

Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club

Appalachian Hiker



Banner Photo by Mark Ferguson

PREZ SEZ

The temperature got down to 28 degrees the first night of our **2025 Fall Maintenance and Family Campout Weekend** on October 24-26. But as the temperature warmed during the early morning, we witnessed 64 volunteers ready to work. *Please refer to John Sima's article for more information and pictures.* I want to express my gratitude to all volunteers of our last major maintenance event of the year and to recognize the dedicated dinner crew members who made sure we all had a warm, delicious meal after our work assignments on Saturday. Catherine Fowler, our Social Chair, planned and organized our dinner and cleanup crews. Additionally, I want to express my appreciation to everyone who generously contributed appetizers and desserts. The food was enjoyed by all attendees, particularly those who had put in a significant amount of effort on the trails.

Thank you, John Sima and Kaci Midgette, for your exceptional leadership as the Trail Supervisor and Asst. Trail Supervisor, respectively, during the 2025 year. Both of you and your dedicated service are invaluable to the organization. Of course, John and Kaci cannot do this alone. Pete Burch takes on the responsibility of preparing our event camping area for our arrival. This includes providing ample firewood, toilet paper, and clean facilities. I would also like to express my gratitude to Rich Seriani, our Tool Boss, for ensuring our tools are always in optimal condition. This includes repairing, cleaning, oiling, sharpening, organization, inventorying, and transportation to and from our events. Rich will be stepping down after the Spring Maintenance so please thank him when you see him. Also, let me know if you are interested in taking on this "thankless but necessary" job or if you have any suggestions. Bruce Davidson, our Safety Chair, plays a crucial role in maintaining the safety of our events. This includes ensuring that our InReach devices are functioning properly, providing training to others on their use, conducting check-ins and check-outs during events, and performing other safety-related tasks. Our trail leaders also make our events possible so thanks to ALL of you for your dedication and leadership. (Continued on Next Page ...)

December 2025 - January 2026
52nd Edition, 6th Issue

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Visit our website at www.tidewateratc.com

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Check our TATC calendar as our 2026 AT maintenance trips have been planned. Please mark your calendars so that you can continue to help us out. *If you prefer not to work the trails but still want to join, we will find something meaningful that you can do so you can spend the weekend with us outdoors. Please talk to me if directly if you are in this category so we can plan accordingly.* I would be remiss without mentioning that we are planning to conduct a Spring Trail Maintenance Training event before our Spring AT Maintenance (planned for April 24-26, 2026). We are still negotiating the date and basecamp for this training event. Please let us know if you are interested in helping with the training event.

Our **Awards Ceremony** was held during our October 8th General Membership Meeting. Following the customary welcoming of new attendees and an overview of forthcoming events, Jim Newman presided over the ceremony, honoring our 50-year TATC members, and many other members for their dedicated volunteer service hours on our AT and Blue Ridge Mountain trails, on our local trails, on our cabin maintenance events, for leading our hikes/bikes/kayak trips, and for administrative tasks. *For further details and photographs, please refer to Jim Newman's article.* A special thank you goes to Michelle Cobb for her artistic talents with designing the logos on these awards and procurements. Following the Awards Ceremony, we were rewarded by Dr. David Pruett's story about his experience thru-hiking the AT in Virginia. Please see Joe Stell's article for more information/photographs from Dr. Pruett's recent book entitled "*Hiking the AT in the Virginias: A Septuagenarian's Journey*".

Greg Hodges, our Cabin Chair, has been diligently watching over and caring for our cabin. He led our final **2025 Cabin Maintenance** trip from November 7-9. During this trip, the group cut firewood, installed a new stove pipe, and performed various maintenance tasks to ensure the cabin is well-prepared for the upcoming winter months. *Please see Joe Stell's article within for more details and pictures about this cabin maintenance event.* Our cabin holds immense value to us, and I strongly encourage anyone who is qualified to consider renting it. If you're not yet qualified, I highly recommend taking the necessary steps to become so by attending one of the maintenance trips offered in 2026. **Thank you, Greg Hodges, for your exceptional leadership as the Cabin Chair during the 2025 year and the past 15 years!**

Our **Silent Auction**, a success in accordance with popular demand, was held on November 12th at our General Membership Meeting venue. This event provided an opportunity for approximately 70 people to purchase the donated items by our club members. The total amount raised by the auction was \$1005.84. We extend our gratitude to our Program Chair, Paul Heymann, for his efforts in organizing an exceptional event that was thoroughly enjoyed by all attendees. *For further details, please refer to Paul's article within.*

We cordially invite all members to join us for our **Holiday Party**, scheduled for December 6th, commencing at 6 pm. Our Social Chair, Catherine Fowler, has arranged for us to celebrate this festive occasion at The Cove in Virginia Beach again! Live entertainment will be provided as we enjoy a potluck dinner. *NOTE that the COVE is located BEHIND the Francis Asbury Methodist Church, so it is NOT visible from the street.*

The annual **TATC elections** will be held on January 7, 2026, at the General Membership Meeting. *Please see Nomination Committee Chair, Bill Bunch's article for additional information.*

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Thanks to Jim Sexton, our VP and Hikemaster, for pushing us all to add more events to our calendar. Thanks to Paul Heymann, our Program Chair and Local Trails Chair, for organizing our General Membership Meetings and for managing our local trail maintenance events. *[Please see Paul's article to see what's planned for 2026.](#)*

In closing, I hope everyone had a memorable Thanksgiving and, if possible, participated in Bill's annual hike on Black Friday, ***A Shore Thing***. As we welcome the New Year, we plan to continue to offer additional weekend events that will not conflict with our major AT maintenance events. Bill Bunch plans to hold his annual ***First Day Hike*** at First Landing State Park, Don Williams plans to hold two of his ***Beginner's Backpacking*** events, Greg and I plan to hold the 3rd Annual ***For Hikers and Jazz Lovers*** event at the Deer Head Inn in Delaware Water Gap in May 2026, we will continue to host the ***Hasty Hike's*** on the 2nd Saturday each month, the ***Happy Hiker Hour*** social events, the popular ***Tuesday Group's*** weekly events, and much more. Should you have any interest in leading an event, please do not hesitate to contact Jim Sexton at hikemaster@tidewateratc.com. *Lastly, I want to take this opportunity to thank Peg Seriani for her dedication, professionalism, and leadership over the past 2 years as both the TATC Newsletter Editor and Secretary. YOU have done an outstanding job in every way and with the utmost patience and a smile.*

Stay safe and enjoy the trails responsibly. We hope to see you at ***The Cove*** on December 6th.

Happy hiking,

Lelia Vann
President
Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club



Minute for Maintenance December 2025

By John Sima

This year's Fall Backpacking Walkthru was memorable, one of my favorites! Friday, we met up and camped out at Maupin Field shelter. Saturday, we hiked up and over Three Ridges and down to Harpers Creek Shelter to set up camp. After dinner, Meagan Mead and family provided the campfire entertainment by telling campfire stories and funny skits. It was obvious this was well rehearsed. Well done Meagan!! This was my favorite part of the trip. Sunday, we hiked back to our vehicles via the Mau-Har trail. The purpose of these trips is to scout the trail to see what work needs to be done for Fall Maintenance. Thanks Meagan Mead and family, Mike Camlet, Amanda and Veronica Hartwig, Kari Pincus and Michael Boso.

Mark Wenger provided us with valuable Intel on the St Mary's Wilderness area for Fall Maintenance. So dedicated, he made 2 separate trips to the area.

Fall Maintenance, we had a great turnout. Sixty four people showed up and cleaned up our trails one more time before Winter. During the same weekend, Megan Martin, USFS Trail Specialist held a Sawyer Cert/Recert opportunity. Donald Williams, Mike Camlet, Kaci Midgette and I recertified as A & B level crosscut bucking sawyers. A special thanks to Megan for making a special trip for us!!!

Upcoming events for 2026:

Maintenance Trips - POC: John Sima (trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com)

- March 27-29: Sherando Lake Recreational Area Cleanup Day (CCC Kitchen)
- tbd: Spring Trail Maintenance Training (Devils Backbone) **NEW**
- April 10-12: Spring Backpacking AT Walk-Thru
- April 24-26: Spring AT Maintenance (Williams Branch)
- June 19-21: Swingblade & Lopperfest #1 (CCC Kitchen)
- July 17-19: Swingblade & Lopperfest #2 (CCC Kitchen)
- August 21-23: Swingblade & Lopperfest #3 (CCC Kitchen)
- October 2-4: Fall Backpacking AT Walk-Thru
- October 16-18: Fall AT Maintenance (Williams Branch) **includes Sawyer cert/re-cert**

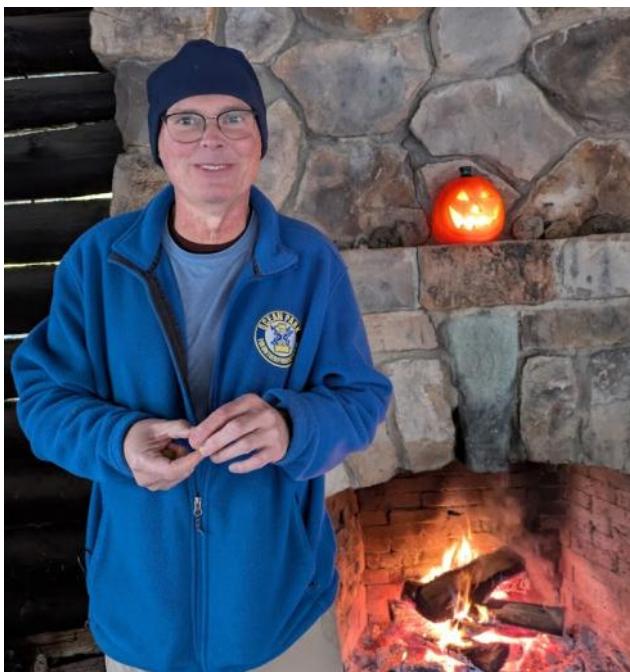
Happy Trails,
John Sima & Kaci Midgette
Trail Supervisor & Assistant



