



nantalahahikingclub.org

Nantahala Hiking Club

Newsletter

4th Quarter 2022

Photo submitted by Jody Todd

— Rev. A. Rufus Morgan, Club Founder —
“Keep ever clear the trails that lead to mountaintops.”



The trail leads not merely north and south
but up to the body, mind and soul of man.

Harold Allen

Early Appalachian Trail planner & volunteer

Welcome to New Members!

Christopher Carpenter
Franklin, NC

Tirso & Mary Ferrer
Franklin, NC

Constance Gentry
Sylva, NC

Bonnie Kirtland
Highlands, NC

Charles Lucas
Ft. Myers, FL

Rick Nale
Franklin, NC

Alexandra Ross
Highlands, NC

Theresa Wall
Dothan, AL

Bethany Conerly
Webster Groves, MO

Robert Fitzpatrick
Franklin, NC

Guy Kingsley
Highlands, NC

Darnelle Little
Hayesville, NC

Lori Mirrer
Charlotte, NC

Don & Lyn Raabe
Franklin, NC

Bernard "Paul" Tibble
Otto, NC



President's Message

By Victor Treutel

The new Board of Directors met for the first time on August 2nd to create the Club's Strategic Plan for the next 12 months. With participation from the ATC and Forest Service, the Board brainstormed new ideas of tasks/activities/initiatives the club could undertake. These new ideas were added to the list of things we currently perform. Items were grouped by Trail Maintenance, Tools and Training for Volunteers, Education and Outreach, Fund Raising, and other Club Related.

We then rated each activity by time and monetary requirements, i.e. 1 being lowest and 3 being highest. So, an item with a time rating of 3 would require considerably more volunteer resources than an item with a 1. Each item was then prioritized from 1 to 5, with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest.

The Board then agreed that we would focus on items with a Priority 1 or 2 first, and when monies and volunteers were available to perform lower priority tasks we would focus on them. Some items that are lower priority, we will support as long as we have the money and volunteers.

Here is the lists of activities, events and initiatives created at the Strategic Planning Meeting:

Trail Maintenance

Activity	Time	Money	Priority
Trail Maintenance	3	3	1
Provide Shirts for Maintainers	1	2	2
Plan for Trail Skills Training	2	1	2
New Maintainer Orientation	2	1	2
Visual Resource Inventory	2	1	3
Trail Maintenance at Work Sign	1	1	3

Tools and Training for Volunteers

Activity	Time	Money	Priority
Regional Partnership Committee	2	2	1
New Member Orientation	2	1	1
Sawyer Certification	2	2	1
Cross-Cut saw Certification	2	2	2
New Member Mentor Program	2	1	2
Wilderness First Aid	2	2	2

Education & Outreach

Activity	Time	Money	Priority
Club Meeting / Programs	2	2	1
Organized Hikes	2	1	1
Trail Ambassador	2	1	1
Franklin AT Community Council	1	1	2
School Outreach	1	1	2
Trail Magic, inc. Easter & Chow Down	2	2	2
Shuttle Driver Coordinator	1	1	2
Include More Schools	2	1	2
The Bear Issue	2	1	2
Festivals and Events	1	1	3
Coordinate with Other Trail Towns	1	1	3
Coordinate with other Clubs	1	1	3
Club Info Video	2	2	3
Redo Booth	2	2	3
Ridge Runner	3	3	4
Christmas Parade	1	1	5
Free Overnight Campsite in Franklin	2	3	5

Fund Raising

Activity	Time	Money	Priority
License Plate Grant	2	1	1
Revise Membership Rates	1	1	2
Establish Grant Program	2	1	2
Spaghetti Dinner	2	2	3
Membership Drive	2	2	3
Evaluate BI Membership App	1	1	3

Other Club Related

Activity	Time	Money	Priority
Board of Directors	2	1	1
Newsletter	2	1	1
Website	1	1	1
Awards	1	2	1
Awards Banquet & Party	2	2	1
Social Media	1	1	2
Club Picnic	1	1	2
Website Redesign	2	1	2
Renovate Clubhouse-Exterior	2	2	2
Organize Storage Unit	2	2	3
Hwy 64 - Large AT Sign	2	2	3
Updated Local Management Plans	2	1	5

