



Appalachian Hiker

Banner Photo by Mark Ferguson

PREZ SEZ

February-March 2026

53rd Edition, 1st Issue

Happy New Year and thanks again to Bill Bunch for leading our **First Day Hike** at First Landing State Park. What a wonderful way to welcome the New Year!!!

Everyone welcome Joe Stell, our new Newsletter Editor, for agreeing to take the torch from Peg Seriani. Joe joined TATC last year. His attraction to our club was our Beginners Backpacking sessions offered by our Education Chair, Don Williams. *Thanks to Don for offering these sessions each year.*

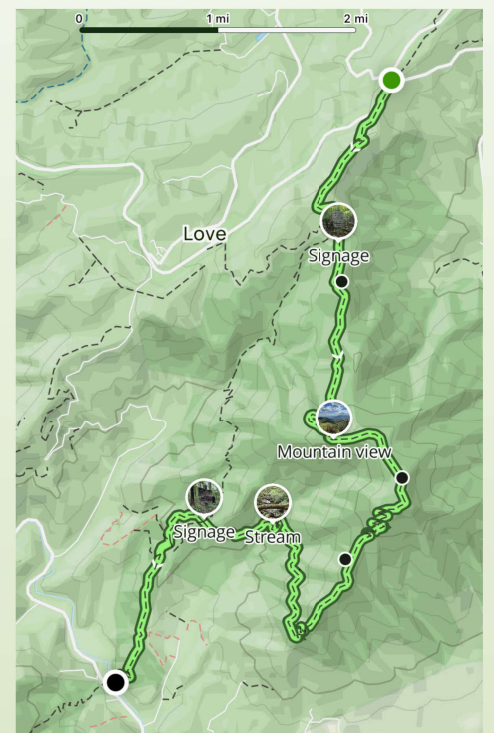
Our Membership Committee recommends again that we provide our members with more local activities. We will continue our popular Happy Hiker Hours with at least one per month. Additionally, we will hold at least one hiking, biking, or kayaking event on the weekend each month. We will continue the Hasty Hiker event 'typically' on the second Saturday of each month at First Landing State Park for those who have continued to express their interest in a hike with a quicker pace, no breaks, or sightseeing. Our Tuesday Group will continue with their popular Tuesday events. And Don will hold his Beginners Backpacking sessions again.

This year we will have our 'Day in the Park' in March. Catherine Fowler, our Social Chair, has already reserved the picnic area at First Landing State Park for this event on March 14. Please mark your calendar and signup on our calendar via SignUp Genius. It looks like we will have two hiking events that day: one, the Hasty Hike before the picnic and the other, after the picnic which will be a more 'leisurely hike'.

Please note that John Sima, our Trail Supervisor, has published all our major Appalachian Trail and other Blue Ridge Mountain trail maintenance events on our calendar. Please plan to attend these events if possible. You should note that new events have been added: **Fall and Spring AT Maintenance Training Events** AND **St. Mary's Backpacking Maintenance Events**.

In addition, Paul Heymann, our Local Trail Chair, has published our local trail maintenance events at First Landing State Park on our calendar as well.

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PREZ SEZ Cont.

At the January General Membership Meeting, our Nominating Committee Chair, Bill Bunch, presented the candidates for the elected Board positions. Please refer to Bill's article within for the results. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to those who have volunteered, consented to serve, and assumed various roles within the club. Serving on the Board entails a significant responsibility that demands considerable time, discipline, and mutual respect to propel our club forward in a positive manner. I appreciate each member's efforts in contributing to the club's success over the past year and anticipate their continued support in the future. Please welcome our new Board members!

Our February General Membership Meeting will be **exciting** after the Budget Approval portion (sorry Andy Grayson, our Treasurer), as we have Skip Fredericksen from the Connecticut Appalachian Mountain Club giving us a live performance of his own "AT: The Musical". Please see Paul Heymann, our Program Chair, advertisement within for more details and a publicity video link. It is truly a must see for anyone that has (or has thought about) Thru-Hiked the AT.

As a New Year's request, I urge members to consider volunteering when opportunities arise especially at our AT maintenance events. We have signed a 5-year Helene Recovery Stewardship Agreement with ATC which is part of the 2025 American Recovery Act. ATC will purchase us tools/equipment for our volunteer hours (see article within from Greg Reck, our Timekeeper). We have agreed to report our hours worked on the AT (as well as a percentage of our administrative hours) each month. We plan to have meaningful tasks for everyone, at every level, so please sign up and help us out.

Happy Trails,

Lelia

Lelia Vann, TATC President

Board of Directors Elections



During the January 14 General Membership Meeting the election for the 2026-2027 TATC Board was held. The slate presented by the Nominating Committee was elected. The number of officers running for reelection assure us experienced leadership in 2026 along with some new ideas from a new Secretary and a new Counselor.

Lelia Vann was reelected President, Jim Sexton was reelected Vice President and Hikemaster, Andy Grayson was reelected Treasurer, John Sima was reelected Trail Supervisor and Kaci Midgette was reelected Assistant Trail Supervisor. Newcomer, Heather Bailey was elected Secretary and Patrick Hayes was elected to serve a three-year term as Counselor.

Many thanks to the members of the Nominating Committee, Michelle Cobb, Lee Lohman, Kaleen Lawsure and Lon Carpenter for the help they provided along the way. I also thank the returning officers for making the Nominating Committee's job easier and for their continuing support of the club.

Bill Bunch

Welcome, New Members!



