rolling out COVID-19 vaccinations has led us to avoid a trail-wide in-person event in 2021. We want the inaugural A.T. Vista to be memorable and this expanded two-year program rollout will allow us to develop and maintain momentum so that we can continue to share in the great camaraderie of the kindred spirits that cherish the Appalachian Trail.

As we want to continue to honor the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Benton MacKaye's 1921 article, "An Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning," the 2021 A.T. Vista program will be conducted with dispersed local hiking opportunities all along the Appalachian Trail (and perhaps even elsewhere!) plus virtual gatherings providing an opportunity for participants at any location to follow the hikes online as photos and videos are posted.

For the 2021 program, we are seeking hiking leaders from trail clubs to conduct small group hikes along the Appalachian Trail and other trails in your serving area. We are also seeking workshop proposals for topics that are conducive to an online presentation.

We anticipate the 2021 program to be a multi-day event with virtual experiences available August 7-8, 2021.

Check out the updates as they become available and let us know how you can help to be a part of history on any of the following sites:

www.Atvista.org
www.Atvista2021.org
www.Atvista2022.org

We are continuing to seek to promote hikes conducted in all 14 States and need your club or organization to identify hikes that you would like to conduct on Saturday, August 7 and/or Sunday, August 8, 2021. We still need hikes in the other states that have not been represented. We are also seeking someone from each state to lead the coordination of getting groups to organize hikes in their state.

The 2021 dispersed trail experience will be a 2-day event. A general itinerary is below (details are still in process):

1. Saturday, August 7 and Sunday, August 8 from 8AM to 5PM: Local hikes to be conducted along the Appalachian Trail in all states (and other trails in your area), we encourage you to take pictures or video footage for uploading to the A.T. Vista social media pages.
2. October 2021 (Date/Time TBD): Pictures and videos from these hikes to be uploaded from the Social Media sites and made into a recording and shared for viewers to experience the weekend hikes and outdoor experiences.

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If you have members of your organization with hike leadership experience, encourage them to submit a hike for A.T. Vista 2021. Additionally, we are planning to provide some pre-recorded workshops or webinars as well (none live for 2021). Any submissions will help make this a memorable experience; email us at atvistainfo@gmail.com with the details below for your hike or enter the information online at www.atvista2021.org and submit the hike and workshop information online by **June 15, 2021** at the links below:

[Proposed 2021 Hike Submission | A.T. Vista 2021-2022 \(atvista2021.org\)](#)

[Proposed 2021 Workshop Submission | A.T. Vista 2021-2022 \(atvista2021.org\)](#)

We would like to begin promoting the hikes through the newsletters and website in July and hope that with the promotion of hikes for this event, it will also increase the awareness of your organization and help your organization increase its membership.

Provide the requested information below and if you have other ideas, feel free to send those too.

Hike Submission:

1. Leader Name and Contact info (email, phone)
2. Co-Leader Name and Contact info
3. Organization hosting the hike
4. Location of the hike (starting point)
5. Trail Name/Section
6. Description to be used
7. Number of Miles
8. Level (easy, moderate, strenuous)
9. Roundtrip or one-way hike?
10. Website link for participants to sign-up for the hike (if your organization has the ability to handle sign-ups directly—if not, the A.T. Vista web site will be able to assist with sign-ups).

[Proposed 2021 Hike Submission | A.T. Vista 2021-2022 \(atvista2021.org\)](#)

We are also seeking workshop proposals for topics that will have been pre-recorded. Based on the number of workshops submitted we will determine how to integrate it with the virtual program.

Workshop Submission:

1. Workshop Name
2. Workshop description
3. Workshop Leader Name and Contact info (email, phone)
4. Length of session (average is expected to be no more than one-hour)
5. Link to the recorded session (or information on when it will be available if still under development).
6. Finally, would you also be willing to conduct this workshop online or in-person for the 2022 A.T. Vista 2022 in-person program at SUNY New Paltz?