Initiatives

Activity	Time	Money	Priority
Time Value of Volunteers	1	1	1
Leadership Authority	1	1	1
Mentor New Leaders	2	1	1
Grow Active Volunteer Base	2	2	1
Volunteer Coordinator Position	2	1	1
Clarify Metric	1	1	1

Initiative Descriptions

Honor Time Value of Volunteers

The most valuable asset this club possesses is the time of our volunteers. We must ensure that volunteer time is spent efficiently and effectively, and not wasted. As a Board, we are committed to this axiom and will ensure that all decisions we make take the time value of our volunteers into consideration.

Leadership Authority

All club leaders are authorized by the Board of Directors to make decisions about their owned activities. Major expenditures are required to be approved by the Board.

Mentor New Leaders

In the past, as Board members and lead volunteers resigned their positions the Board has made a mad dash to find a replacement. Oftentimes, a position went unfilled for years or the new individual was left with little knowledge/background to properly perform the role. In order to solve this, the Board will create a mentoring program that will encourage and train members how to find and mentor a replacement prior to their desire to depart.

Grow Active Volunteer Base

With 370 current members, but less than 100 recording hours over the past year, the club is missing out on a large base for volunteer activities. There is so much more our club could do, but unless we find a way to engage these members we won't have the resources to do so. Last year we implemented the New Member Orientation, which added greatly to our active volunteer base, but more can be done.

Volunteer Coordinator Position

Select a volunteer who will act as a central point for leaders to search for volunteers. Historically, volunteers are canvassed by each leader for each event. As our club continues to expand, it is increasingly difficult to reach the entire membership. A centralized point for volunteers should help to streamline this process.

Clarify Metric

Determine what metrics are key to measure our success, i.e. membership count, volunteer hours, trail miles, active volunteer %. Once determined, the metric(s) should be used to guide our leadership in making decisions.



Trail Maintenance, August 10, 2022

Wildest Women's Trail Skills Workshop

On Friday, September 16 over a dozen participants from North Carolina and Georgia made their way to Mooney Gap for a day long trail skills workshop on the A.T. Kris English, Technical Trail Specialist with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, was the workshop trainer. Sarah Adams, the ATC's Regional Manager for Nantahala and Georgia, was also on hand for the day. The day was spent identifying areas where trail improvements were needed. Essential trail maintenance techniques were demonstrated and discussed prior to participants practicing the learned skills themselves. This training enables participants to be ready to join future work trips with A.T. maintaining clubs or even to adopt their own section of the A.T. to maintain. See further information about adopting a section of the trail elsewhere in this newsletter.



The Wild Women!



Maintenance 101

A.T. Trail Marking

If there is one thing common (well, almost common) among the 30 clubs that maintain the almost 2,200 miles of the A.T. it is the white blaze that marks the foot path. The NHC maintains roughly 60 miles of the A.T. and 30 miles of side trails (blue blaze trails). The trails are marked by blazes 2 inches wide by 6 inches high. The A.T. is blazed white and the side trails are blazed blue ("where in blue blazes are we?"). The climate conditions in our area require the repainting of the blazes every 5 years. The NHC process to do this work is to have a crew of 2-3 maintainers paint about 20 miles of blazes each year. Sometimes the crew works with the Wednesday maintenance crew. Other times they go out on their own. Typically one crew member identifies the tree to be blazed, gently scrapes the bark, and trims vegetation that would obstruct the hiker's view of the blaze. The other crew member paints the blaze. Usually it takes about an hour to blaze a mile of trail.

Blazes are normally spaced about 100 paces apart. They are placed less frequently if the trail tread is clearly visible and more frequently if the trail tread is less obvious. They are painted at eye level. Double blazes, one directly above the other or the top one offset to one side signal to the hiker to "slow down...and look!" One blaze directly above the other signals a trail junction and that the hiker needs to make sure when they leave that junction that they are on the right trail. To assist the hiker in staying on the A.T., a "safety blaze" is painted where it can be easily seen from the double blaze. If the top blaze is offset to the right or left, it signals to the hiker that the trail turns in the direction of the top offset blaze. Side trails blazed blue include paths to view points, water, shelters and trail-heads. Sometimes you will find blazes painted on posts, rocks, road guardrails and on road pavement if needed to guide the hiker.