As a club, we like to do everything we can to be as welcoming as possible to new members. This of course entails giving them access to all the information possible on what we are all about and the many opportunities for participation and engagement we offer. But relationships are a two way street. So our diligent membership committee reaches out and asks them to provide an (entirely voluntary) short bio to publish here in the newsletter so we can get to know them better. I am thrilled to include below our final submissions from 2025. Here's to many more this year!

Welcome, Chandler Parker!

Hi TATC, my name is Chandler Parker and I live in Portsmouth. I love the mountains and being outdoors and I enjoy camping, cycling, hiking, and paddling. I also used to dabble in backpacking and I'm interested in getting back into it. I'm looking forward to getting involved with TATC! Thanks, Chandler.

Welcome, Matthew Adams!

I am Matthew Adams, 41 yr Marine veteran and early-retired outdoor enthusiast. I am engaged to a lovely Gold Star Navy widow, Traci Sadowski, who has two awesome kids that we hike and camp with (sometimes). Traci and I are section hiking without the kids these next few years. I also have awesome children that live with my ex-wife. We look forward to meeting y'all.

Welcome back, Carl Moeser!

Not really a new member. I first joined when Bill Rodger was president. That was around 1986. I just have been busy taking care of my parents and other things. I have participated in multiple Konnarock projects, Spring, Summer and Autumn maintenance trips, local hikes and projects, trail relocations and led a couple of local hikes.

Welcome, Matt Harris!

My name is Matt Harris. I'm located just East of Richmond Virginia in Varina. I've been active in hiking and backpacking since I was about 7 years old. My Father got me started early as he had done many adventures earlier in my life. Yukon, Mt Adams, numerous AT trips and even backpacking to the Arctic Circle.

So I started young. First just us camping around Humpback rocks. Then later joining Boy Scouts. We had an active troop, monthly we would pick a trail loop along the parkway and hike/tent camp. As an adult I've stayed active in backpacking. I'm trying to do it more as I continue to grow older (now 45). I was introduced to the club through Wayne, Mary Lou and Chris Mortimer.

I enjoy trail work/maintenance and learning more about the trail networks all over the State. TATC sounded like a great way to connect, give back to the hiking and outdoor community, all while enjoying some fellowship.

Thanks and hope to meet some of y'all soon.

Minute for Maintenance



Date Event

March 27-29 Sherando Lake Recreational Area Cleanup Day (CCC Kitchen)

April 10-12 Spring Trail Maintenance Training (Devils Backbone) NEW

Spring Backpacking AT Walk-Thru

April 24-26 Spring AT Maintenance (Williams Branch)

May 15-17 St Mary's Backpacking Maintenance Weekend NEW

June 19-21 Swingblade & Lopperfest #1 (CCC Kitchen)

July 17-19 Swingblade & Lopperfest #2 (CCC Kitchen)

August 21-23 Swingblade & Lopperfest #3 (CCC Kitchen)

September 11-13 Fall Trail Maintenance Training (Devils Backbone) NEW

October 2-4 Fall Backpacking AT Walk-Thru

October 16-18 Fall AT Maintenance (Williams Branch) includes Sawyer cert/re-cert

November 13-15 St Mary's Backpacking Maintenance Weekend NEW

This is the slow time of year for our club as far as Trail Maintenance goes. We received Hurricane Helene funding from the ATC. Great news! The past few years, we had to use membership dues money to purchase tools. This funding is a welcome addition. We purchased a couple gas trimmers (weed-eaters), another Garmin Mini Inreach, rock work tools, and a few more Silky saws. We are expected to receive more funding in the next couple years. If you have any tool suggestions that we should purchase, let me know. Our Club is hurting for qualified B Crosscut Sawyers. We only have 8 certified B Crosscut Sawyers. When I first joined the club we had around 25, so we need more!!! The next certification courses are shown below. Please sign up as soon as possible, before the available spots fill up. Note: After reading the courses content, A Sawyers looking to up cert to B, need to take the 2 day course.

Here are the links to the courses:

- [EDRD Chainsaw March 6-7 course](#)
- [EDRD Chainsaw March 8 recert](#)
- [GPRD Crosscut March 13-14 course](#)
- [GPRD Crosscut March 15 recert](#)
- [MRNRA Chainsaw March 27-28 course](#)
- [MRNRA Chainsaw March 29 recert](#)
- [MRNRA-SAWS Crosscut March 31-April 2](#)

Happy Trails,

John & Kaci

Introduction to Trail Maintenance Weekend



An Orientation to Terminology, Techniques, and TATC Trail Locations

IMPORTANT INFO

When: Friday April 10th -
Sunday April 12th

Where: Tent City, Devils
Backbone Basecamp,
Roseland VA

**Signup is required as space
is limited!!!**

Participants must bring their own food (breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks) and means to cook food if not planning on eating at Devil's Backbone/other local restaurants.

Loaner tenting/camping equipment is available to members that have paid their dues: *limited inventory so plan ahead - reach out to us in advance to discuss*



TATC is proud to announce that we are offering an Introduction to Trail Maintaining weekend event. The weekend is tailored for those that:

- are interested in AT maintaining
- have wanted to join our maintenance events in the mountains but didn't want to commit without knowing what you were getting into
- want to better develop the skills used on our trips.

Stations will be placed along our section of the Appalachian Trail and groups will rotate through each section ensuring that everyone gets an opportunity to home in on skills that are frequently used; based on availability but not limited to Campsite and Safety, Erosion Control, Corridor Maintenance, and Sawing. The tentative schedule for the day starts with a departure at 9:00am, just after a group/general hazard analysis, and runs until approximately 4:15pm, on trail. Each station should run for about an hour and a half, all starting with a job specific safety briefing and task overview.