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Minute for Maintenance December 2025

Photos by Sharon McQueen



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Minute for Maintenance December 2025

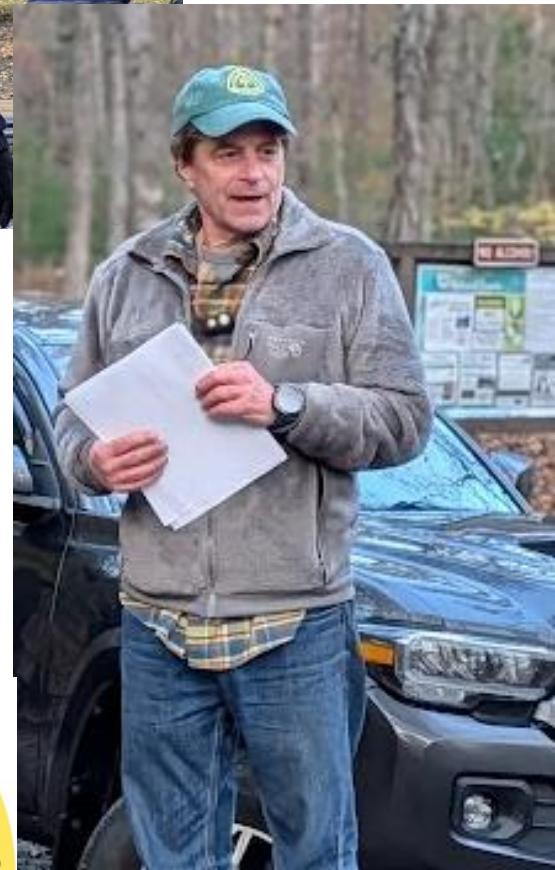
Photos by Sharon McQueen



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Minute for Maintenance December 2025

Photos by Sharon McQueen



Volunteer Awards Celebrate Honorable Work

And Longevity of Task

By Jim Newman

In early 2024 a committee was formed to plan a better way forward for recognizing our members' volunteer work. Under the able leadership of Chairman Jim Sexton, the committee was composed of Bill Bunch, Michelle Cobb, Paul Heymann, Lee Lohman, Kaci Midgette, Jim Newman, Greg Reck and Lelia Vann.

After three meetings at two Norfolk eateries, the following was decided, recorded, and put into practice:

- Awards will be featured yearly at October meetings
- Timekeeping is vital (Greg spends lots of time doing this)
- Ordering award items also important (Lelia's job)
- Designer of patches, T-shirts, etc. (Michelle)
- Dealing with Local Trail matters (Paul)
- Scheduling, notifications (Jim S, Kaci)
- Photography (Bill)
- Elder statesman, all around go-to guy (Lee)
- Presentation (Jim N)



The trial run for the new plan was at the October 2024 meeting.

- Sixty-six items were earned by members consisting of pins, t-shirts, hats, vests, water bottles and stickers
- The main features were the awards of the Golden Pulaski to Ned Kuhns, John Sima and Bob Atkinson

The October 8, 2025 Awards Night featured recognition of the first three members reaching 50 years of volunteer service with TATC. They are Reese Lueki, Jerry Cobleigh, and Susan Gail Arey.

So, folks, show up, do volunteer work. Awards await you!

Oh, by-the-way, awards are now expanded to new areas: cabin maintenance, administration, social leadership, corridor monitoring and outreach participation.



TATC Included in Helene Recovery Stewardship Agreement

By Greg Reck

Last fall, Hurricane Helene had a devastating impact in several southeastern states including significant damage to portions of the Appalachian Trail. As part of the 2025 American Recovery Act (ARA), Helene recovery funds have been transferred through a 5-year agreement from the US Forest Service to the ATC. These funds will be used to *“restore recreation access, improve habitat, and repair damaged infrastructure. Work will include assessing the trail & facilities from GA through central VA, identifying and developing projects, implementing projects, and coordinating trail management during Helene recovery.”*

On November 18, 2025, TATC signed a 5-year agreement with ATC that defines the specific obligations agreed to by both parties relating to Helene recovery and associated USFS funds. TATC is the northernmost trail club included in the agreement which includes the following:

ATC will:

Jointly plan, support & monitor ARA projects with TATC and USFS on a monthly or quarterly basis,
Support direct-to-club purchase of saw equipment and PPE,
Support contracted chainsaw & crosscut training & evaluation,
5 seasons of the Tye River Ridgerunner,
Support a termed Non-Native Invasive Species coordinator, treatments and inventory,

And TATC will:

Track & report individual club member volunteer hours by month to ATC (as an in-kind contribution),
Provide volunteer hours per year on all activities in its area of responsibility, whether or not the work is associated with ARA-funded activities.

Both parties will:

Meet quarterly to coordinate, plan, develop, and implement projects that are included in the scope of this agreement.
Not commence project work until they receive written permission from the designated Forest Service representative.

FROM THE TATC TIMEKEEPER:

TATC will be submitting volunteer hours to ATC reported by members on the following forms:

Federal Lands Trail Maintenance & Related Admin
Outreach & Communication
TATC Management & Admin (selected activities)

Since reporting to ATC will be monthly, it is important that all time volunteered in these areas be reported.
Please make sure that your time is being reported.



TATC's Local Trails at FLSP

By Paul Heymann

The last First Landing "trail checkup" for 2025 will be Thursday December 11, led by Paul Heymann. Meet at the picnic area parking lot. From the Shore Drive traffic light, turn south. At the guard shack, advise the ranger you are with TATC, then turn right into the parking lot. Wear gear with TATC logo, safety glasses, gloves, suitable head-gear and footwear. Bring loppers, pruners or a small silky saw, or tools will be provided. A sign-up link is on the club calendar. About 6 people are adequate.

First Landing is very appreciative of our club's support, which we accomplish at least monthly, per agreement. Many club members volunteer for other FLSP activities, as well as volunteering at other parks and facilities in Tidewater. A big shout out to all of you!

For 2026, below are the planned dates and leaders. We normally check the Live Oak and Cypress Swamp trails, but also can undertake other important tasks if requested by the Park.

2026 Schedule:

Sat Jan 17 - Lee Lohman
Sat Feb 21 - Jim Sexton
Sat Mar 21 - Paul Heymann
Thu Apr 16 - Bill Bunch
Thu May 14 - Lee Lohman
Thu Jun 11 - Dave Plum
Thu Jul 9 - Cory Galdo
Thu Aug 13 - Greg Reck
Thu Sep 10 - Paul Heymann
Thu Oct 22 - Pending
Sat Nov 21 - Jim Sexton
Sat Dec 12 - Bill Bunch



Twelfth Annual Silent Auction

By Paul Heymann

The 2025 Silent Auction (12th Annual) was held November 12. About 70 club members attended, contributing and bidding on many nice items! Over \$1000 was raised, including an anonymous donation of \$120. Thanks to all for making it a fun and successful event! Be sure to keep next year's auction in your plans - the date is November 11, 2026.



Announcing Our 2026 Programs

By Paul Heymann

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend these interesting, informative and fun programs during 2026!

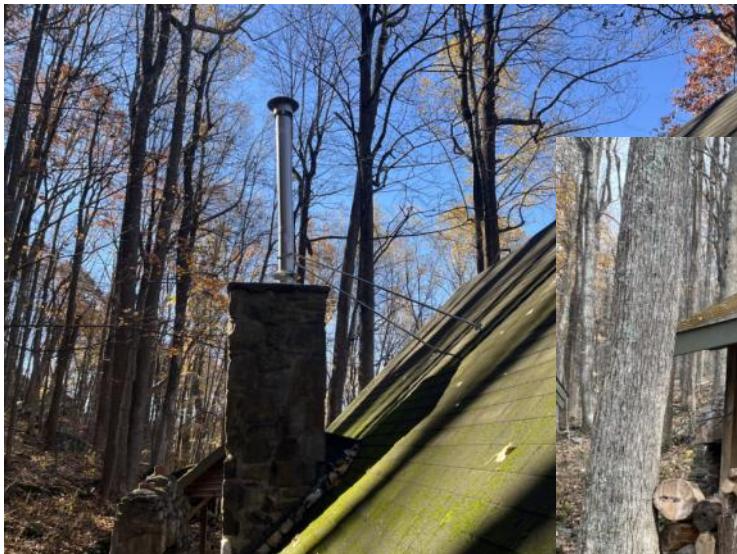
- Jan 14 Club Elections (Nominating Committee)
- Feb 11 Budget Approval & "AT the Musical" (Skip Fredericksen)
- Mar 11 Volunteer Opportunities at Back Bay NWR (Erica Ryder)
- Apr 8 Alton's Keep Wildbird Rescue (Tommy Harley)
- May 13 Hiking the Grand Canyon (Faye Bailey)
- Jun 10 Trail Maintenance: Water Bars (John Sima)
- Jul 8 Plants of the Appalachian Trail (Dr. Kristen Wickert)
- Aug 12 Hadrian's Wall Part II (Ned Kuhns)
- Sep 9 Virginia Beach Rail Trail (Steve Lambert)
- Oct 14 Awards Program (Jim Newman) plus "Trail Names & Tribulations" (activity)
- Nov 11 Silent Auction & Veterans Day Recognition (Paul Heymann)
- Dec Date & Venue TBA - Holiday Party (Catherine Fowler)



Cabin Maintenance, November 7th-9th

By Joe Stell

Lynette and Aubrey's delicious crumble, made from apples hand picked on Cole Mountain, freshly warmed in a Dutch oven on the outside fire, and accompanied by freshly shaken ice cream was the delicious centerpiece of Friday night, and after the final pair of our seven overnighters arrived in the pitch black of sometime after eight o'clock after a customary I64 hold up, we settled in for the night with the mezzanine window open, so powerful was the fantastic new stove.