[Proposed 2021 Workshop Submission | A.T. Vista 2021-2022 \(atvista2021.org\)](#)

A Monthly A.T. Vista Newsletter is now available to promote and to keep “those who want to know” up to date on the 2021 and subsequent 2022 program as the plans develop. Thanks!

The link is available on all the websites listed below and emails can also be submitted directly to atvistainfo@gmail.com

www.atvista2021.org/webform/newsletter-signup

www.atvista.org/newsletter-signup

--A.T. Vista Committee: atvistainfo@gmail.com



Many of us will soon be adventuring to places like the Appalachian Trail to take advantage of the longer days and beautiful weather — and maybe to be serenaded by a few billion cicadas.

Whether you're a new visitor to the A.T. or are dusting off your boots for your hundredth upcoming hike, here are some tips for recreating responsibly:

Choose less crowded hikes: Weekends on the A.T. can be busy depending on your destination, even more so on holiday weekends. Choose less popular sections of the Trail when possible, and have a backup plan if parking lots or trailheads are packed. This will not only make for a better hiking experience — it will also help reduce concentrated impacts on the Trail!

Plan ahead: Whether it's a day hike or a multiday backpacking adventure, always bring the essentials to make sure you have a safe, enjoyable trip. Check out our [Hiker Resource Library](#) to help you get started on the right foot.

Leave No Trace: Leave the A.T. (and all of our public lands) in the same or better condition than you found it by following Leave No Trace Principles, including respecting wildlife, packing out trash, choosing resilient campsites and staying on the footpath. For more information, visit [appalachiantrail.org/leavenotrace](https://www.appalachiantrail.org/leavenotrace).

And, importantly, let's take time on Memorial Day to remember the heroes who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

Hike safe and happy trails!

P.S. Did you know that [National Trails Day](#) is just a week away (June 5)? While every day is Trails Day for the ATC, each year we join the [American Hiking Society](#) in celebrating the trails and green spaces that give millions a chance to restore themselves physically, mentally and emotionally. Give back to these spaces by finding a [volunteer opportunity](#) today!

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Lead photo by Jim Cotey

Day Pack - Suggested Contents

Jim Sexton & Bill Rogers

Revised: 24 May 2021

This list is not all inclusive. It is meant for those backpackers who leave their base camp and go day hiking quite some distance from their cars and from civilization.

Note: The farther you are from your car and home, the more of the things on the list you must carry. The closer to your car and home, the more you can leave out. Remember that sometimes we use a day pack in the middle of a backpacking trip far from home. This list really covers the worst case of day hiking on a backpacking trip, when you are the farthest from home and/or help. Adjust as needed for trips closer to the car or home.

When using this list for a local day hike, use it as a checklist reminder for things you might want to include in your pack - dependent upon the type and length of your day hike, and the expected weather for the hike.

You may skip items on the list if you like or add additional items, but it is up to you to be prepared for all eventualities that might occur on the day of your hike.

Whether on a day hike, backpacking trip, or maintenance trip, there is always a chance for a mishap. How well, or how badly, you fare with a sprained ankle or other problem depends upon the things you carry, or do not carry, when you are away from camp. You may be miles from camp. You are your own responsibility!!!!

The inclusion of brand names is for example purposes only, and is NOT an endorsement of any product.

Remember to carry your personal identification, credit cards, money and keys in a safe place!

Never leave your day pack unattended!

Never run out of Water!

Day Pack should comfortably carry:

Binoculars
Camera in Ziploc ® bag if not waterproof
Chapstick ® -or- Blistex ® -or- ?
GPS Device or Compass
Disposable Towelettes
Emergency Blanket (Mylar)
Flagging Tape (1 roll)
Flashlight (with spare batteries and bulb)
Garbage bag (pick up other people's junk)
Head lamp (with spare batteries)
Insect Repellent
List of Emergency Contacts
Lunch and Snacks / GORP
Map and/or Trail Guidebook
Lighter or Matches (waterproof) and fire starter
Mirror (sighting mirror preferred)
Nature Guidebook(s)
Poncho (large) -or- 5x7 lightweight nylon tarp (can be shelter, stretcher, -or- sleep wrap)
Pen / Pencil and Pad
Pocket knife (small Swiss Army w/scissors & tweezers)
Snacks
Sun Glasses
Sun Screen
Toilet Paper and Trowel
Water Filter -or- tablets (treatment and neutralizing)
Water Bottle(s) or Bladder, Water (Minimum 4 liters if no water source is available on hike [running out of water will hurt you long before a lack of food is a problem])
Whistle
Ziploc ® bags for garbage and to protect 'stuff'