This event includes free camping from Friday April 10th through Sunday April 12th at Devils Backbone Basecamp in Roseland, VA, just off the beautiful Blue Ridge Parkway. Amenities provided at Tent City are picnic tables, fire rings with grilling grates, a bathhouse, and a restaurant where food and libations may be purchased. A new **gear loaning program** is available to those that would like to attend but do not have equipment, as this is a new offering inventory is currently limited so if there is something needed, be sure to inquire early. A separate article is available covering what gear is currently available.

To sign-up, use the link to be redirected to [Sign-up Genius](#) where you can read a more detailed work overview and what to bring. As stated on the signup page, contact assistantts@tidewateratc.com for more information. For members that are interested in getting involved, we would love to have your support, please email us to see how you can help.

Kaci Midgette

Loaner Gear: Look at all this Cool Stuff you can Borrow!



The following table shows a summary of the backpacking and camping gear that TATC has available to loan to individuals in the club. This gear was donated to TATC by one generous member to start the program. Other people have donated some gear since that time.

Some possible uses of this gear could include the following:

1. This gear could be borrowed by people new to backpacking or camping and in need of several items to do their first, second or third trip.
2. A club member is bringing a friend to a trail maintenance trip, and they don't have the necessary gear for camping.
3. This gear could be borrowed by seasoned backpackers who have tent camped, but would like to test sleeping in a backpacking hammock.
4. This gear could be borrowed by seasoned backpackers who have used sleeping bags, but would like to test sleeping on a quilt

Individuals borrowing items will be required to sign a loan agreement to ensure return of all items with reasonable timeliness and only expected wear and tear. For the full and up to date breakdown, including links to official product pages and assembly instructions, additional notes on condition etc. and comprehensive photos, and please see the education section of the website.

Don Williams

Item	Description	Size	Weight
Backpacks			
Mountainsmith Phantom 40	Medium/Large	40L 2440cu in	3lb 15oz
Gregory Baltoro 65	Medium, Multi compartment, many pockets and tie-on straps, removable brain that can be used as fanny pack, includes rain cover, heavy pack due to rich features, firm back panel and hip belt	65L 3970cu in	5lb 15oz
ULA Ohm 2.0	Ultralight frameless pack, 30 lb max load	63L 3845cu in	1lb 15oz
Granite Gear Vapor Trail	Large, 35 lb max load	59L 3600cu in	2lb 4oz
Tents			
Big Agnes Blacktail 3	3-season, free-standing, 75D polyester tent and fly, two doors, dome-style tent with vestibules on each side, 3 aluminum prebent poles	3 person	6lb 2oz
Kelty Wireless 2	3-season, free-standing, 68D polyester tent and fly, two doors, dome-style tent with vestibules on each side, 3 fiberglass poles,	2 person	7lb 9oz
Marmot Pulsar 2	3-season, free-standing, 40D nylon tent and fly, single door, dome-style tent with one and a half vestibules, 2+ aluminum poles	2 person	3lb 15oz

Item	Description	Size	Weight
Eureka Isis 2XT	3-season, free-standing, single door, dome-style tent with one vestibules, 2 aluminum poles	2 person	6lb 13oz
Zpacks Duplex	Requires trekking poles to setup, Ultralight, Dyneema waterproof fabric, seamsealed, full double-doors both sides, single-wall with attached canopy	2 person	1lb 6oz

Shelters, Tarps & Hammocks

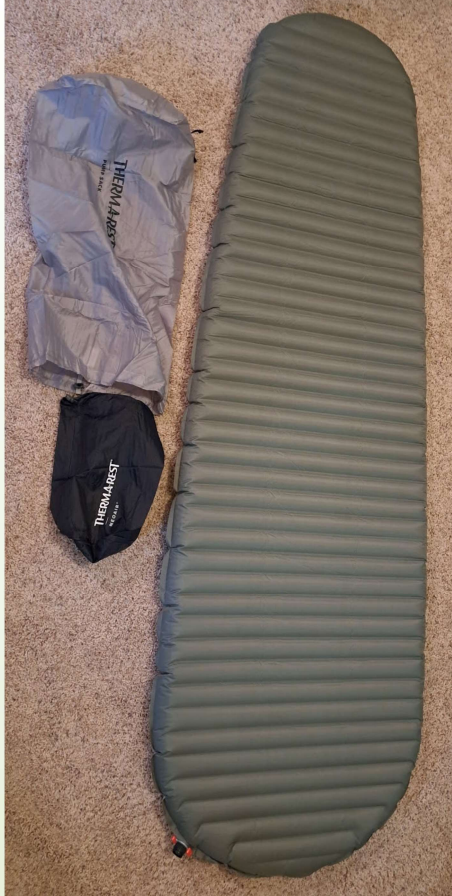
MSR Thru-Hiker Mesh House 2	Ultralight, requires trekking poles to setup: tent body only, needs tarp to protect from rain	2 person	14 oz
Jacks 'R' Better Bear Mountain Bridge Deluxe Hammock	With tree straps and whoopie sling suspension; weight includes everything for complete setup		2lb 7.2oz
Dream Hammock Thunderbird	Right-asymmetrical lay, 1.9oz camo (w/tree straps and whoopie sling suspension); weight includes everything in bag for complete setup including mosquito netting, fly and all straps and cord	10ft L	2lb 1oz
Dream Hammock Sparrow	1.7 Mtn XL fabric, Burnt Orange, winter overcover, right-asymmetrical lay (w/tree straps and whoopie sling suspension), Recommended weight Limit: 325 lbs; weight includes everything in bag for complete setup including mosquito netting, fly and all straps and cord	11ft L x 70" W	2lb 3oz
Jacks 'R' Better 11x10 SilNylon Tarp	For use with hammock, odor may indicate PU coating deteriorating, need to test waterproofing		1lb 8.8oz
Hammock Gear Standard Cuben Fiber (Dyneema) Tarp	For use with hammocks, with doors (stored in "snakeskins")		10.5oz
Kelty Noah's Tarp 16	Includes various tarp poles (big, heavy tarp for basecamp), tarp 4 lb 9 oz, two pole sets 3 lb 8 oz (weights including bags)		8lb 1oz