Text & photos by Bill Van Horn

Indian Pipe

by Tommy Smith

We are incredibly blessed by breathtaking vistas, streams and many other obvious attributes the trail offers but there is so much more to see if we just slow down a bit and know where to look. The Indian Pipe, also called the Ghost Plant, was called to my attention by Gail Lehman some time ago. I was immediately fascinated by it and had to learn more. It lacks chlorophyll, is parasitic and translucent. It can be found in dark areas and is a member of the blueberry family. It likely grows in many places around us but the ones shown to me were on the right side of the A.T. just before its junction with the Bartram Trail walking north. The more I looked, the more I found as I took a right and walked a short distance on the Bartram. Must be a prime spot for them. Sometimes new treasures are right at our feet!



We Have A New Program Coordinator!

New seasons bring change in nature's landscape and a new year of evolving roles in our club. Katharine Brown is handing off the leadership baton to Pam Addleton as program coordinator for 2023. Pam has held multiple volunteer roles with non-profits. Her professional career emphasis was community health care as an advanced RN in clinic, international corporate and private elder health advocacy. Pam and her husband, David, have called the Western NC area home since January 2022. They are proud of their three adult children (two daughters and a son) and have their first grandchild due in early 2023. If you have program suggestions, please contact Pam at 12tree-house@gmail.com.

LOST EYEGASSES

A pair of what seem to be men's glasses was found after the last membership meeting. They have metal frames and have a line across them as though they are bifocals. They are in a black Ray-Ban case. If they are yours, please contact Katharine Brown at 828-421-4178

Carter Gap Privy Removal

By Victor Treutel—NHC President

The maintenance of 60 miles of the Appalachian Trail is our club's primary mission. Every Wednesday our volunteers load up on gear and head into the forest for a fun-filled day of hard labor. We have no special access points to the trail, no shortcuts or helicopter drops, so oftentimes those days are extremely long with upwards of 8 miles of hiking. Every year or so we are tasked with rebuilding structures, i.e. shelters and/or privies. There are 10 of each in our section of the A.T.

In 2017, our club built a new privy at the Carter Gap shelter. The old privy sat abandoned since then, mainly because of the 6-mile round trip hike to the shelter. Until this summer that is, when we received an offer from Deerfoot Lodge, which had 13 young men available for a day to assist us. We jumped at the chance for assistance and provided them with directions to Carter Gap shelter. By the way, these young men love to hike long distances and appreciate the challenge of shouldering heavy materials.

Deerfoot Lodge started in the 1930's as a Christian summer camp for boys in the Adirondack Mountains. In 2019, they opened a second camp outside of Cashiers, NC. Their focus is on raising Godly men and teaching them wilderness skills. Nick Dotti, Deerfoot Blue Ridge director, provided 4 strong young men to assist NHC with the Clubhouse renovation in February.

The young men drove from Cashiers and hiked to Carter Gap shelter on Monday, June 20. They assessed the job and began dismantling the old privy.





They loaded up the pieces and headed back to the trailhead. I bet they were whistling as they hiked.



Thank God for these young men. Without them that rotting privy would still be sitting in the forest.

For more information on Deerfoot Lodge, check out their website:

<https://deerfoot.org>.