The new stove pipe



An impressive, if precarious stack

Glorious sunshine accompanied Saturday's work day, and with multiple chainsaws and some much needed task specific expertise in the form of John Kuster in residence, the combined work planned for both this and the previous rain beset trip went off without a hitch. A shiny new stove pipe now extends skywards, clearing the cabin roof's apex by at least two feet, meaning the smoky air should escape above the eddies that have, in the past, pulled it down to the picnic shelter or the flat area behind the cabin often used for tenting. Not that the stove needs it, but this should also help it draw even better. Greg's final stunt as cabin chair saw him astride the chimney, harnessed and tethered to a pair of onlookers either side for safety, wrestling the cap into a secure position, hopefully for the last time. Five dead trees near the cabin in danger of falling were felled and the remaining previously cut wood too long for the new stove was resized. Though it seems now that, with the new stove's far superior efficiency, much less wood has been used this year, meaning there is a glut of stacked wood piles, with most of the aforementioned felled trees left where they landed, ready to be collected when the need should arise. So rest assured, any winter hirers, make the cabin as toasty as you like, there's no shortage of fuel!

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Leaves raked and cupboards cleared of the unused pots and pans and refilled with sparkling new ceramic ones, a serious upgrade, it was a case of each to their own for the afternoon's diversion, before gathering again as the light faded for the last of Greg's officially sanctioned spaghetti and Italian sausage dinners, which was as tasty as always. Scrabble and Yahtzee ended the evening, with the usual smattering of disagreements on the validity of certain words.



New ceramic pots

Between the crumble, Saturday's bacon and scrambled egg breakfast, the cake that our reinforcements, Mary and Debbie, brought for Greg and the spaghetti, I think we all left a fair few pounds heavier. I'm sure all members will join me in sending great thanks and appreciation to Greg for fifteen years of looking after this most treasured club asset, and applauding Chris and Kaleen for taking up the charge moving forward.



Greg's cake



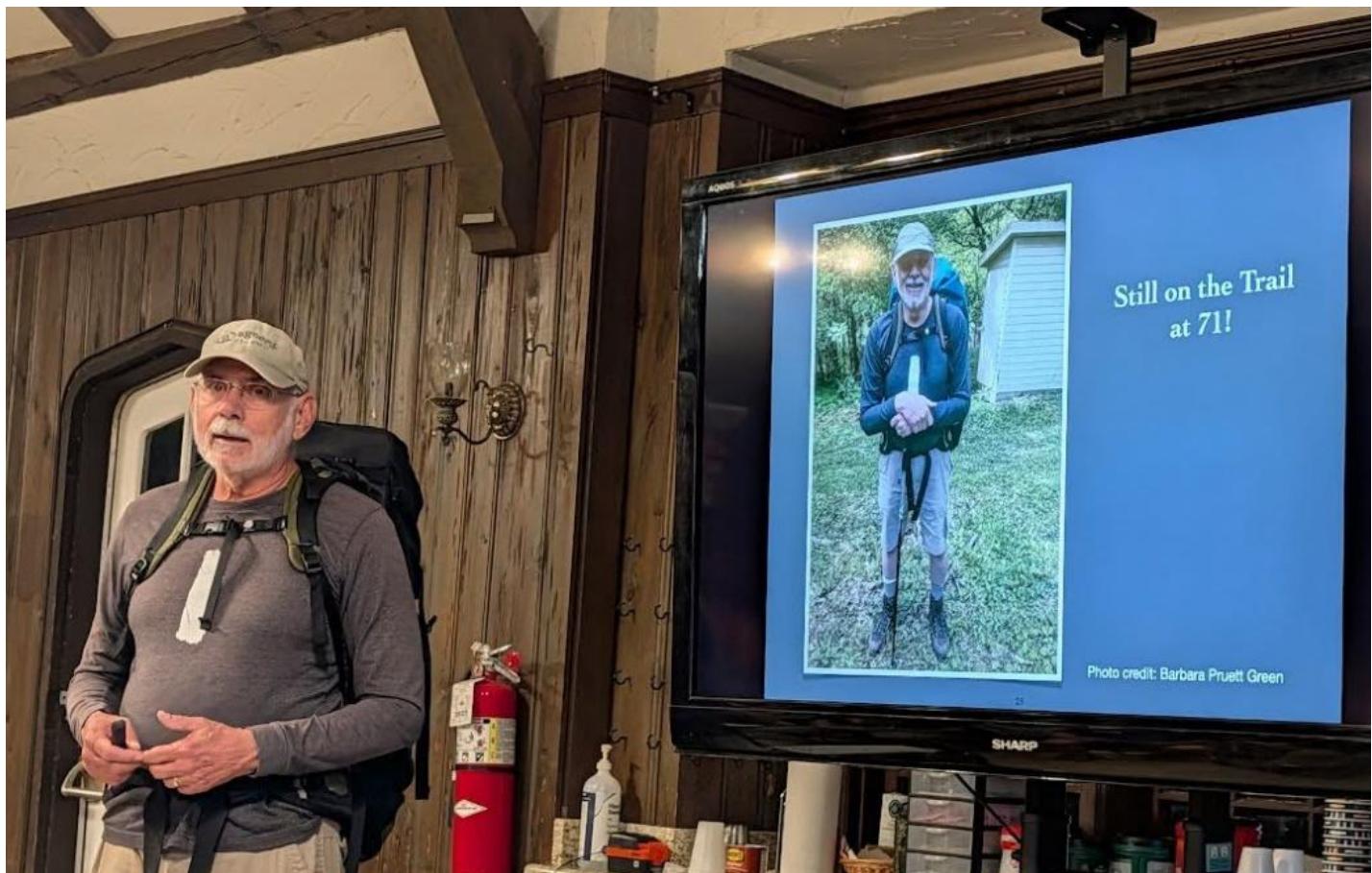
Guest Presentation during the October General Membership Meeting

By Joe Stell

This past October's meeting was a presentation from JMU Professor Emeritus C. David Pruett on his newly released book. It was very well received and there was quite a wait to buy autographed copies. For any members unable to attend, please enjoy the following excerpt and photos, featuring our own AT section in no less than superlative terms. And was anyone present at the anti pipeline rally back in 2018? Available online from Amazon, Barnes & Noble and others, as well as directly from UVA Press.

Hiking the AT in the Virginias: A Septuagenarian's Journey, by David Pruett

<https://www.upress.virginia.edu/title/10135/>



David Pruett presenting during the October GMM

Photo by Sharon McQueen

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ONE

Trails

These mountains, in several ways rivaling the western scenery, are within a day's ride from centers containing more than half of the population of the United States.¹

—BENTON MACKAYE

WALKING THE AT OF THE VIRGINIAS RANGES from a stroll in the park—quite literally at Harpers Ferry National Historic Park, Shenandoah National Park, and Sky Meadows and Grayson Highlands State Parks—to a grueling slog on northern Virginia's tortuous, ankle-busting “Roller Coaster.” There is also everything in between: broad fire roads, rocky ledges, country lanes, rock-strewn wilderness, a stretch of U.S. 52, boulder fields, tunnels of rhododendron, stairs, bridges, wetlands, and meadows—both high and low.

Along its entire course, the AT twice exceeds 6,000 feet in elevation, at Kuwohi (also known as Clingman's Dome) in the Smoky Mountains of North Carolina and much farther north in the Presidential Range of New Hampshire. The trail dips to its lowest point, just over 100 feet above sea level, at a bridge crossing the Hudson River in New York. Needless to say, there's a lot of up and down, so much so that an end-to-end hiker will ascend and descend the equivalent of sixteen Mount Everests.²

The AT of the Virginias is no exception. Precious little is level. In a typical twenty-five-mile section-hike, one can expect to climb at least a mile and descend by an equal amount, for an average gradient of eight percent. Most of the AT in the Virginias is well graded, and switchbacks tame steep ascents, limiting most grades to about ten percent, a foot of rise for every ten feet of horizontal distance.

The greatest continuous ascent/descent within the Virginias lies in the Tye River watershed of Nelson and Amherst Counties. Heading south from the 4,000-foot summit of Three Ridges, one descends to the Tye River, 1,000 feet above sea level, only to regain the entire half-mile-plus vertical loss in a continuous climb to the summit of The Priest. Along the four-mile trail up The Priest, the gradient is a taxing 750 feet per mile, almost fifteen percent, but, mercifully, is nearly constant the whole way.

Book Excerpt (continued)

Hiking the AT in the Virginias: A Septuagenarian's Journey, by David Pruett

There are, however, here and there in Virginia, scattered stretches of trail with gradients as high as twenty percent, and on these sections one curses the trail blazer. Thankfully, most are short. Steep uphill is hard on the heart and lungs. Steep downhill is worse: treacherous. It's murder on the knees and rife with opportunity for a tumble, particularly when the trail is wet or the hiker exhausted. Most AT thru-hikers are four-footed creatures, relying on two hiking poles. I'm told by an orthopedist this reduces stress on the knees by thirty percent.

Two of the most tormenting sections of the AT that I've hiked, however, were nearly flat boulder fields: a section north of Reeds Gap along the upper Blue Ridge Parkway and another north of Bailey Gap Shelter and south of Mountain Lake Wilderness. Above Bailey Gap the AT traverses across more than a mile of large, moss-encrusted stones through an utterly primeval forest. Loose stones, which are abundant, tilt disconcertingly under the hiker's weight. The boulder field at Reeds Gap is not nearly so long, but I hiked it after days of rain had rendered the stones perilously slick. The concentration necessary to avoid a spill was so vexing that, upon arriving safely at my car, I immediately developed a migraine.



On a beautiful fall day in 2018, citizens from all walks of life and political persuasions gathered to oppose the 600-mile-long Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP), which, had it been completed, would have crossed the AT at Reeds Gap, site of the protest. In July 2020, developers of the ACP cancelled the project, in large part due to economic and environmental realities and well-organized, informed and relentless bi-partisan opposition.