Extras:

Extra Glasses, or Contacts & Solution
Hiking Poles
Meals (in case you don't make it back in time for supper, or even breakfast)
Socks (inner & outer)
Small Change for possible pay phone calls. And YES, you can take a Cell Phone, use it for emergencies (otherwise keep them in your pack, turned OFF!).

First Aid Kit

2 x 4-inch Self-Stick Bandages
Ace Bandage
Anacin ® -or- Ibuprofen ® -or- Tylenol ® -or- Nuprin ® -or- Band-Aids ®
Benadryl ® or equivalent antihistamine for allergic reactions
Dental Floss (shoe lace, other repairs)
First Aid Cream, Bacitracin, -or- whatever you're NOT allergic to
Roll of 2-inch gauze
Moleskin ®
Needle (hole size to fit dental floss)
Paper Adhesive Tape
Personal Medicines
Safety Pin -or- Diaper Pin
Soap or Sanitizer (small amount)
Sting Eze ® -or- After Bite ® -or- ?

Suitable Clothing for the Season:

Appropriate Footwear
Belt (flexible, not stiff)
Head Protection (sun, insects, rain)
Kerchief (is towel, bandage, bandana)
No Jeans!
Rain Gear (jacket, trousers, head gear [jacket serves as windbreaker])
Sweater -or- Shirt (fleece -or- wool)
Wicking Underwear
To keep dirt out of boots and help protect against ticks, wear gaiters, -or- tuck trousers into socks

For a Trail Maintenance Trip:

Appropriate tools, safety glasses, boots not sneakers, gaiters, long trousers, gloves (leather = dry weather | cotton stippled = wet weather), helmet or cap

For further first aid information refer to the TATC Education Handouts titled: "FIRST AID - AN INTRODUCTION," and "FIRST AID KIT," and the paragraph "Suggested Activity Leader's First Aid Kit," in the TATC Education Handout titled: "ACTIVITY LEADER POCKET GUIDE."

Pack it in - Pack it out!

Take what you need.

Return Safe!

Human Kindness

Gene Monroe

I, like most of us tend to feel good about myself as a volunteer when participating in activities such as “Day of Caring” and “Bay Days” and other activities that are arranged by local organizations; including, Trail Maintenance workdays that are managed by our Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club (TATC). Afterall, I do love nature and for the most part I enjoy being around others, as teams of “us volunteers” go venturing out and about helping in these common causes. But what does this say about our character? Who are we when no one is around, or when someone has a need that we could satisfy? Kindness comes in all forms, but when kindness happened to me recently it encouraged me to help others; almost as if human kindness were contagious.

The other day I was returning the tools that we (TATC) had used on a trail maintenance workday to where we stow them at the StorAway Self Storage facility in Portsmouth. Because of my schedule being as tight as it always is...I just barely got there before the gate is locked at end of the day, but no worries I said to myself because I knew that I had plenty of time to put everything up, get out the gate, and move on to the next task on my long list of To-Do's. Upon putting all the tools away and making some notes about what tools needed what maintenance, I got in my truck and hit the ignition and nothing! Not even a clicking noise. So immediately I went to the front gate to speak with the manager about not locking me in; and this was when true kindness came to my rescue.