Sleep System

Jacks 'R' Better down underquilt for hammocks	~20°F underquilt, (for use with next item), original owner thinks it is rated to 20°F; also has 1.4oz stuff sack	44" L x 40" W ~3.0-3.5" loft	1lb 0.8oz
Hammock Gear Burrow 20 Quilt	Ultralight, 20°F top quilt, intended for use with hammocks, but could be used in tent with sleeping pad also; combination snaps and drawstring footbox	73"L x 48"W top 36"W foot ~3.0" loft	1lb 4.8oz
Exped Luxewool Blanket	Very comfortable blanket; not quilt or sleeping bag, also has 1.4 oz stuff sack; ~18" L x 9" diameter rolled up in sack		3lb 7oz
Therm-a-Rest Argo Blanket	Very comfortable blanket; not quilt or sleeping bag, integrated storage bag/stuff sack		1lb 8.5oz

Item	Description	Size	Weight
Therm-a-Rest Auriga Down Quilt/Blanket	Ultralight, 35° F quilt, compact: highly compressible, box-baffled 750+ fill goose down, weight listed is quilt/blanket only (without storage bag)	76"L x 48"W top 21"W foot	1lb 5oz
Helinox Lite Cot	Very nice lightweight cot, but one partially broken support piece bracket, weight includes carry sack		2lb 12.3oz
Therm-a-Rest NeoAir Sleeping Pad	Ultralight, makes crinkle sound (like rolling a bag of chips) when moving around on it; also has 1.5 oz stuff sack which acts as pump sack to inflate pad if desired rather than blowing up by mouth	72"L x 20"W (tapered foot width)	15.7oz
Therm-a-Rest NeoAir Xtherm Sleeping Pad	Ultralight, R value = 6.9, makes crinkle sound (like rolling a bag of chips) when moving around on it; also has 0.8 oz stuff sack and 1.8 oz pump sack to inflate pad if desired rather than blowing up by mouth; total weight of pad and both bags is 1 lb 5.7 oz; suitable for winter conditions; includes patch kit	72" L x 25" W x 2.5" Th	1lb 3.2oz
Exped Megamat 10MW Sleeping Pad	Self inflating then top-off by breath or air pump, with fitted sheet (1 lb 3.3 oz) not required for use, but available; also has 5.7 oz carry bag, ~29" L x 8.5" diameter rolled up in carry sack	72" L x 27" W x 4" Th	4lb 6.3oz
Klymit Inertia X Wave Sleeping Pad	Super-ultralight, torso length, thin, hollow-frame design, "skeleton" design with strategically located weight-saving hollowed empty areas; also has 0.7 oz stuff sack	48"L x 25"W x 1.5" thick center area/2" thick side rails	11.1oz
Gukkicco Sleeping Pad	2 person with built-in foot pump and pillows, can be inflated by mouth also; also has 0.7 oz stuff sack	78" L x 50" W	3lb 0oz
Kitchen			
Jetboil Sol stove kit	All in one cook kit, includes built-in igniter, insulated pot, plastic lid for pot, plastic cup, fuel canister stabilizer, and can hold 100 gram fuel canister; weight listed doesn't include fuel canister	0.8 liter main pot	10.9oz
Alcohol stove (Trangia Spirit)	For use with denatured alcohol (not included), doesn't include a required pot stand or optional wind screen		3.9oz
Fuel canister - small	Isobutane/propane mix for canister stoves, weight when full ~ 7.1 oz	100 g fuel	Varies
Fuel canister - large	Isobutane/propane mix for canister stoves, weight when full ~ 13.2 oz	230 g fuel	Varies
MSR 0.7 L kettle/pot with lid and handles	Titanium, large fuel canister can nest in pot	700 ml / 24 fluid oz	4.3oz
Snow Peak 450 ml double-wall mug with handles	Titanium, double-wall insulation keeps beverages warm or cool, note: double-wall titanium cannot be used for cooking or placed over a heat source; has mesh bag carry sack (0.3 oz)	450 ml / 16 fluid oz	4.1oz

Therm-a-Rest NeoAir Xtherm



Granite Gear Vapor Trail



Set of 3 dry sacks



Helinox Lite Cot



Jetboil Sol stove kit



Therm-a-Rest Auriga Down Quilt/Blanket



Alite Mantis Chair



Sleeping Pad: Exped Megamat 10MW

Timekeeping: The More you report (legitimately), the More Tools we Get!