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Book Excerpt (continued)

Hiking the AT in the Virginias: A Septuagenarian's Journey, by David Pruett



Crabtree Falls, accessed either from above by an AT spur trail near The Priest or from below via US 56, is a favorite destination for day-hikers. On a hot day, soaking one's feet in a cool stream is bliss. And there's no better way to end a hard day of hiking than to be lulled to sleep by natural white noise when camped alongside a gurgling brook. Photograph by Suzanne Fiederlein and used by permission.



TATC Elections January 2026

By Bill Bunch

The TATC Nominating Committee is very pleased to submit the following slate of Officers for fiscal year 2026-2027. Please plan to attend the January 14th membership meeting and vote in your next Board:

President - Lelia Vann
Vice President – Jim Sexton
Treasurer - Andy Grayson
Secretary – Heather Bailey
Trail Supervisor - John Sima
Assistant Trail Supervisor - Kaci Midgette
Counselor – Patrick Hayes

Any club member is eligible to run for any one of these positions. Additional nominations can be made at the January 14th membership meeting.

Our sincere thanks go out to each candidate for stepping forward to take on a leadership role in our club.

Nominating Committee: Lee Lohman, Michele Cobb, Lon Carpenter, Kaleen Lawsure
Bill Bunch, chair: bbunch@att.net



TATC Winter Holiday Party



Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2025

Time: 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Location:

The Cove

1871 N Great Neck Rd,

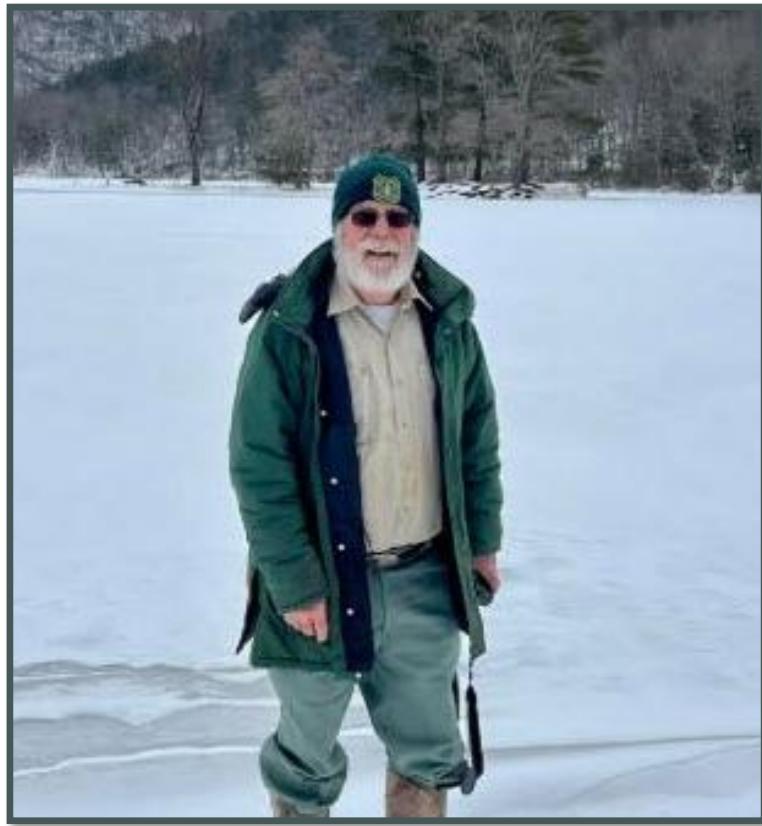
Virginia Beach, VA 23454

Online Sign-Up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-59389620-tatc>

In Remembrance

Kelley Sims, a Friend to TATC



Kelley Sims, 69, of Lyndhurst, passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, October 2nd, 2025, at his residence. Many club members knew and worked with Kelley during his 25-year tenure as Facilities Manager of the USFS Sherando Lake Recreation Area. Kelley was always friendly and helpful, and ensured that TATC campsites at Sherando were always ready for our maintenance trips. During Kelley's time at Sherando Lake, TATC volunteers initiated the annual practice of helping the staff at Sherando Lake clean up and open the USFS campsites in the Spring. He will be missed by his friends in TATC.

Copy of Obituary:

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/stuarts-draft-va/kelley-sims-12545559>

Article on Kelley by Phyllis Neumann:

<https://tidewateratc.com/resources/History/Remembering%20Kelley%20Sims.pdf>

TATC Cabin Report

TATC Cabin Maintainers and Club Members,

To rent the cabin you must 1. be a member of the club, and 2. participate in a cabin maintenance / orientation weekend. Cabin maintenance / orientation trips are scheduled 4 or 5 times a year and are meant to acquaint new members with the cabin, its history and its rules, how to open and close it up, how to operate the wood burning stove, etc. Some light to moderate maintenance work is also done during these trips. These weekends are fun, free of charge, and open to all. There is a 12-person limit at the cabin itself, but people are welcome to camp out nearby.

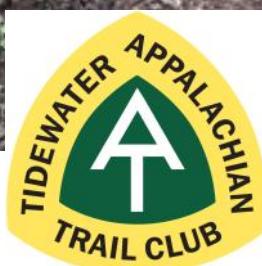
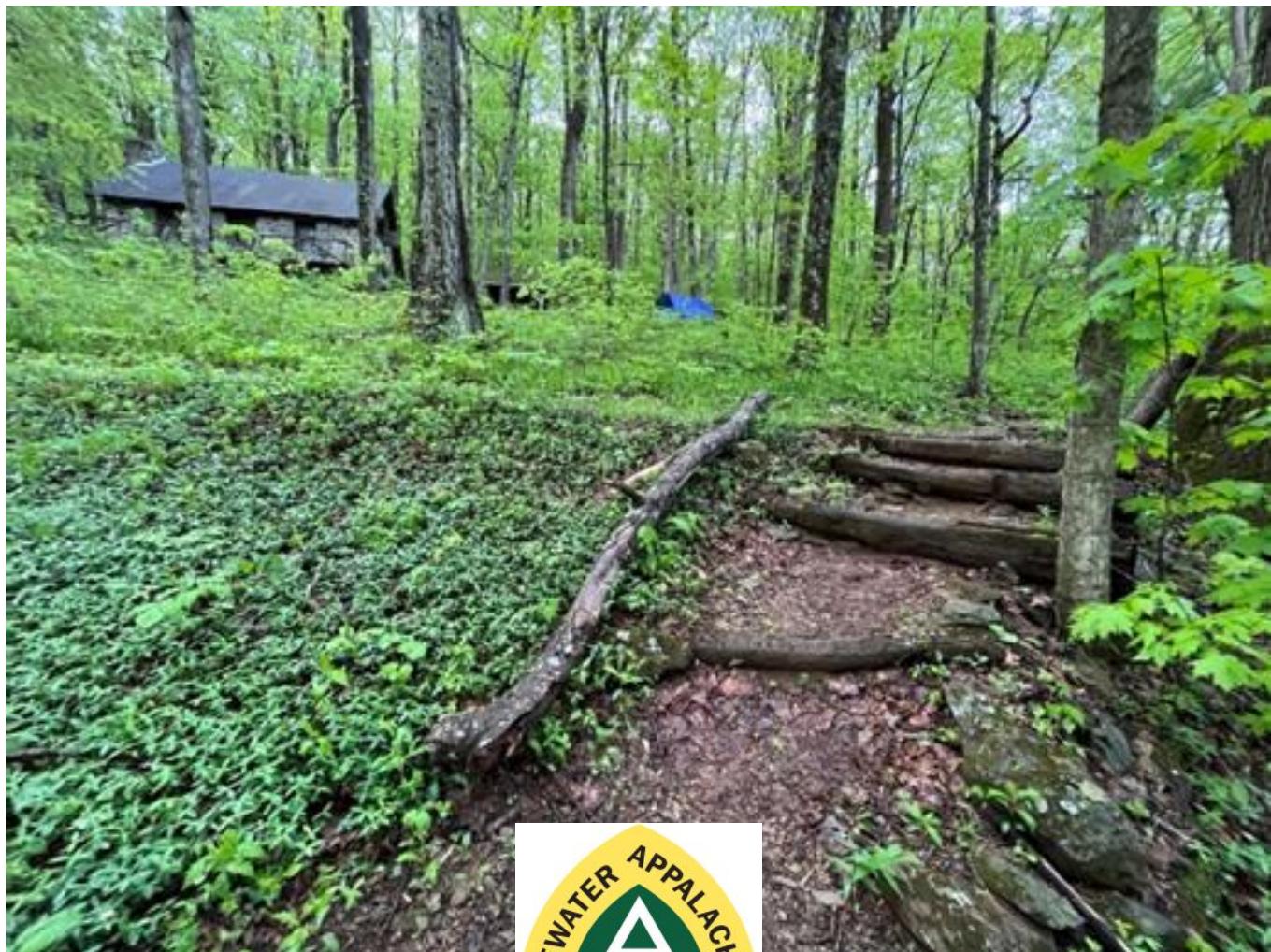
Here are some important cabin links (see the TATC website for more information):

Cabin Availability Schedule: <https://www.tidewateratc.com/Cabin-Schedule>

Cabin General Information: <https://www.tidewateratc.com/General-Information>

Cabin Rules: <https://www.tidewateratc.com/Cabin-Rules>

For more information, please contact: cabin@tidewateratc.com



Presentation Event

Reese Lukei, Jr will present a PowerPoint program about the local Peregrine Falcon population to the staff and volunteers of FLSP on Tuesday, December 9 at 2:00pm.

Contact Tanya Wisoker, Volunteer Coordinator,
FLSP 757-297-8223



Photo by Reese Lukei, Jr.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Join the Grounds Maintenance Team at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge!

Members of this important team help keep the refuge grounds safe and beautiful for visitors. The work consists of using a riding lawn mower to cut grass around the Visitor Center and D-Pool fishing area and/or edging and trimming with a weed whacker. All volunteers receive an orientation and training for this project. This work is primarily done on Thursdays or Fridays, to prepare the site for heavy weekend visitation. Volunteers sign up for times that work for them. Please contact Erica Ryder at Erica_Ryder@fws.gov for more information and to join the team at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge!