Juanita and Ken Patterson manage the StorAway and Ken quickly made me feel confident that my truck would not be locked in over-night! Ken told me that I could have as much time as I needed; so, I called AAA to get my truck towed home where I could work on it in the comfort of my own driveway; AAA told me that it would be a two hour wait! I let Ken know that his supper was going be late that evening and went back to my truck to begin the troubleshooting process to figure out why I had no power to the starter when...Ken shows up with some water bottles and gets under the hood with me trying to figure out what was the issue! Well, I am not going to go into all the details of the troubleshooting experience and how my dilemma was resolved, but the point of this article is to say thanks to Ken and Juanita for their understanding of my situation and their genuine act of kindness towards me. They were not only NOT upset because now I had caused them to be delayed from their evenings, but they were right there with me trying to help.

Ken and Juanita are a married couple who manage that entire facility and make themselves available to all their customers. So, who are these folks, and what made them so giving and kind? I had to know more and went back to talk with them, and as it turns out Juanita and Ken have a lot in common with the TATC. Before coming to the StorAway Ken had been a law officer and then the Town Manager for Victoria, VA. In that capacity Ken was responsible for laying down several miles of trails in and through town that are to this day used for horses, bicycling, walking, and running for the town folks to have and to enjoy. Ken had campaigned for and received over four million dollars (\$4,000,000.00) towards the construction of these outdoor amenities! You would think that this level of leadership would cause a person to be conceded, but not Ken; actually, as it turns out Ken has Parkinson's Disease with batteries embedded beneath the skin to charge his muscles to work. Ken also is a Veteran of the armed forces and has a neurological disorder due to a chemical exposure while serving our country.

In conclusion I would just like to give a huge shout out to Juanita and Ken for their generous display of kindness towards me, and to Ken for giving so much in service to both our country through his military service and to one of our Virginia hometowns as the Town Manager; THANK YOU for your integrity, management skills, and kindness, which together makes it clear that the TATC tools are stowed in the best place we could have them. The lesson for me in all of this is how it made me feel when I went to start my truck, and nothing! And thinking “oh my goodness! I'll be stranded over-night without my truck.” Volunteering my time to give of myself to help with activities such as the Day of Caring, which are arranged by organizations for causes larger than me does make me feel good about myself; but “kindness” is the character trait that good people possess. Plato said “Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle,” and Syed Balkhi said “Happiness is the new rich. Inner peace is the new success. Health is the new wealth. Kindness is the new cool.”

The Virginia Capitol Trail



The Virginia Capital Trail is a 51.7 multi-use, fully-paved trail that runs through 4 jurisdictions (City of Richmond, Henrico County, Charles City County, and James City County) with dozens of attractions along the way. The Trail is for everyone! Bikers, runners, walkers, skateboarders, dog walkers, etc. You can go out by yourself, with friends, or with the whole family!

Website: <https://www.virginiacapitaltrail.org/>

Trail Map: <http://vctf.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=e6e8a7a48ace4906880857508845a4be>

Links to Planned Itineraries:

- Trip Length 0-15 miles
- Trip Length 16-30 miles
- Trip Length 31+ miles

Bike Tours and Rentals: www.basketandbike.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/virginiacapitaltrail>

Volunteers are essential to the work of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation. Volunteers can also help the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation by keeping the Trail tidy and by representing us at local events. If you're interested in contributing your time, please email, **info@virginiacapitaltrail.org** and let us know how you'd like to help. You can also keep up with volunteering opportunities by subscribing to our **[e-newsletter](#)** or following us on **[Facebook](#)** and other social media outlets.

Contact Information:

Physical Address: Capitol Trail Foundation, 200 South Third Street, Richmond, VA 23219

Phone: (804) 788-6453

Email: info@virginiacapitaltrail.org

The VCTF is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that depends on private donations to fulfill our mission. Your one-time or monthly donation allows the VCTF to continue to protect and enhance the Capital Trail, support our programming and events, and advocate for more miles of trails to the Capital Trail. Thank you for your support! We can't do this without YOU!

DONATE

Tye River Ridge Runner Report - Week 4

Hi there!