Trail Manager's Report

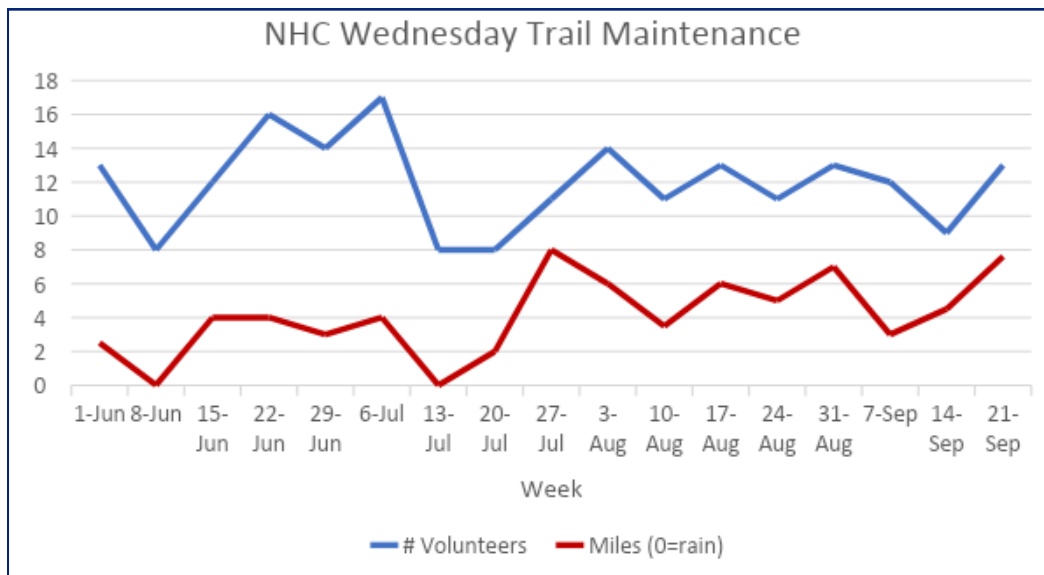
Rich Corporon ended his tour of duty as Trail Manager in July. We thank him for his 2 years of fine service! I am Hygie Starr, the recently nominated and elected Trail Manager. I joined the club and the trail crew in September 2020, soon after retiring from over thirty years as a chemical engineer in chemical manufacturing in numerous locations with DuPont. I was born and raised in Greensboro, NC and went to NCSU. My husband, Ben, was born and raised in Cleveland, GA and went to North GA and GA Tech. We met at DuPont in Brevard, NC. That property is now DuPont State Forest. We have been ATC members for over thirty years. We live between Hayesville and Murphy near the John C. Campbell Folk School with our 2 cats and 10 chickens. (Sadly, we lost our dog of fourteen years earlier in 2022.) I hope to keep the fine trail work going smoothly and pleasantly for the Maintainers.



We are happy to welcome several new first-time maintainers over the past few months who have come back out to work with us on numerous Wednesday workdays: Paul Tibble, Christopher Carpenter, Bob Fitzpatrick, Brenda Haas and Jerry Denney. Welcome to the Maintainer team!

We are looking to have some Section Maintainer vacancies filled. For further details, see the article below. We are also hoping to see more Section Maintainer reports come in. We had 5 over the past few months: thank you to Cindy Rodinsky, Paul Dyer, David Addleton, Jerry Novak and Mike Vanderkodde for your reports!

Some Wednesday trail workday metrics of number of Maintainers working and miles worked are found in the graph below:



Want to help with trail work but can't work on Wednesdays? Become a Section Maintainer!

If you've been interested in working on the trail, but are unavailable to work on Wednesday work-days, we have an opportunity for you: Section Maintaining. A Section Maintainer is expected to work their section a minimum of 4 times a year and is expected to follow the guidelines on clearing and water bar construction and cleaning that you will receive from the NHC. These are taken directly from or based upon the information in the ATC publication entitled Trail Design, Construction, and Maintenance. Responsibilities include the following:

1. Remove fallen limbs and trees from the trail. Most can be removed as is or by cutting using a small folding saw. Report location and size of larger blow downs that require a certified sawyer to the Trail Manager.
2. Use fallen limbs or branches to disguise abandoned trail segments and to discourage the shortcutting of switchbacks.
3. In the summer (June, if possible), cut weeds and other growth at sides of trail as shown in the Clearing Guideline. If the weeds are particularly bad on a section, a second weed cutting trip may be required again in August.
4. At any time, but particularly in the fall, clean and shape water bars. Using a fire rake, Pulaski, McLeod, Rogue, shovel or other tool, remove leaves and dirt from water bars so water will be diverted off the trail. Report water bars in need of repair or sections where more water bars are needed to the Trail Manager.
5. Remove all litter from the trail and pack it out.
6. Makeshift campsite structures within view of the trail should be removed and unnatural materials carried out.
7. Evaluate blazes, signs and bridges; inform Trail Manager of any needs.
8. Shelters should be kept clean, the water source kept free of debris and the notebook replaced when full or at the beginning of a new year. For privies, knock down the cone, add a layer of leaves, fill the leaf buckets and remove trash.
9. Communication responsibilities: After each trip, enter your hours in Better Impact and send a written report to the Trail Manager. Include information on the general condition of the trail and/or the shelter, location and size of slowdowns that require a certified sawyer, etc.