The TATC Awards Committee has asked that I provide an annual “Timekeeping Update” for our club Newsletter. Last year my first Newsletter article consisted of a brief description of each of the 9 online forms Lee Lohman created to collect volunteer hours from members as well as the results of the first year. These data are the primary basis for the following efforts:

- (1) Annual reports are prepared for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the US Forest Service to support their budget advocacy. These reports also include descriptions of specific TATC efforts and accomplishments,
- (2) The ATC also provides special awards on an annual basis to TATC members who have contributed significant hours to supporting the AT,
- (3) And, finally, the TATC uses the volunteer hours data to present a series of club awards to members who have accumulated volunteer hours at several levels, up to and including Lifetime Awards.

This year the hours data has gained added significance as a result of Hurricane Helene (described in the previous TATC Newsletter). The bottom line is that TATC is eligible to receive “in kind” equipment and services based on the number of TATC volunteer hours related to trail maintenance and administration. So, since October 2025 TATC has been submitting monthly reports of volunteer hours in AT-related activities to ATC. And Lelia Vann recently received notification from ATC that \$4,500 is available from the Helene funding. John Sima has already provided a list of needed equipment and is updating it to ensure we utilize the total funds provided.

Since the “Helene Reports” are monthly, if you have contributed qualifying time, I beseech you to report your hours on the appropriate timekeeping form ASAP. (I don’t use ‘beseech’ very often.)

Greg Reck

February Program

Special Announcement:

AT: The Musical



Acoustic Artist Storyteller: Skip Fredericksen



February 11th 7:00pm
All Welcome

Greetings members! In addition to our regular annual budget review, led by Andy Grayson, our Club President Lelia Vann has arranged an exciting addition to the February 11th program. Skip Fredericksen of the Connecticut Appalachian Mountain Club will present his engaging and humorous "AT: The Musical". The venue is our normal location, Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave in Norfolk. 7:00 PM - You won't want to miss it! (Please see link to the trailer here!)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1K9TOH70luZeMEj2Ju3cdg5qF7NY2Xcvo/view?usp=drive_web

Paul Heymann

Man Attacked by Bobcat

Yes, it's true; a bobcat attacked Kyle Houghton, a 31-year-old hiker from New Market, VA, on the afternoon of Friday, July 1, 2016, near Humpback Rocks off the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia. While the initial 911 call and early news reports on July 1 and July 2 stated it was a 'mountain lion' attack, articles published around July 4 and July 5, 2016, corrected the record to identify the animal as a large bobcat. The location of the attack was on the Appalachian Trail between Dripping Rock and the Humpback Rocks overlook. Houghton was hiking with his girlfriend when a bobcat, estimated to weigh between 35 and 50 pounds, stalked and then pounced on him. He fought the animal off by slamming it to the ground and stomping it before it fled. The 'mountain lion' rumor started because Houghton's mother made that assumption when relaying the 911 call. Wildlife experts and the victim later confirmed it was a Bobcat.

In the aftermath of the July 2016 attack at Humpback Rocks, the bobcat remained at large. Unlike many other high-profile wildlife encounters where the animal is quickly captured or killed, this specific bobcat was never officially caught by authorities. Because the bobcat was not caught, Houghton had to undergo the full rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (a series of several shots) as a precaution. He suffered significant puncture wounds and scratches on his leg but recovered fully after treatment at a local hospital.

You can find archival versions of this story in the following publications:

The News Virginian: (July 4-5, 2016) - 'Hiker fought off bobcat, not mountain lion' Provided the primary correction that the animal was a bobcat.

C-VILLE Weekly: (July 6, 2016) - 'In brief: Bobcat attack and more'

AppalachianTrail.com: (July 5, 2016) - 'Extinct Mountain Lion Attacks Appalachian Trail Hiker' (This article discusses the debate over the species and confirms the July 1 date).

Jim Sexton

Blue Ridge Parkway Trails - The Jack Albright Loop

The Jack Albright Loop Trail (also known as the Dobie Mountain Loop) is a 3.8-mile moderate hike located off the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia. While it shares a parking lot with the extremely popular Humpback Rocks, it is far less crowded and offers a quieter, more wooded experience. The Jack Albright Loop Trail is located at Milepost 6.0 of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Main Access: The trail begins at the northeast corner of the Humpback Gap parking lot, directly behind the information kiosk.

Overflow Access: If the main lot at Milepost 6.0 is full, you can use the parking at the Humpback Rocks Visitor Center at Milepost 5.8 and follow a short connector path to reach the trailhead.

Hiking Description

The trail climbs around Dobie Mountain and is characterized by mature deciduous forests, mossy rock formations, and historical intrigue.

- **The Plane Crash:** One of the trail's most unique features is the wreckage of a Beechcraft Bonanza that crashed in 1963. The debris is located on the west slope of Dobie Mountain, about 2.5 miles into the loop (if going counter-clockwise). It is marked by a small rock cairn and a short, unmarked path.
- **Glass Hollow Overlook:** A 0.2-mile spur trail leads to this overlook, providing stunning panoramic views of the Rockfish Valley and the Blue Ridge Mountains. On clear days, you can even spot hikers on the summit of Humpback Rocks from here.
- **Terrain:** The path is well-maintained but includes some rocky sections and steady elevation gains. It overlaps with a section of the white-blazed Appalachian Trail to complete the loop.

Access Points & Parking

The trail is accessed via the Humpback Gap Overlook parking area.

- **Main Trailhead:** Located at Milepost 6.0 on the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- **Secondary Option:** If the main lot is full (common on weekends), you can park at the Humpback Rocks Visitor Center (Milepost 5.8) and take a 0.3-mile connector trail through the Mountain Farm exhibit to reach the Humpback Gap parking lot.
- **Finding the Trail:** From the Humpback Gap parking lot, the Jack Albright Trail starts at the northeast corner (behind the information kiosk).