Another beautiful week in paradise over here. I have done all but 6 miles of my section at least once now and have met a lot of colorful and interesting folks. This week at the priest was no different. I didn't have to out and back my hike this time and was able to cover a larger section due to a helpful shuttle driver who offered me a free ride back to my car. I met three large groups of boy scouts and shared some LNT resources with them. They shared pictures of two timber rattlers they saw this week. I also scared off an adult bear around Seeley-Woodworth Shelter Friday night. Several hikers, 5-10 miles south of here the next day reported seeing a cub but no mom so it is good to be on the lookout. Hopefully and most likely they were temporarily separated and the cub is not orphaned or alone.

Hikers are coming through from trail days this week and say the bubble is about a week behind. Everyone seems in good spirits and health.

I will return to this section next week to remove some graffiti. The amount of feces and toilet paper I am finding is rising as is expected with growing numbers. A special shout out to NBATC for those extra clear and clean waterbars. I actually had two hikers this week remark about them to me.

Thank you all for everything you do to keep the trail and forest clean and healthy!

Sincerely,
Mia Fernandez

Daily Reports:

Trail Section Hiked Route 56 to Harpers Creek Shelter and back then south bound up the Priest about a quarter mile and back. 05-20-2021

Comments & Observations: I walked northbound from the lot on 56 to harper's creek shelter because I hadn't done this short section yet. I found someone's GoPro then was lucky enough to find the hiker who lost it as well. I found one blowdown that I couldn't cut through as well. There is a sign on the Tye river bridge about freezing surfaces on the trail. I don't know if you all want to keep this up for summer or not. I started up the Priest intending to make it to the shelter in the evening and found a very large (about 15 gallon) styrofoam cooler full of trash that I walked back to my car and threw away in Nellysford. By the time I got back it was almost dark so I decided to hike the Priest southbound tomorrow.

Trail Section Hiked From Route 56 to Seeley-Woodworth Shelter. 05-21-2021

Comments & Observations: Whew, the priest is no joke. It took me a very long time to get up to the shelter today. The log book at this shelter has some pretty not kid safe material in it. If you'd would like I can replace the log book with another, just let me know. It is not full yet (only about half way) and I do believe as the tradition for this shelter goes that any replacement will probably also be fairly irreverent. The privy at this shelter is also on the fuller side. There are about four feet from the toilet seat to the waste. I swept out they privy and the shelter. There is some very large graffiti in the shelter that I will bring paint to cover in my patrol next week. I found a fair bit of garbage at this shelter as well as a pair of glasses that I will post in hiker lost and found on Facebook and take to Glenwood-Pedlar this week on one of my days off. I removed two blowdowns but there were a couple I was not equipped to remove. I stayed at the Seeley-Woodworth shelter. Three thru-hikers were camped near the shelter but no one slept in it. I swept out the privy and the shelter and removed some trash. I ate dinner with a friendly through thru-hiker named g-daddy. At night I saw a bear about 100 yards off (I think I'm bad at estimating distance). I said "go away" and the bear promptly left.

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Trail Section Hiked from Seeley-Woodworth to Cow Camp Shelter and back to Cole Mountain. 05-22-2021

Comments & Observations: In the morning I had breakfast with a mother and her three children who had been hiking for 8 weeks. That is very impressive! I was able to warn her about the inappropriate log book and phallic graffiti at the privy and she said they would not stop there. The privy at Seeley-Woodworth is in great shape. I started my hike and pretty much immediately rolled my ankle (whoops) but it wasn't too bad so I kept on. I cleared a small blowdown but there were two larger ones that I did not clear. I removed a fire ring near Lovings-ton spring and cleaned up and buried a lot of human waste and paper (I didn't bury the paper I packed it out). I met two very lost motorcyclists at salt log gap and we spent a long time talking (probably around an hour) until we figured out through gut hook and a two maps how to most safely navigate them to route 60. I rolled my ankle again just before hog gap and this time I had to wrap it. I met a group of 12 Boy Scouts and their adults at hog camp gap and was able to give them some leave no trace hang tags and talk to them for a while. They said there was at least one other group of twelve boys farther ahead. I removed two fire rings from Cole mountain but there were several more that I did not get to. I made it to cow camp shelter just before dusk at found a group of about 50 total Boy Scouts, group leaders and their families. It turns out that this was actually two different groups who happened to end up at the same shelter overnight. One was a group of younger boys. I was able to talk to them about appropriate privy use and campfire risk minimization. They were very respectful and attentive and I found out afterward that many of them had never been camping before. The group of older boys and group leaders there got the full leave no trace breakdown as well as some hang tags. (They asked a lot of great questions) They were also very interested in my position and how I pack my bag/ what I bring with me so we talked about that for a while. One of the scout leaders gave me his name and email and is interested in getting some leave no trace information or resources via email. By this time I realized it was dark and there were no available campsites at the shelter, my ankle was a bit too sore to make it four more miles to the next spot southbound so I back tracked to Cole mountain and set up camp there. I poured cool water over my ankle and rewrapped it so it feels better but today definitely wore me out. It is very heartwarming to see children enjoying the woods respectfully both this morning and this evening. Today was long but good.