A good resource of section maintaining from the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club can be found at: <https://www.nbatc.org/maintenance.htm@JobDescription>

A good video on AT trail maintenance from the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ozpbU5otbPg>

The following AT sections are available: Lower Ridge Trail—Beech Gap (2.9 mi), Beech Gap—Timber Ridge (2.8 mi), Timber Ridge—Betty Creek Gap (4.1 mi) and Mooney Gap—Albert Blue Blaze (1.8 mi). Only AT mileage is shown; there are additional miles to hike into and/or out of the section.

Please contact Hygie Starr, NHC Trail Manager, at hygiestarr@gmail.com if you are interested in Section Maintaining and a section walkthrough and training will be provided.

Trailwork: Blue Blaze Bridge Repairs

There have been some blue blaze trail bridge repairs in the past few months.

Maintainers worked with the Forest Service to make temporary repairs to the Kimsey Creek bridge. The decking on top of the current stringers was repaired and a rope was added to hang onto while crossing. See photo. In the next year we will replace the entire bridge, stringers included, with a full handrail. This was a temporary fix for safety reasons. The replacement is a construction project that requires paperwork and approval by the Forest Service.

Maintainers also worked on the Lower Park Creek bridge. A 14.5 foot log was split with wedges and saws. One half was carried a distance with straps; we really put our backs into it! One rotten side of the bridge was removed and replaced with one split log piece. The other half will be completed another day. See photos.

Kimsey Creek bridge:



Lower Park Creek bridge:



Bridge before work



Splitting log



Bridge after work

NHC School Outreach

For over 15 years NHC has provided support to our local school system to encourage teachers to use the Appalachian Trail as an outdoor classroom. In the past, the NHC has provided training to teachers on place-based education, land navigation, Leave No Trace and the basics of day hiking. Most recently, NHC has provided a club presence at the Summit School's water testing field trip, East Franklin's fourth grade hike to Siler Bald and Union School's trail maintenance. We are looking for volunteers to continue these programs and hopefully grow the outreach program. The most immediate need is to support East Franklin's hike to Siler Bald on Friday, October 14th with a rain date of Monday, October 17th. If you are able to help with the hike on October 14th and/or are interested in helping with school outreach, contact Bill Van Horn at 828-369-1983 or by email at airborneengineer20bde@gmail.com.