GPS Coordinates

- **Trailhead (Humpback Gap Parking):** 37.9685, -78.8968
- **Glass Hollow Overlook Spur:** 37.9614, -78.8921 (approximate)
- **Plane Crash Site:** 37.9642, -78.9022 (approximate)

Jim Sexton

Holiday Party

Dear TATC Members,

I wanted to share a recap of our recent gathering at The Cove to celebrate the 2025 Holiday Season. Since dinner was a potluck, we enjoyed a wonderful variety of delicious food shared by everyone.

We were entertained throughout the evening by two fantastic musicians, Fred Karam and Rick Lutz. It was a lot of fun to see several members make their way to the dance floor! To wrap up the festivities, we held a raffle that sent a few lucky members home with gifts.

As always, I am very thankful for how graciously TATC members helped with the holiday party to make it such a success.

Best regards,

Catherine Fowler

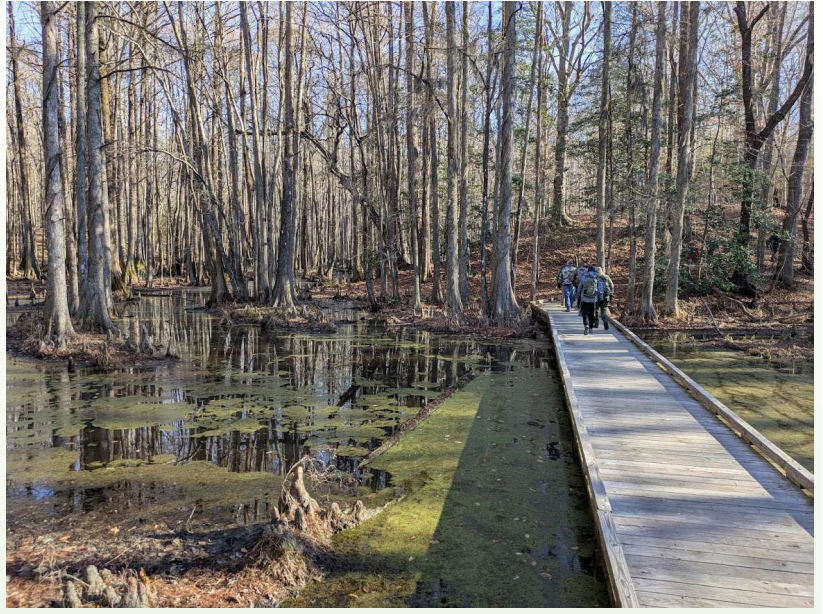


Tuesday Group

On January 6, 2026, Phyllis Neumann led a marvelous hike at York River State Park.



On January 13, 2026, Ellis & Phyllis led us on an incredible hike in an amazing North Carolina location: Merchants Millpond State Park.



O TATC Tuesday Group: January 20, 2026. Carolyn Sanford led a terrific historic hike at Dismal Swamp State Park, NC. Group photo by Bob Ernst.



TATC Tuesday Group: January 27, 2026. Bruce Julian led a stunning ice-covered hike at Harwood's Mill Reservoir. We all stayed warm despite the 23 degree temperature as we alternated between stopping to silently take in the sparkling view and raucously laughing at one thing or another. And we saw a moose! See if you can spot it in the photo near the reservoir.



Activities Schedule: February

For full and up to date details, contact information and sign up links, please see our [website calendar](#)

Date/Time	Description	Location
February 2 3:00-5:30pm	Elizabeth River Trail to Myrtle Park Walk. Join Outdoor Recreation, Norfolk Park Rangers, Elizabeth River Trail and more for a tour of two local restored Wetlands as a celebration of World Wetlands Day! Note: not a TATC led event.	Birdsong Wetland at Larchmont Library, 6525 Hampton Blvd, Norfolk, VA 23508
February 3 9:15am	4-5 miles, mostly on winding forest trails with sections of rolling hills. The Beaverdam Reservoir is often visible through the trees, especially this time of year. Bring your lunch and a sit-upon for breaks along the way.	Beaverdam Park, 8697 Roaring Springs Rd, Gloucester, VA 23061
February 3 3:00-4:00pm	VARO Meeting - Zoom Call	
February 4 7:00-9:00pm	TATC Board Meeting	Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave, Norfolk, VA 23503
February 7	Annual Friends and Volunteers Meeting, call the FCSP Office to sign up to volunteer - 757-426-7128	False Cape State Park, 4001 Sandpiper Rd, Virginia Beach, VA 23456
February 11 7:00-9:00pm	TATC General Membership Meeting, featuring this year's budget review and special performance of AT: The Musical by Skip Frederickson	Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave, Norfolk, VA 23503
February 14 10:15am	Hasty Hike: Hike several trails at FLSP totalling ~5 miles, without taking breaks. This is designed to be a workout hike averaging 20 minutes a mile or less. Be ready to keep moving!	First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 234516
February 15 9:30am	Join us for the 24th Annual Chocolate Hike! We meet at this time each year to celebrate chocolate, win prizes, and walk the Noland Trail. Test your pastry prowess by producing a culinary creation (must contain chocolate) for the judge and others to sample.	The Mariners' Museum and Park, 100 Museum Dr, Newport News, VA 23606
February 18 6:30-8:30pm	Come join the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club for Happy Hiker Hour (HHH). Located in a former post office, just three blocks from the Virginia Beach oceanfront, the fully renovated Pilot House is home to a small-batch brewing system, private event space and tasting room.	Smartmouth Brewery's Virginia Beach Pilot House, 313 32 nd St, Virginia Beach, VA 23451
February 21 9:00-11:00am	First Landing State Park Trail Maintenance. TATC normally works on the Live Oak and Cypress Swamp trails, but also can undertake other important tasks if requested by the Park. Tools will be provided, or bring your own lopper, pruner, and/or small silky saw.	First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 234516
February 24 6:8:00 PM	Tidewater Appalachian Trail Eatery Reviewers (TATERs). Join TATC members for camaraderie and coastal cuisine. The Surf Rider Restaurant at Bay Point Marina in Norfolk, VA, is a culinary gem.	Surf Rider Bay Point, 9500 30th Bay Str, Norfolk, VA 23518