Trail Section Hiked From Cole Mountain down to Cow Camp and on to Swapping Creek. 05-23-2021

Comments & Observations: I past the larger group of boy scouts as I headed south and they headed north and every single one of them said hello or something very friendly to me. I was also impressed that they left cow camp clean and trash free. The privy at cow camp is in great shape and the spring and pool are also both in great shape. I found a log that looks like it has been cleared before and has rerolled onto the trail. I could not manage to roll it off. I met a lot of hikers today but nowhere near as many as yesterday. Everyone who is thru-hiking is excited to get through three ridges. Many remarked that Virginia was not as flat as they thought it would be. And several said they will be visiting devils Backbone Brewing Company in the next couple days. I met a hiker named star lord at the brown mountain creek shelter who had just finished his flip flop hike he started in 2020 four days shy of a year after he started. It was so joyful and moving to talk to him he was elated and definitely emotional. I was able to share some snacks with two of his friends who arrived just after he left and we're running low on food. They said they were going to catch up to him and celebrate together. There is some graffiti in the shelter and I cleaned a lot of trash out from here but the privy is in great shape! I hiked on to swapping creek for the night. It was cool to read about the history of brown mountain creek and the people who lived there.

Trail Section Hiked From Swapping Creek to Punch Bowl Overlook. 05-24-2021

Comments & Observations: Today was a great day. I removed two fire rings from near swapping creek where I camped and saw the cutest little snake I have ever seen. One of the fire rings was infested with ants so after removing the rocks I actually had to cover the ashes with leaves and sticks because digging upset the ants. I did realize that my trash weighs about half as much as my pack which is the only reason I am excited to hike out today. It also made me feel a bit accomplished. I met fewer hikers today but we had very quality conversations. Everyone was in good spirits after hitting the 800 mark. I cleaned graffiti off of there a few weeks ago but someone has remarked the same tree with sharpie. I met some hikers that are from very close to where I am from as well and a lot of hikers who are supplied in Buena Vista and shuttled with Aubrey (piney) the friendly local shuttle driver who I have met before.

The mission of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy is to protect, manage, and advocate for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. To become a member, volunteer, or learn more, visit www.appalachiantrail.org.

Activities Schedule

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

TATC Board Meeting

When: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 7pm-9pm

Where: Online via Zoom App

Contact: Lee Lohman president@tidewateratc.com

Description: TATC Board Meeting. Guests are always welcome! This meeting will be held remotely using the Zoom App. Please contact Rosanne if you are not currently on the Board, but wish to attend this online Board Meeting remotely.