Visual Resource Inventory

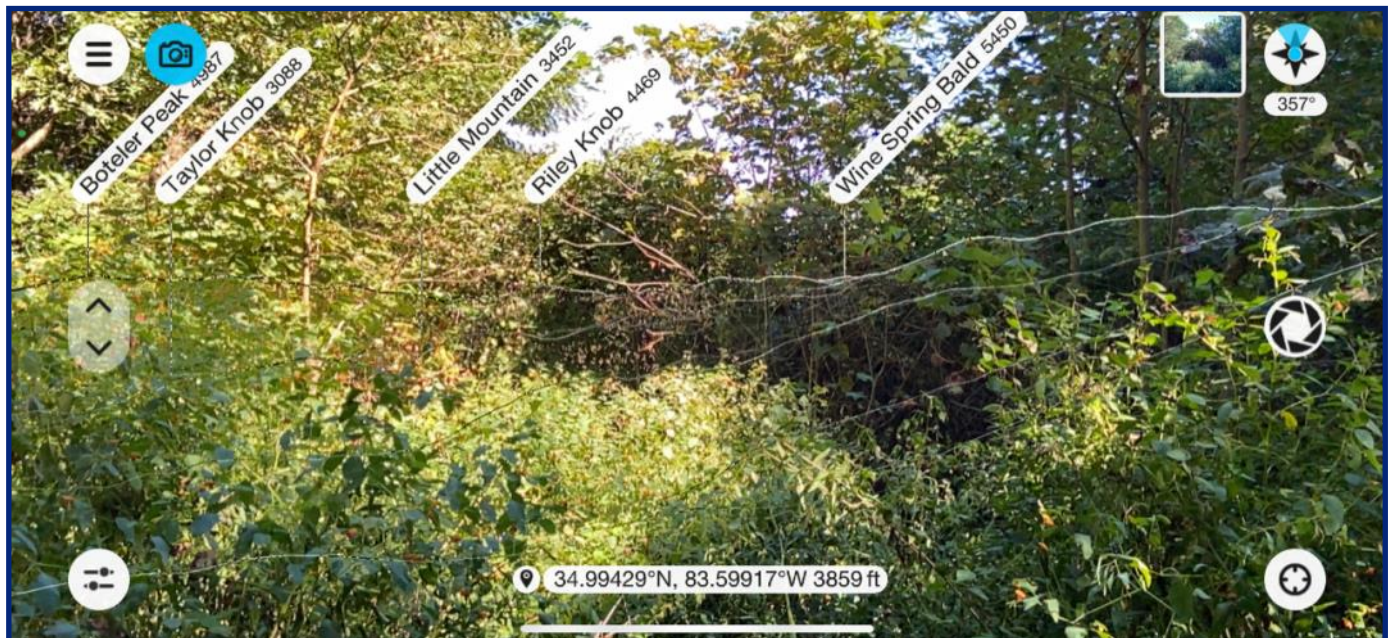
The NHC has 32 identified scenic views along the 60 miles of the AT that it maintains. A couple of examples are Siler Bald, the Wayah fire tower itself and the view from the tower. The NHC is in the process of objectively inventorying the views for scenic quality and view importance. This inventory process will help protect the viewed area from cell towers, power lines, pipelines, etc. and assist in coordinating the maintenance of the view point. The volunteer effort to support this inventory process involves day hiking to the view point and spending an hour with 3-5 other club members evaluating the view point and its view. To date the club has inventoried 12 of the 32 views. If interested in this unique volunteer opportunity, contact Bill Van Horn at 828-369-1983 or by email at airborneengineer20bde@gmail.com.



View from Raven Rock



View from Big Butt



Bly Gap view??? This is what happens if a view is not maintained.

David Lippy

The NHC is saddened by the passing of long-time member David Lippy. Prior to his retirement, David worked in Orlando, Florida for Lockheed Martin as an engineer for 38 years. The day he retired in 2008, he moved to Otto where he became engaged in numerous service projects. One such project was serving as President of NHC for 3 years and contributing many volunteer hours to the Appalachian Trail. The club extends deep condolences to his family.

Upcoming Programs

Just two General Meeting programs remain for 2022:

On October 13 at 6:00 pm at the Macon County Public Library, Sarah Adams, the ATC Regional Manager for Georgia and Nantahala, will speak about the ATC and its cooperative partnership with NHC and the Forest Service.

On November 10 at 6:00 pm at the library, Jason Love, Associate Director of the Highlands Biological Station, will present on salamanders of Western North Carolina.

In addition to these programs, we have an ATC/NHC event coming up:

- **Saturday October 8th – Trail Skills and Leave No Trace Workshop**
 - o What: Introduction to essential trail maintenance and Leave No Trace principles
 - o Where: Wayah Crest
 - o Time: 9am-5pm
 - o For more information and to register, go to volunteer.appalachiantrail.org/s/atc-project-details?c_reclId=a0q8Z000000CsnaH. Registration is required to attend.

Our Treasurer, Amber Hornbarger, reports the following: “I’ve seen a steady increase in the amount of Amazon Smile donations. Thanks to everyone who chose to support the club. Please reach out if you need help setting this up.” Amber can be reached at 386-269-0360.



Photo by Jody Todd

Bear Activity

by Victor Treutel

This year we had an uptick in bear/human interactions reported on our section of the Appalachian Trail. Most of them were concentrated in a couple of shelters in and around Standing Indian. The troubling part of these interactions is that the bear(s) were not scared off by humans. They found a reliable source of dehydrated camp food and energy bars at the shelters so they capitalized by climbing trees and tearing down food bags hanging from them, which is the generally accepted practice. When startled hikers tried to scare the bear(s) away, they were not deterred and continued their mission.