Activities Schedule: March

For full and up to date details, contact information and sign up links, please see our [website calendar](#)

Date/Time	Description	Location
March 3 9:15am	Bamboo Hike: Please join Stephanie and Steve for this favorite hike at Mariners Lake Natural Area in Newport News. We'll start the hike on the Noland Trail, departing from the Museum parking lot. After half a mile, we'll cross Warwick Boulevard and continue on the Natural Area Trail. This ~5-mile hike is partly lakeside and is a beautiful, winding, heavily wooded trail with rolling hills.	The Mariners' Museum and Park, 100 Museum Dr, Newport News, VA 23606
March 3 3:00-4:00pm	VARO Meeting - Zoom Call	
March 4 7:00-9:00pm	TATC Board Meeting	Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave, Norfolk, VA 23503
March 11 8:00-9:00pm	TATC General Membership Meeting. Program: Volunteer Opportunities at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Erica Ryder)	Episcopal Church of the Advent, 9629 Norfolk Ave, Norfolk, VA 23503
March 13-14 9:00am-5:00pm	Crosscut Sawyer Certification Course. This is a 2-day crosscut certification course offered primarily for A.T. volunteers and other regional partners.	Buena Vista, Glasgow, Virginia
March 14 9:45am	Hasty Hike: Hike several trails at FLSP totaling ~5 miles, without taking breaks. This is designed to be a workout hike averaging 20 minutes a mile or less. Be ready to keep moving!	First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 234516
March 14 12:00pm	Picnic in the Park. Join TATC members for a lunch and hike at First Landing State Park. Don't forget to bring cash or your checkbook because TATC merchandise will be available for sale.	First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 234516
March 15 9:00am-5:00pm	One-Day Crosscut Recertification. This is a 1-day crosscut sawyer recertification offered primarily for A.T. volunteers and other regional partners.	Natural Bridge Station, VA
March 21 9:00-11:00am	First Landing State Park Trail Maintenance. TATC normally works on the Live Oak and Cypress Swamp trails, but also can undertake other important tasks if requested by the Park. Tools will be provided, or bring your own lopper, pruner, and/or small silky saw.	First Landing State Park, 2500 Shore Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 234516
March 27-29	ATC Southern Partnership Meeting	Mountain Lake Lodge
March 27-29	Sherando Lake Cleanup. Jonathan Zimmermann, the administrator of the Sherando Lake Area District, and a great friend of TATC's, is asking for a little help. He wants to get Sherando ready for spring and asked if TATC members would be willing to do some spring cleaning of the campground and day use area, plus a few minor repairs. He characterized the work as being the type where many hands make a light workload.	Sherando Lake Recreation Area, 96 Sherando Lake Rd, Lyndhurst, VA 22952

Medic Solo

MEDIC SOLO is once again excited to offer a strong [lineup of classes](#) in 2026 (see [schedule below](#)). As uncertainty continues to shape our world, the importance of being prepared has never been clearer. Our students regularly share stories of how they've applied skills learned in our [Disaster + Travel + Wilderness First Aid](#) courses in real-life situations (see [story below](#)), and we're incredibly proud to see that training making a real difference.



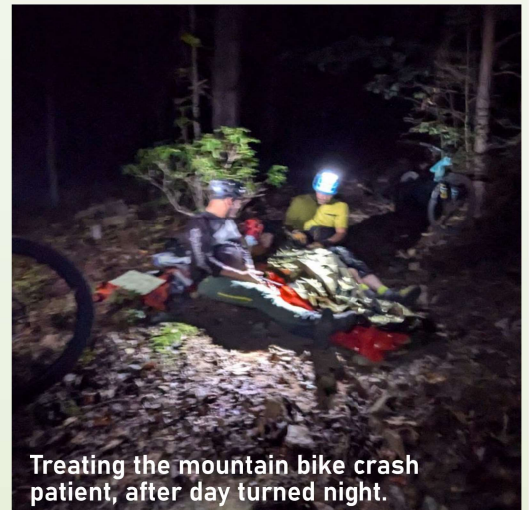
At the same time, we've seen a significant increase in requests for scholarships to attend our dtWFA courses. While we work hard to keep tuition as affordable as possible and offer discounts whenever we can, the current level of need exceeds what we're able to provide. In response, we've created the [MEDIC Accessibility Fund](#) to expand our ability to offer scholarships—especially for individuals who have historically faced barriers to accessing wilderness medical education.

If you believe in this mission and are able to [contribute](#), we invite you to do so. The more people who have access to this lifesaving education, the safer our communities become.