TATC General Membership Meeting and Grand Reopening 2021

When: Wednesday, June 9, 2021 7pm-9pm

Where: Online via Zoom App

Contact: Lee Lohman president@tidewateratc.com

Program: To Be Determined

Description: TATC General Membership Meeting. It's hard to believe that it's been over a year since we've met together as a group. To celebrate our grand post COVID-19 reopening, we will be holding our June general membership meeting and social outdoors at Portsmouth City Park, on June 9, from 5-8 pm. To make this gathering extra special, we will be hosting a gear swap meet to rehome unneeded equipment which has turned up during your COVID-19 cleaning purges. These are the items that would normally have been on the "free" or maybe the "\$1 table at our annual auction. In other words, this is not our auction and no exchange of \$\$ is permitted. Items for giveaway will be put on display as members bring them, but cannot be selected until 7 pm so the early birds don't get all the best bits. This is a BYOP (picnic) event, but please feel free to bring a dessert to share. We will meet at the covered double shelter near the water. Guests are always welcome! This meeting will be held remotely using the Zoom App. A blast email with a link to this Zoom Meeting will be sent out next week. If you do not currently subscribe to our blast email listing and would like to receive future blast emails, then click on the following link: <http://tidewateratc.us6.list-manage.com/subscribe/post?u=55b4b56215f58352eca502f98&id=0eb6788ff3>

Local Trail Maintenance Outing at Pleasure House Point on June 17th

When: Thursday, June 17, 2021 9am-1:00pm

Where: Pleasure House Point Park, Virginia Beach

Contact: Dave Plum localtrails@tidewateratc.com

Description: Pleasure House Point Invasive Species Attack, This is a call for volunteers to join up and help the City of Virginia Beach clean out some invasive plant species and vines in one of the City's newest environmentally sensitive parks. We will be working with City Parks and Recreation staff to rid a portion of the park of nuisance plant life that is strangling several beautiful live oaks and pine trees along the most visible area of the park. This is the section along Shore Drive between Marlin Bay Drive and the shared use path bridge over the creek. The City will be providing debris trailers to place the cuttings in. All we need to do is prune, lop and drag the items out to the containers.

We need 24 volunteers to show up and join the fun. No experience is necessary. The City staff will be helping us identify what items are to be lopped and removed. Preliminary work hours are 9:00 AM to 1:00PM, unless we finish early. FREE on-street parking is available on Marlin Bay Drive is right around the corner from the work area. Masks will NOT be required if you are fully vaccinated for COVID 19. Wear long pants and long sleeve shirts to protect from the briars, heavy-duty gloves and sturdy closed-toe shoes. Hats and sunscreen are optional. Also, bring plenty of water to stay hydrated. Who knows, there may even be an opportunity for lunch or ice cream at the end of the effort?

Let's show up and let the City see what TATC members can accomplish in a short period of work.

Contact localtrails@tidewateratc.com to sign up or get more information.

(Continued on next page ...)

Activities Schedule

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

TATC Board Meeting

When: Wednesday, July 7, 2021 7pm-9pm

Where: Online via Zoom App

Contact: Lee Lohman president@tidewateratc.com

Description: TATC Board Meeting. Guests are always welcome! This meeting will be held remotely using the Zoom App. Please contact Rosanne if you are not currently on the Board, but wish to attend this online Board Meeting remotely.

TATC General Membership Meeting

When: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 7pm-9pm

Where: Online via Zoom App

Contact: Lee Lohman president@tidewateratc.com

Program: To Be Determined

Description: TATC General Membership Meeting. Guests are always welcome! This meeting will be held remotely using the Zoom App. A blast email with a link to this Zoom Meeting will be sent out next week. If you do not currently subscribe to our blast email listing and would like to receive future blast emails, then click on the following link: <http://tidewateratc.us6.list-manage.com/subscribe/post?u=55b4b56215f58352eca502f98&id=0eb6788ff3>

TATC Lopperfest Part 1

When: July 16-18, 2021

Where: Camping at the CCC Kitchen in Sherando. The gate may be locked, make sure to contact Brittany for a key code to unlock the gate.

Why: We will be clearing any vegetation overgrowth on the Three Ridges trail and doing our walk-thru for Fall Maintenance.

Who: 15 TATC Volunteers

Contact Brittany at trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com for details

TATC Lopperfest Part 2

When: August 13-15, 2021

Where: Camping at the CCC Kitchen in Sherando. The gate may be locked, make sure to contact Brittany for a key code to unlock the gate.