First Day Hike January 1 2026 The Nature
Bus First Landing State Park Virginia Beach
All Ages Welcome

New Year 'First Day Hike' with Naturalist James Abbott

Begin the New Year by setting the intention to get outside more and meet more nature-loving friends!

TOUR DATE: Thursday, January 1st, 2026

TIME: 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm (3 hour tour)

Link to purchase tickets: <https://thenaturebus.com/>



The Nature Bus Nature Tours Ecotours Eco
Tours Best Tours Virginia Beach Group
Tours Hikes Kayak Wineries Breweries
Birthday Parties

**Customizable
Group Nature
Tour for up to 16
people**

Link to purchase tickets: <https://thenaturebus.com/>



TATC Merchandise Catalog

You can order TATC shirts, polos and bandanas online from the [TATC website](#) or buy them at the monthly [General Membership Meetings](#).

New



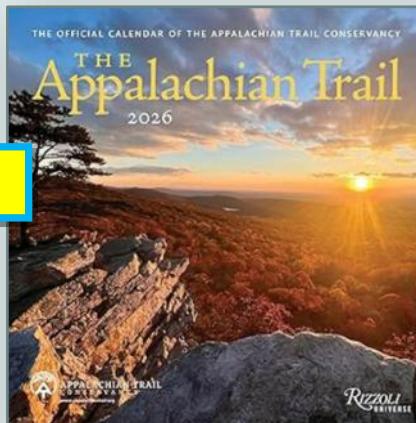
[ORDER YOURS](#)

ATC Trail Store

Appalachian Trail Conservancy Calendar 2026

The official Appalachian Trail Conservancy 12" x 12" wall calendar for 2026 features professional photography by users of the Trail! Order yours today from the Official A.T. Store.

New



[ORDER YOURS](#)



Disaster + Travel +
Wilderness First Aid
 & WFR Recert for current SOLO grads



2025/2026 Course Schedule

2025

Sept 27-28....Charlottesville area, VA ❤
 Oct 18-19....Washington, DC area ⚡
 Nov 15-16....Charlottesville area, VA ❤

2026

Jan 10-11....Charlottesville, VA ❤
 Jan 24-25....Louisville, KY
 Jan 24-25....Richmond, VA ❤
 Jan 31-Feb 1....Baltimore area, MD
 Jan 31-Feb 1....Harrisonburg area, VA ❤
 Feb 21-22....Williamsburg area, VA
 Feb 21-22....Blacksburg, VA ❤
 Feb 28-Mar 1....Charlottesville, VA ❤
 Feb 28-Mar 1....Chattanooga area, TN ❤
 Mar 21-22....Washington, DC area ⚡
 Mar 21-22....Richmond, VA
 Mar 28-29....Circleville, WV ❤ ⚡

April 4-5.....Charlottesville, VA ❤
 April 11-12....Triangle/Triad area, NC
 April 11-12....Williamsburg area, VA
 April 18-19....Baltimore area, MD ❤ ⚡
 April 18-19....Blacksburg, VA ❤
 April 18 & 25....Eden, UT
 April 25-26....Philadelphia area, PA
 May 9-10.....Charlottesville, VA ❤
 May 30-31....Washington, DC area ⚡
 May 30-31....Richmond, VA ❤
 June 13-14....Winchester area, VA ⚡
 June 13-14....Charlottesville, VA ❤
 June 27-28....AWFA Part II Williamsport, WV ⚡
 Aug 22-23.....Circleville, WV ❤ ⚡
 Sept 5-7.....Blacksburg area, VA ⚡

❤ Optional Friday Night CPR Class

⚡ Camping/Lodging Available

Are you prepared to give vital first aid care when professional help is far away or busy?

Hands-on learn how to save lives & limbs in areas inaccessible to an ambulance. Blend of classroom instruction and problem-solving rescue scenario practice. Come away with actual care-giving skill and confidence, and 2-year SOLO WFA certification. Counts as WFR Recertification.

Topics: Patient Assessment System, Medical Emergencies, Environmental Issues, Skin Injuries, Musculoskeletal & Spinal Injuries, Evacuation & Care-giving

No prerequisites.
 Spaces limited!
 Course fee starts at \$295
 Gift cards available
 Private courses offered.
 (434) 328-4697

More Info & Registration:

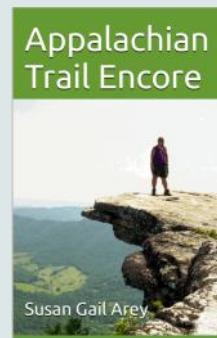
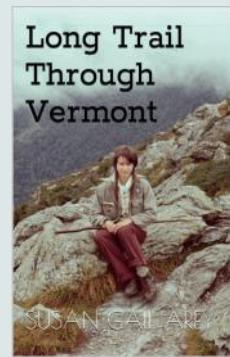
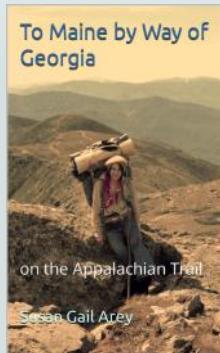
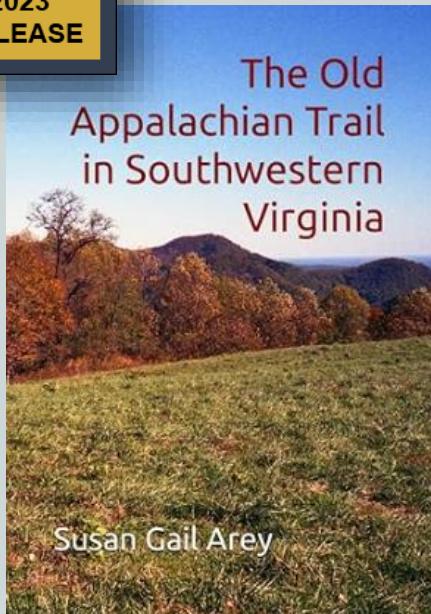
www.solowfa.com



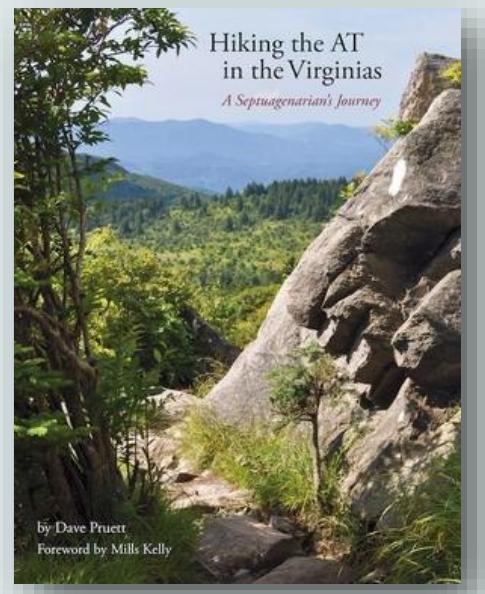
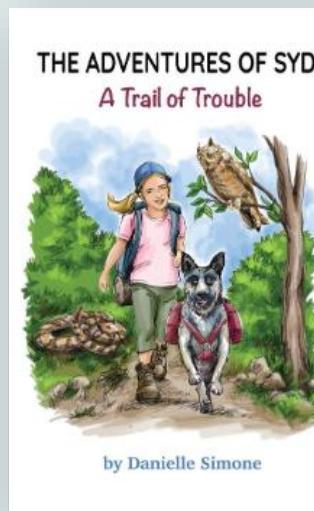
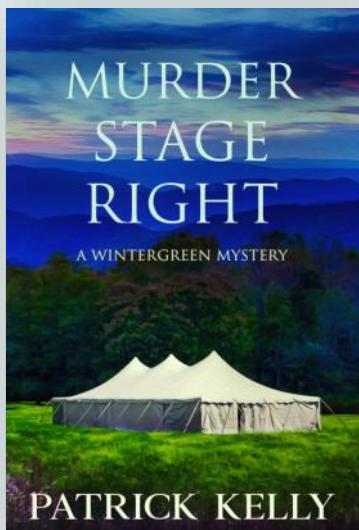
Books on Hiking by Susan Gail Arey

Available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) as Print or E-books

2023
RELEASE



Books by other Authors



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.

Merchants Millpond Hike – Tuesday Group

Tuesday, December 2, 2025 – Meet at 9:15am

Merchants Millpond State Park, 176 Mill Pond Rd, Gatesville, NC 27938

To sign-up email Ellis/Phyllis at: TuesdayGroup@tidewateratc.com

ATC Virginia Regional Office (VARO) Call

Tuesday, December 2, 2025 – Zoom Call – 3:00pm -4:00pm

Contact Lelia Vann for more information: president@tidewateratc.com

TATC Board Meeting

Wednesday, December 3, 2025 - 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave Norfolk, VA, 23503

Contact Lelia Vann for more information: president@tidewateratc.com

Fort Monroe Hike

Saturday, December 6, 2025 - 10:00am - 12:30pm

Meet in the parking lot Northeast of Oozlefinch Brewing

81 Patch Rd, Hampton, VA 23651

Online Sign-up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-59382877-fort>

TATC Winter Holiday Party

Saturday, December 6, 2025 - 6:00pm - 9:00pm

The Cove, 1871 N Great Neck Rd, Virginia Beach, VA 23454

Online Signup:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-59389620-tatc>

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

(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.

Elation Brewing - Happy Hiker Hour

Wednesday, December 10, 2025 – 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Elation Brewing, 5104 Colley Ave, Norfolk, VA 23508

Online Sign-Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-60050737-elation>

First Landing State Park Maintenance

Thursday, December 11, 2025 - 9:00am - 11:00am

First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Online Sign-Up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-60087240-first>

Hasty Hiking

Saturday, December 13, 2025, Meet at 10:15am

First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Online Sign-Up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-60079900-copy>

Happy Hiker Hour - Three Notch'd Brewery & Craft Kitchen

Wednesday, December 17, 2025 - 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Three Notch'd Brewery & Craft Kitchen, 4561 Virginia Beach Blvd, Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Online Sign-Up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-60081886-happy>

First Day Hike at First Landing

Thursday, January 1, 2026, Meet at 9:15 am

First Landing State Park, Boat Ramp, 64th St, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Online Sign-Up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-60118969-first>

Visit our TATC Calendar

(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.