ALUMNI SAVE STORY

During a fall 2024 youth mountain bike practice in Harrisonburg, VA, MEDIC Alum **Nathan Beyeler** put his WFA training to full use when a rider suffered a severe crash. By recognizing the seriousness of the injury early, activating emergency response quickly, and coordinating care with other trained coaches, EMTs, fire rescue, and life flight, they were able to get the help he needed fast.

The rider required emergency surgery but made a strong recovery—and weeks later was back at the trailhead smiling and walking under his own power. Moments like this remind us why training, preparation, and carrying proper first-aid gear matter, even when people joke about the “big pack.” [Full Story](#)



Treating the mountain bike crash patient, after day turned night.

SOCIAL

Earlier this month, our ever-growing **Team MEDIC** gathered for its annual meeting and social. The day began with a scenic hike-stroll along the Potomac River, from Gravelly Point—beneath the planes arriving at Washington, DC's Reagan Airport—to Alexandria, Virginia. Team members who

were able to join in person did so, followed by a hybrid lunch social and meeting, held both in person and virtually at La Madeleine. Energized by the time together, **Team MEDIC** is excited to continue serving you with the highest quality medical education in the year ahead.



Upcoming Course Schedule

2026

(2 days 8am-7pm each day)

Jan 31-Feb 1...Baltimore area, **MD**
Jan 31-Feb 1...Harrisonburg area, **VA** + optional CPR Fri night
Feb 21-22.....Williamsburg, **VA**
Feb 21-22... ..Blacksburg, **VA** + optional CPR Fri night
Feb 28-Mar 1... Charlottesville, **VA** + optional CPR Fri night
Feb 28-Mar 1....Chattanooga, **TN** + optional CPR Fri night
Mar 21-22... ..Washington, **DC** area + **camping available!**
Mar 21-22.....Richmond, **VA** + optional CPR Fri night
Mar 28-29.....Circleville, **WV** + optional CPR Fri night
April 4-5.....Charlottesville, **VA** + optional CPR Fri night
April 11-12..... Triangle area, **NC**
April 11-12Williamsburg, **VA**
April 11-12.....Blacksburg, **VA** + optional CPR Fri night
April 18-19... ..Baltimore area, **MD** + optional CPR Fri night
April 18 & 25.....Eden, **UT**
April 25-26... ..Philadelphia area, **PA**
May 9-10.....Charlottesville, **VA** + optional CPR Fri night
May 30-31.....Washington, **DC** area + **camping available!**
May 30-31.....Richmond, **VA** + optional CPR Fri night
June 13-14.....Capon Bridge, **WV** + **camping available!**
June 13-14.....Charlottesville, **VA** + optional CPR Fri night
June 27-28.....**AWFA Part II Bridge** Williamsport, **WV** + **camp**
Sept 5-7.....Blacksburg area, **VA** + **camping available!**

Hands-on learn how to save lives & limbs in wilderness areas, protests, and disaster zones (terrorist or weather) inaccessible to an ambulance. Practice care-giving during the critical minutes or hours it takes to stabilize and evacuate your patient. Blend of classroom instruction and hands-on problem-solving rescue scenario practice. Come away with actual do-it-yourself care-giving skill and confidence, and 2-year SOLO WFA certification. Counts as WFR Recertification.

No prerequisites. Spaces are limited.

Private Courses also available!



www.solowfa.com

Books by 50 Year TATC Volunteer and Author

The Old Appalachian Trail in Southwestern Virginia

Susan Gail Arey

Trail Mix

Susan Gail Arey

Long Trail Through Vermont

SUSAN GAIL AREY

Appalachian Trail Encore

Susan Gail Arey

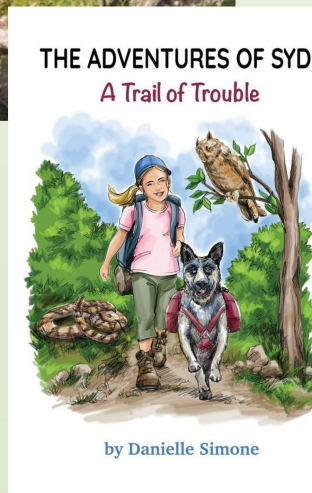
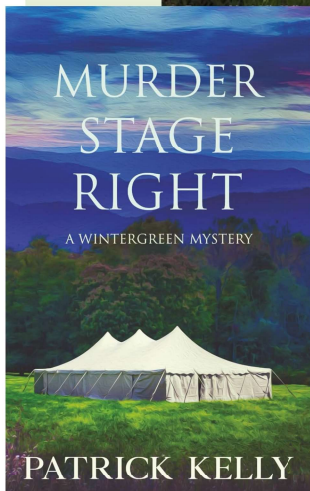
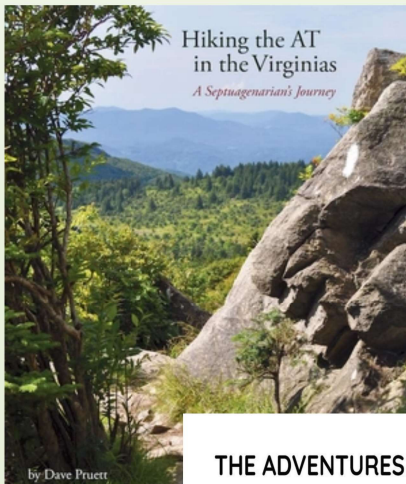
To Maine by Way of Georgia

on the Appalachian Trail

Susan Gail Arey

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Other Authors



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- Kayak
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- Birthday Parties

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Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club Officers and Board



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