Why: We will be clearing any vegetation overgrowth on the Three Ridges trail and doing our walk-thru for Fall Maintenance.

Who: 15 TATC Volunteers

Contact Brittany at trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com for details

TATC Fall Maintenance

When: October 15-17, 2021

Where: TATC's Appalachian Trail Section, Nelson County, VA, Camping: at Group Camping Area, Sherando Lake Recreation Area, 96 Sherando Lake Rd, Lyndhurst, VA. Williams Branch Camping Area.

Contact: Brittany Collins to sign up, trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com

Description: This is the second major trail maintenance event of 2021. Check our website for updates www.tidewateratc.com. Free camping and no entrance fee if gate attendant informed of your purpose. Be prepared to be self-sufficient for own food, beverage and supplies for duration of your stay. TATC supplies tools. Currently, we can only have 25 folks camping at the Williams Branch picnic area; however, if you plan on camping somewhere else and would like to join us, please let us know and we can still add you to our crew list. This is a weekend for us to satisfy the reason for our existence: to keep the AT, Mau-Har, and White Rock Falls trails open to foot traffic. Best to arrive between noon & dusk on Friday in order to establish camp and be ready for our Saturday 8:00AM meeting.

TATC Facebook Site

TATC Officers & Board

Position	Name	Email Address
President	Lee Lohman	president@tidewateratc.com
Vice President	David Altman	vicepres@tidewateratc.com
Treasurer	Cecil Salyer	treasurer@tidewateratc.com
Secretary	Steve Clayton	secretary@tidewateratc.com
Trail Supervisor	Brittany Collins	trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com
Assistant Trail Supervisor	John Sima	assistantts@tidewateratc.com
Counselor	Bruce Davidson	counselor@tidewateratc.com
Counselor	Ellis Malabad	counselor@tidewateratc.com
Counselor	Kari Pincus	counselor@tidewateratc.com
ATC RPC Representative	Ned Kuhns	rprep@tidewateratc.com
Alt ATC RPC Representative	Jim Sexton	rprep@tidewateratc.com
Cabin Committee	Bob Adkisson	cabin@tidewateratc.com or 627-5514
Cabin Committee	Gregory Hodges	cabin@tidewateratc.com
Calendar	Tony Phelps	calendar@tidewateratc.com
Education	Vacant - TBA	education@tidewateratc.com
Hikemaster	David Altman	hikemaster@tidewateratc.com
Historical	Jim Sexton	historical@tidewateratc.com
Land Management	Nalin Ratnayake	landmgt@tidewateratc.com
Local Trails	Dave Plum	localtrails@tidewateratc.com
Membership	Kama Mitchell	membership@tidewateratc.com
Membership	Sharon Salyer	membership@tidewateratc.com
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Past President	Rosanne Cary	pastprez@tidewateratc.com
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Timekeeper	Bill Lynn	timekeeper@tidewateratc.com
Tool Boss	Gene Monroe	toolboss@tidewateratc.com
Webmaster	Jim Sexton	webmaster@tidewateratc.com



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Mal Higgins



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Mal Higgins



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Provided by Mal Higgins



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Mal Higgins



**Mal Higgins and Milton Beale Removing a Down Tree
from the bottom of the Three Ridges Switch Backs**

Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Mal Higgins



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Mal Higgins



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Mal Higgins



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Mal Higgins



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Mal Higgins



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Karen Maher



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Karen Maher



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Kathryn Herndon-Powell



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Kathryn Herndon-Powell



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Kathryn Herndon-Powell



Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Andy Grayson



Flat Rock Overlook

Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Andy Grayson



Swing Blade Crew Harpers Creek to Flat Rocks

Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Brittany Collins



Swingblade Team Flat Rock to Chimney Rocks

Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Brittany Collins



New Waterfall sign near the Waterfalls off of the Mau-Har Trail

Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Brittany Collins



Maupin Field Crew

Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 14-16, 2021

Provided by Brittany Collins



Mau-Har Trail Crew

Spring Trail Maintenance

MAY 15, 2021

Jim Sexton



Sanitized Harpers Creek SST