ATC Virginia Regional Office (VARO) Call

Tuesday, January 6, 2026 – Zoom Call – 3:00pm -4:00pm

Contact Lelia Vann for more information: president@tidewateratc.com

TATC Board Meeting

Wednesday, January 7, 2026 - 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave Norfolk, VA 23503

Contact Lelia Vann for more information: president@tidewateratc.com

TATC Corridor Monitoring

Friday to Sunday, January 9-11, 2026

Sherando Lake Recreation Area, Admin Bldg., 96 Sherando Lake Rd, Lyndhurst, VA 22952

Online Sign-Up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-60087836-tatc>

TATC General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, January 14, 2026 - 7:00pm-9:00pm

Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave Norfolk, VA, 23503

Program: Elections

Contact Lelia Vann for more information: president@tidewateratc.com

[Visit our TATC Calendar](#)

TATC Officers & Board



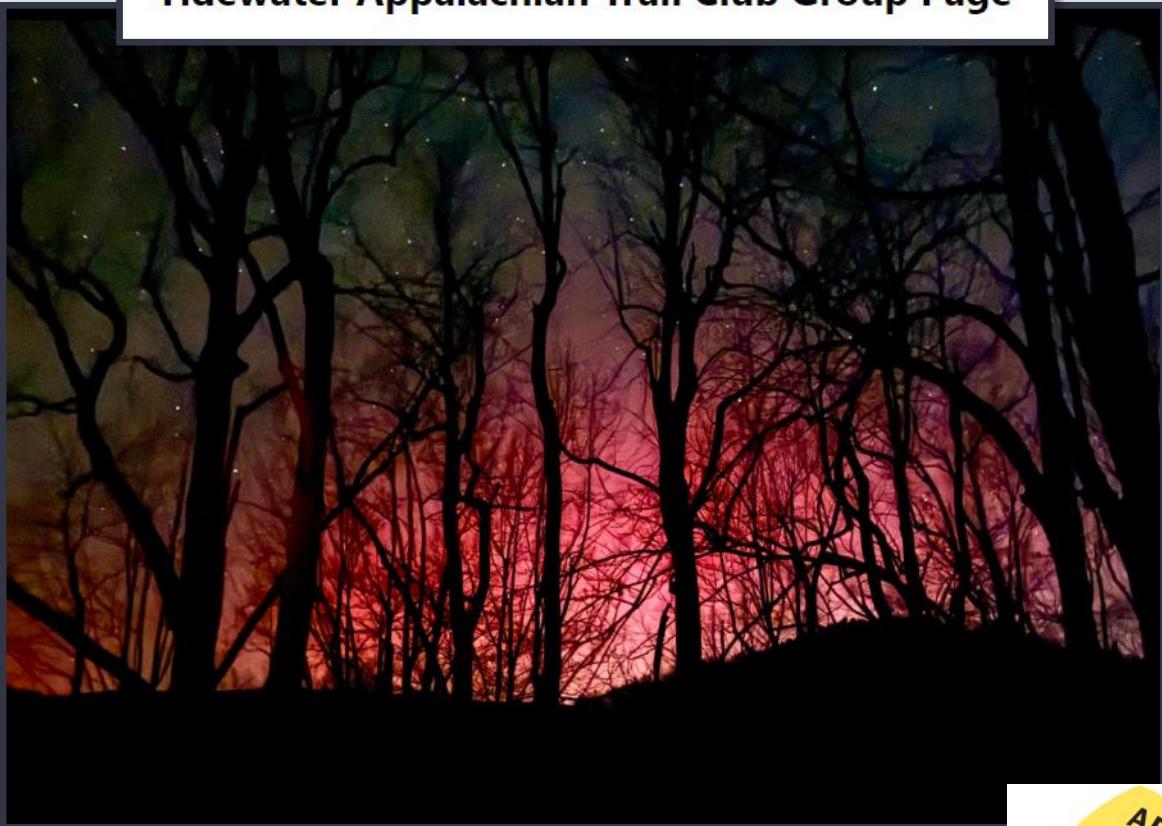
Position	Name	Email Address
President	Lelia Vann	president@tidewateratc.com
Vice President	Jim Sexton	vicepres@tidewateratc.com
Treasurer	Andy Grayson	treasurer@tidewateratc.com
Secretary	Peg Seriani	secretary@tidewateratc.com
Trail Supervisor	John Sima	trailsupervisor@tidewateratc.com
Assistant Trail Supervisor	Kaci Midgette	assistantts@tidewateratc.com
Counselor	Jim Newman	counselor@tidewateratc.com
Counselor	Christopher Butler	counselor@tidewateratc.com
Counselor	Sandra Canepa	counselor@tidewateratc.com
ATC RPC Representative	Ned Kuhns	rpcrep@tidewateratc.com
Alt ATC RPC Representative	Jim Sexton	rpcrep@tidewateratc.com
Awards Coordinator	Jim Newman	awards@tidewateratc.com
Cabin Committee	Gregory Hodges	cabin@tidewateratc.com
Education	Donald Williams	education@tidewateratc.com
Facebook	Bill Bunch	facebook@tidewateratc.com
Hikemaster	Jim Sexton	hikemaster@tidewateratc.com
Land Management	Andy Grayson	landmgt@tidewateratc.com
Local Trails	Paul Heymann	localtrails@tidewateratc.com
Membership	Kama Mitchell	membership@tidewateratc.com
Membership	Sharon Salyer	membership@tidewateratc.com
Merchandise	Michelle Cobb	merchandise@tidewateratc.com
Newsletter	Peg Seriani	newsletter@tidewateratc.com
Outreach	Kaci Midgette	outreach@tidewateratc.com
Outreach	Lon Carpenter	outreach@tidewateratc.com
Past President	Lee Lohman	pastprep@tidewateratc.com
Programs	Paul Heymann	programs@tidewateratc.com
Safety	Bruce Davidson	safety@tidewateratc.com
Social	Catherine Fowler	social@tidewateratc.com
Timekeeper	Greg Reck	timekeeper@tidewateratc.com
Tool Boss	Rich Seriani	toolboss@tidewateratc.com
Webmaster	Jim Sexton	webmaster@tidewateratc.com

Visit our TATC Facebook group page.

We invite you to create a post and upload photos of any club related activity.



Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club Group Page



Also please send TATC events to hikemaster@tidewateratc.com for inclusion in the club schedule and the next newsletter.
Please consider sponsoring a club event this Winter.

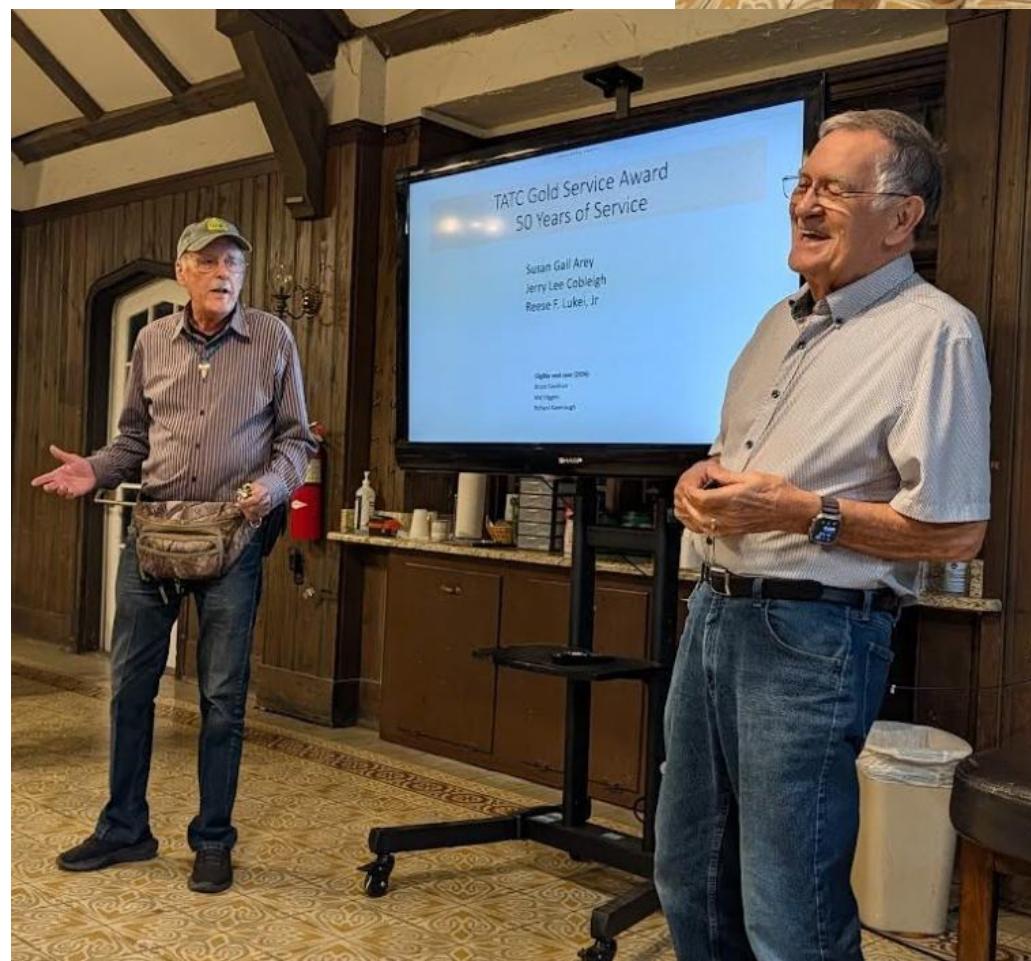
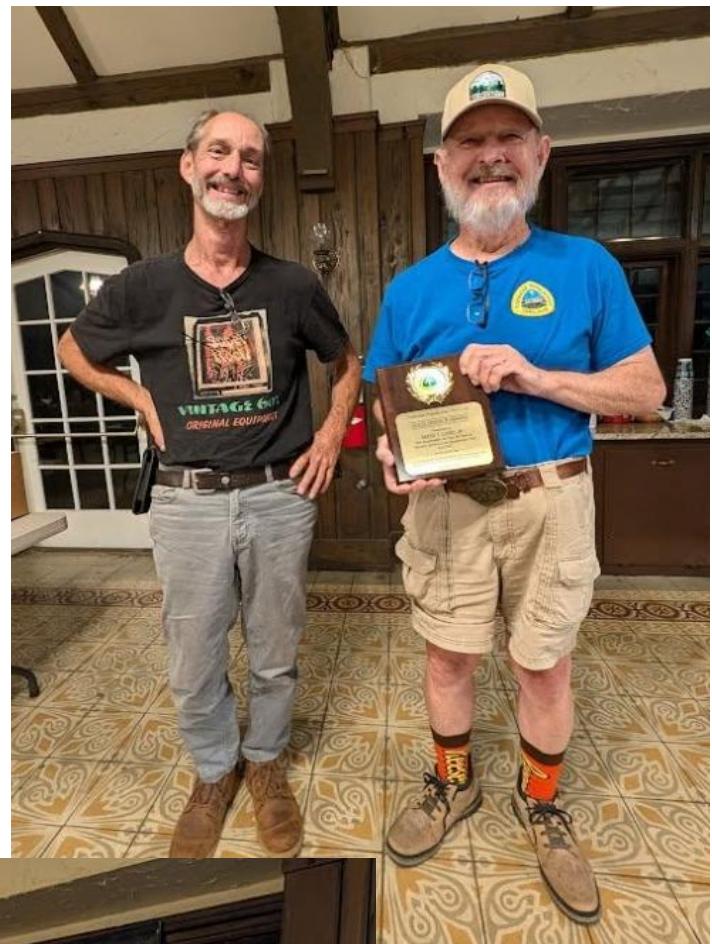