The below picture was taken by our Trail Maintainers. You can clearly see the food wrappers in the pile of bear dung.



Bears are attracted to easy food and if they locate some they will return. If they are successful on the second trip, that location becomes imprinted in their brain and they will continue to return, setting off a never ending cycle.

With so many reports being received, I reached out to Morgan Sommerville, Director of Visitor Use Management for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. Here is my email and below that is Morgan's response.

Morgan,

With only one year of experience in club leadership, I don't have the history of what a normal year of bear reports/encounters looks like. But after 5 years as a Trail Ambassador, I never received a single report of a bear encounter. This year I've received a bear comment from practically every thru-hiker I ask. Many are now stating that they don't camp in the Standing Indian area because of the bear problem. They just hike on through. Does this seem like a huge increase to you, or maybe just a slight increase?

Bear Boxes were discussed with the Forest Service at our last Board meeting, but I can't imagine them taking any action for years. Bill Van Horn told me that the NHC had installed bear cables in the past, but the maintenance was overwhelming as it appeared hikers were tearing them down. Getting hikers to carry bear canisters seems virtually impossible. It seems like something needs to be done before the act of destroying the bear(s) is taken by the Forest Service/Wildlife Commission.

Is there something the NHC and ATC can do to address this issue?

Victor Treutel

President—Nantahala Hiking Club

Hi, Victor. This particular Southern Nantahala Wilderness bear issue is relatively new, maybe since 2020 (?), and may just be one or two bears causing the whole problem, as bears tracked in the Smokies were shown to routinely travel as much as 50 miles per day. In other words, one or two bears may be hitting from Deep Gap to Betty's Creek Gap all in the same night.

Thru-hikers are increasingly carrying bear canisters (up from 0 in 2015 when we started recommending them), with up to 17% of 2021 thru-hikers carrying a bear can for at least part of their hike and 10% saying it was their main method of food storage.

Bill is correct in saying that NHC used to have food storage cables at all of the NHC A.T. shelters, but they were vandalized and became too much of a maintenance problem. For a while, there were bear cables installed at all A.T. shelters in the Carolina Mt. Club, Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, NHC and GATC trail sections. Now they are maintained only in the Smokies and the Carolina Mt. Club sounds like they are interested in starting to install bear boxes. In GA, the Chattahoochee NF did not

allow installation of bear boxes in Wilderness, but the GATC has installed them at all shelters outside of Wilderness.

ATC is trying to cause a paradigm shift away from food hangs to the common use of bear canisters for camping anywhere along the A.T. I believe Paul Curtin, the SORO RPC Chair, recently forwarded you a copy of ATC's new food storage policy which recommends bear canisters as the best method for food storage along the A.T.

Bear boxes work very well but are prone to problems so that A.T. campers can't depend upon them being available: they are prone to misuse leading to unusable damage; they are prone to becoming trash receptacles from thoughtless campers; they may be full to overflowing when a campsite is full. Additionally, they are expensive and very difficult to transport to A.T. shelters. Most importantly, however, is that dispersed camping is allowed along much of the A.T. so there is no way we can provide bear boxes everywhere someone may camp along the A.T. Nor do we want to. We need to transfer the facility costs to the hikers: i.e., they need to take responsibility for their own adequate food storage, their own shelter, their own waste disposal. The A.T. is free to use and the least A.T. hikers can do is help take care of the Trail in those basic ways. A.T. volunteers have enough to do just maintaining the footpath and shelters, and, where provided, privies. If I were "King" of the A.T. and we were starting over, there would be no shelters (except, perhaps, in locations like alpine areas) and very few other facilities. The A.T. is the only National Scenic Trail with a shelter chain, and hikers seem to do just find on the other trails without all the amenities we provide along the A.T. Shelters along the A.T. are a result of the age of the A.T., i.e. when the A.T. began there was no lightweight camping equipment and shelters were provided to deal with that problem.