PHOTOS -- TATC Award Ceremony - 50 Years of Service

By Sharon McQueen

Awards were bestowed at the October TATC monthly meeting, including to three of our members who were honored for having given 50 years of service: Susan Gail Arey, Jerry Lee Cobleigh, and Reese F. Lukei, Jr.

Jerry and Reese were present to accept their accolades in person. Reese's son was also in attendance.



PHOTOS -- TATC Awards - 50 Years of Service

By Paul Heymann



**Susan Gail Arey received her award for 50 Years of Service during the November
General Membership Meeting**

PHOTOS -- Staying at the PATC Robert Humphreys Cabin near Elkton

By Kevin Du Bois



PHOTOS -- Staying at the PATC Robert Humphreys Cabin near Elkton

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By Kevin Du Bois



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Sharon McQueen



John Sima, Trail Supervisor

Rich Seriani, TATC Tool Boss.



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Sharon McQueen



**Bruce Davidson,
Safety Chair**

**Catherine Fowler,
TATC Social Director
& Head of the Kitchen
Crew**



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Sharon McQueen



***Jim Newman,
Counselor
& Awards Coordinator***

***Kaci Midgette,
Assistant Trail Supervisor
& TATC Outreach***



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Sharon McQueen



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By Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Sharon McQueen



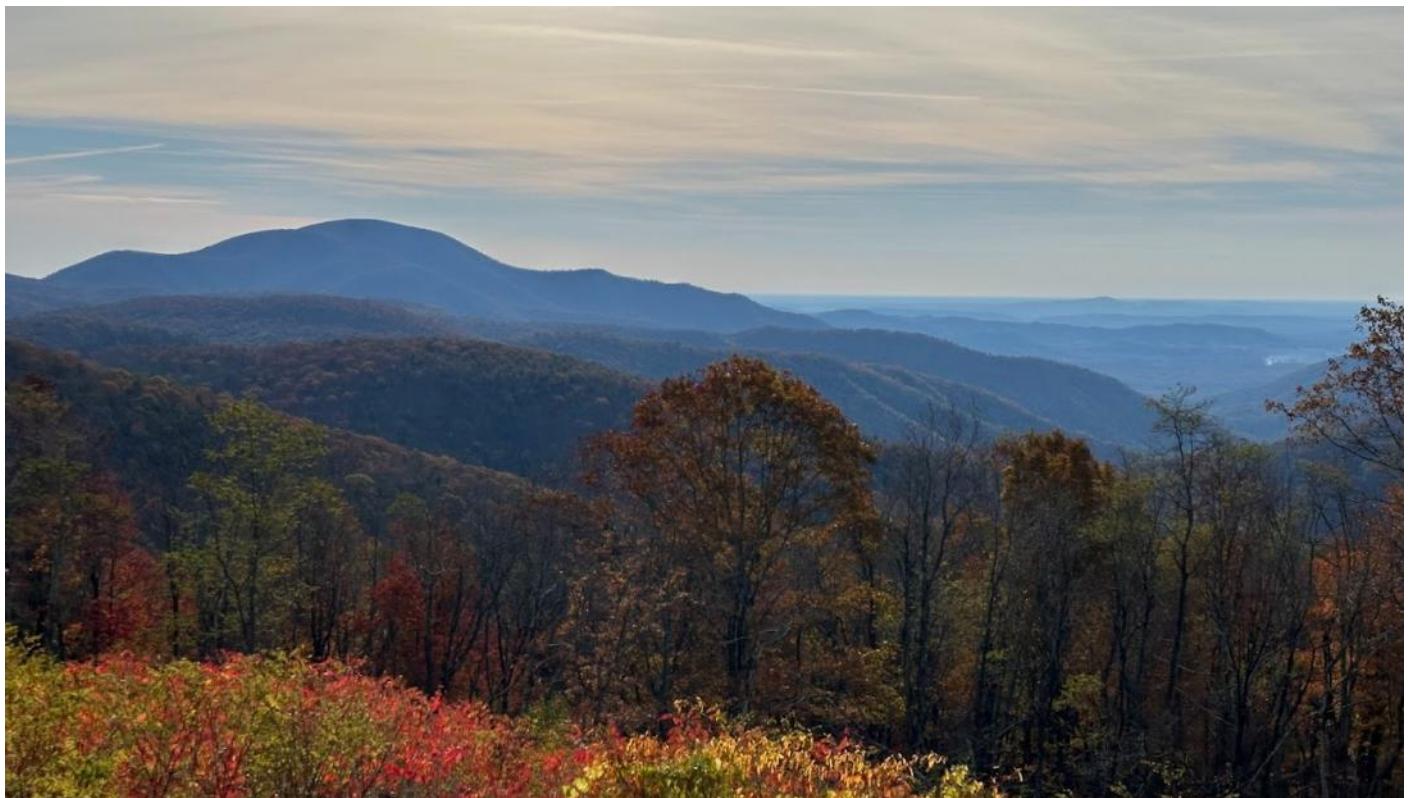
PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Carl Albuquerque



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Carl Albuquerque



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Carl Albuquerque



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Carl Albuquerque



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Carl Albuquerque



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Bob Veverka



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Bob Veverka



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Bob Veverka



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Michelle Cobb



**Who cheerfully volunteers to clean the
Harpers Creek privy? John Murray
does! Kathy O'Hara assisted John with
PPE.**



Thank you, John!

**Kathy O'Hara working on some
stubborn graffiti. It didn't budge,
a return trip with shelter paint is
needed.**

PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

Photos by Michelle Cobb and Kathy O'Hara



**Thank you, Patrick Hayes, John Murray, Michelle Cobb, Kathy O'Hara and Bill Bunch
for being on the crew.**



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Michelle Cobb



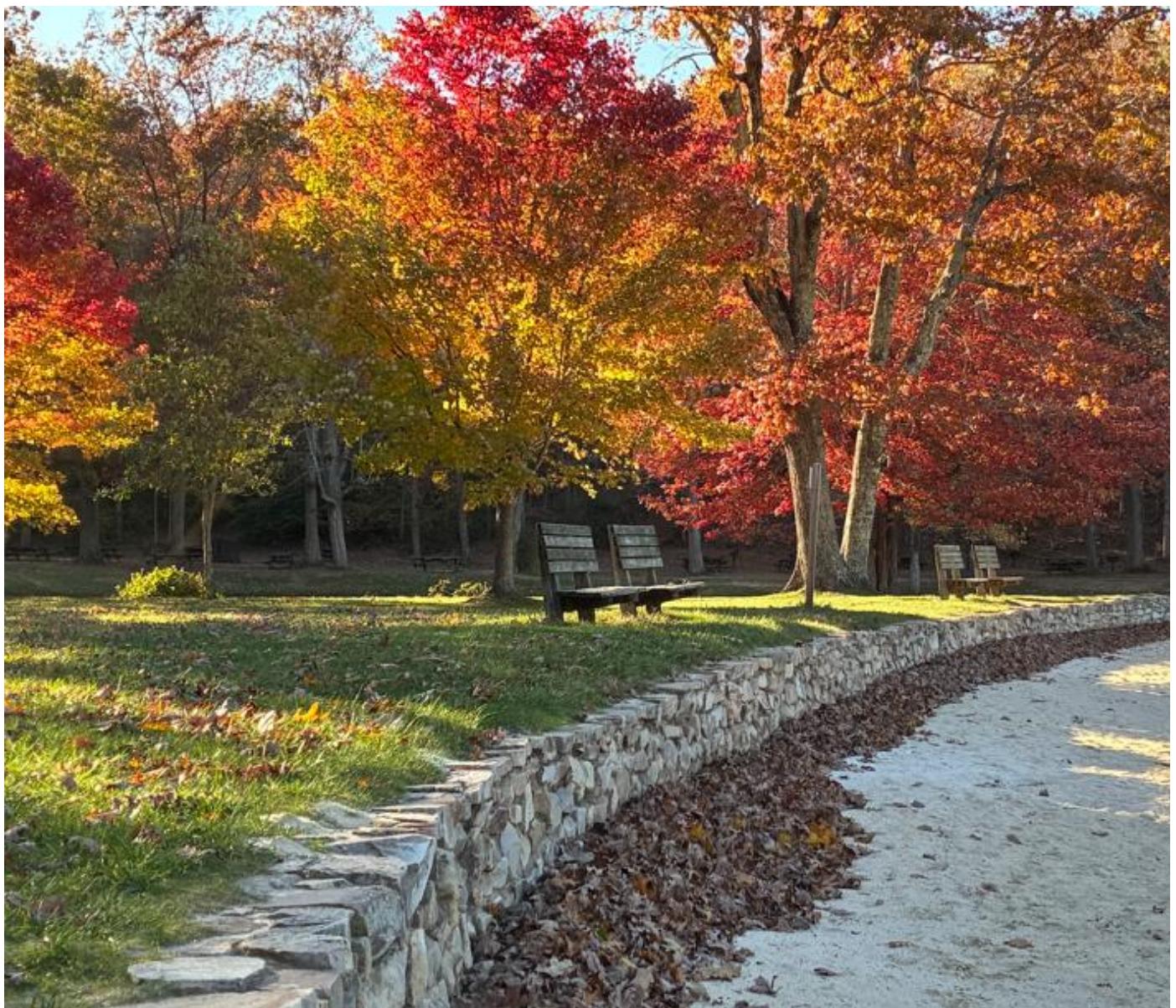
Harpers Creek crew
cleaning one of many
campsites across from
the shelter. There are
many official campsites
in the woods that be-
come overgrown and
hidden in fall. Our crew
scraped them out, mak-
ing them visible again.

**One of the two
creek crossings
leading to Harpers
Creek shelter area**



PHOTOS -- Fall Maintenance 2025

By Michelle Cobb



Sherando Lake - 2025 Fall Maintenance coincided with prime leaf peeping.

PHOTOS -- Fall Festival 2025 - Newport News Park

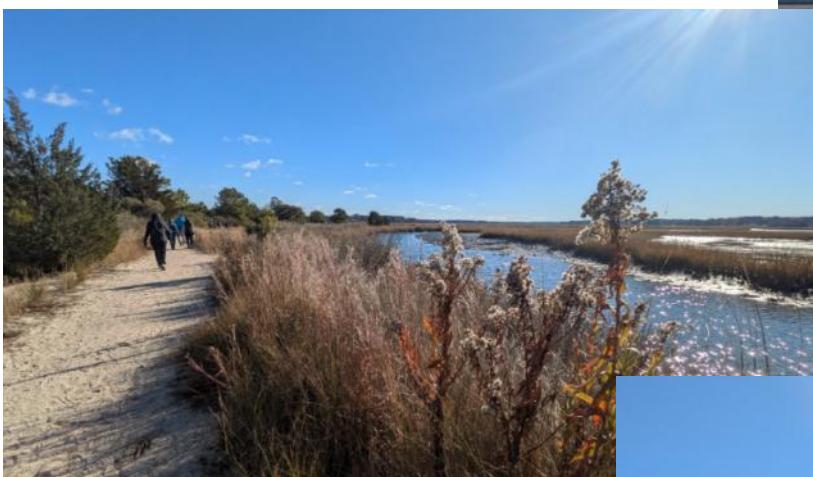
By Bob Veverka



PHOTOS -- A Shore Thing for Black Friday Hike

By Sharon McQueen

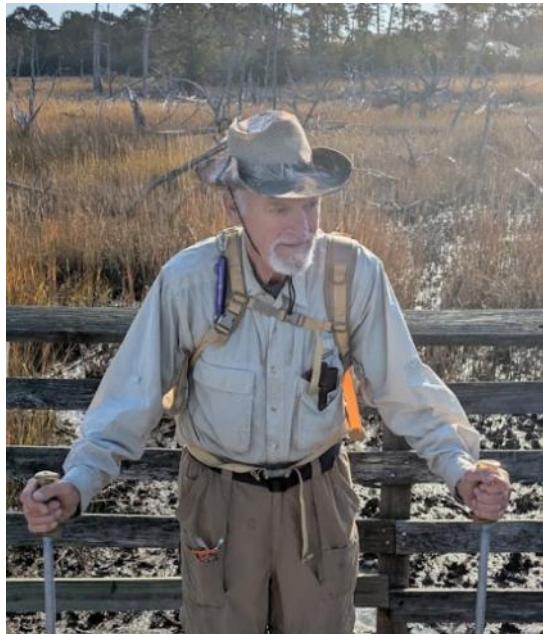
Many thanks to Bill Bunch for leading “A Shore Thing” for Black Friday Hike on November 28, 2025. We hiked about 5 miles of the Pleasure House Point Natural Area and the Lynnhaven River shoreline. At least 15 signed up and at least 5 dogs joined the fun.



PHOTOS -- TATC Tuesday Group: First Landing SP Hike

By Sharon McQueen

TATC Tuesday Group: Catherine Fowler & Richard Tarr led a fabulous hike at First Landing State Park on November 25, 2025!



PHOTOS -- TATC Tuesday Group: Epic Blackwater River Paddle

By Sharon McQueen

Photos by Bill Billings

On Veteran's Day the TATC Tuesday Group set off on Bill Billings's annual Epic 15-mile Blackwater River Paddle. It was a windy day and the group launched early at 31 degrees. There was still some snow in the shade, as you can see on the bench at the launch. Eight paddlers made the trip (Gayle, Kevin, Steve, Richard, Cathy) including 3 veterans: Mike, Bruce, and Bill).

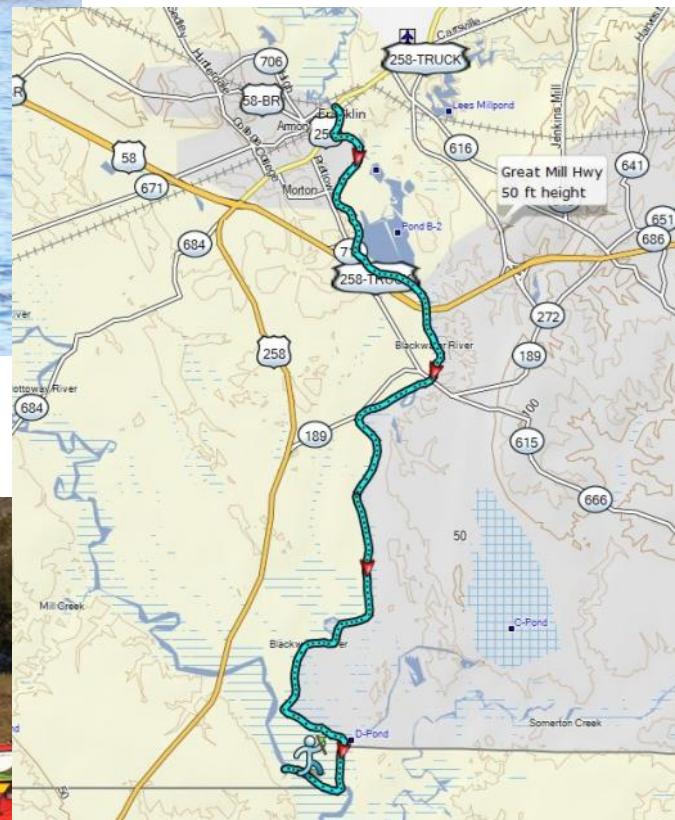


PHOTOS -- TATC Tuesday Group: Epic Blackwater River Paddle

By Sharon McQueen

Photos by Bill Billings

Once the paddlers got going, and with the help of the sunshine, no one was cold. In fact, some were shedding a few layers. The group enjoyed some beautiful fall color and lunched on the banks of the river. They then paddled all the way down to the state line. Perhaps the cold made them all paddle harder to keep warm because they made record time: six hours for the 14.2-mile trip. The temperature had warmed by 15 degrees over the course of the day.



PHOTOS -- TATC Tuesday Group: Country Bike Ride

By Sharon McQueen

Mel Potter led the TATC Tuesday Group on a beautiful fall day bike ride in the country on November 18, 2025. We saw cotton in all stages of harvesting and even saw a few boll weevil pheromone traps, which are used to monitor the pest and prevent its reintroduction. After the ride we all enjoyed a pot luck lunch.



PHOTOS -- TATC Tuesday Group: Country Bike Ride

By Sharon McQueen



PHOTOS -- TATC Tuesday Group: Noland Trail

By Sharon McQueen

On October 14 Steve Babor and his new dog Zoe led a 5-mile hike on the Noland Trail of the The Mariners' Museum & Park. We had lunch afterward at Harpoon Larry's.



Steve Babor & Zoe



The Bridge



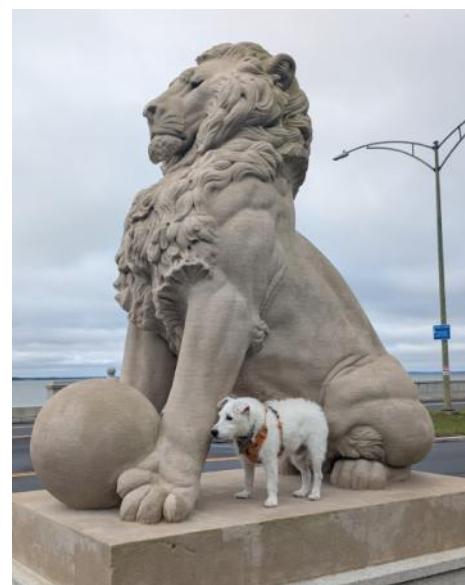
PHOTOS -- TATC Tuesday Group: Noland Trail

By Sharon McQueen

Kathy, Bill, & Boston



Harpoon Larry's



Dickens dreams big.