Likewise, most A.T. campers and backpackers these days seem to pride themselves on using the latest and greatest equipment. Well, bear canisters are part of the list of latest and greatest backpacking equipment. ☺

Finally, to answer you directly, yes, both NHC and ATC can help with this situation. The George Washington & Jefferson National Forest staff are about to finish development of two posters encouraging the use of bear canisters. Once they are done, assuming Troy Waskey is OK with it, you could install them on Trailhead bulletin boards. You could also brief all NHC Trail Ambassadors on the benefits of using bear canisters (please see the new ATC food storage policy for that, but have included it again in case you missed it) so they can pass that info along to A.T. campers they meet, and also be sure they know about the bear can loaner program in GA.

For ATC's part, we have been "strongly recommending" use of bear canisters since 2015, we've started a northern and a southern bear can loaner program, and we've been working with the USFS for almost 10 years to try to get new food storage regulations in place for the A.T., which will hopefully include a bear canister requirement, and uniform, Trailwide food storage messaging. According to research ATC commissioned by the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics and Penn State Univ., A.T. campers polled said:

65% thought bear cans are an effective means of food storage
76% said they would not carry a bear canister if not required
74% said they **WOULD** carry a bear can if required

So, there is hope! Thank you for your help, and let me know if you have additional questions.

Morgan Sommerville

Director, Visitor Use Management

Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Email: msommerville@appalachiantrail.org

Phone: 828.551.4873

The Board of Directors has established that bear/hiker interactions is a priority for NHC this year. We are forming a committee to make recommendations to the Board as to what we as a club can do. If you are interested, please send me an email and I'll add you to the discussion. president@nantahalahikingclub.org



Wayah Loop Hike, photo submitted by Jody Todd

Konnarock A.T. Volunteer Trail Crew

by Paul Dyer

Konnarock is the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's flagship trail crew that works on the southern section of the A.T. from Georgia to Virginia throughout every summer. Trail work is done in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service and the 12 southern trail clubs. NHC and other southern trail clubs schedule projects with Konnarock 5 years in advance. Base camp for the crew is the Sugar Grove Work Center at Mount Rogers National Recreation Area near Marion, VA. Konnarock was founded in 1983 and is named for its original base camp in southwest Virginia.

A full trail crew consists of a crew leader, assistant crew leader and 8 volunteers. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old and no experience is necessary. Konnarock provides all training and tools. This year was a typical crew with some members having several years of Konnarock experience and 2 members having little or no trail experience. Volunteers this year were from Florida, Georgia, Michigan, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, Virginia and Finland. Some NHC trail maintainers joined the crew on 4 of their 6 work days and NHC treated the crew to dinner at Boone Thai Restaurant, the crew's choice, at the end of their work week.

This year the crew arrived at Albert Mountain on July 14, followed by 6 work days. They returned to their Virginia base camp on July 21. The crew camped near Bearpen Gap and performed work between Bearpen Gap and the Albert Mountain Tower.

Trail work began at Bearpen Gap where wood materials were prepared from nearby locust trees. Felled trees and trees already down were cut to length, debarked, split and carried uphill to be used as water bars, steps and cribbing. Large rock was located trailside and used for rock steps, rock water bars and crushed with sledge and smaller rock hammers to golf ball size for fill at steps and water bars. A rock drill was used to drill holes for rebar and carve steps into rock. A 13-foot ladder was built and anchored into rock for an easier ascent/descent of a narrow, slippery, steep section.

This year was just the beginning of the necessary work at Albert Mountain. We hope to have the crew back for at least 2 more years of work between Bearpen Gap and the Albert Mountain Tower.

Please see photographs on following pages.



Konnarock Trail Crew 2022

Photos submitted by Paul Dyer



Carrying a 13-foot log to be used as a stringer for a ladder above Bearpen Gap. Hygie Starr and Paul Dyer are in the lead.



Konnarock Crew and NHC maintainers on the ladder. Rory Cassedy is 2nd from the bottom on left. Paul Dyer and Mark Holmberg on the bottom right.

NHC Essential Trail Maintenance Workshop

On September 7th, Kris English, Technical Trails Specialist for the ATC, came out to Macon County to teach trail maintenance skills to NHC maintainers. Topics included Leave No Trace (inappropriate camp site) removal, water bars, rolling grade dips, removal of down hill trail berm and proper blazing techniques.



Franklin A.T. Community Council

As many of you know, Franklin was the first town to be recognized as an A.T. Community in recognition of its efforts to promote and protect the A.T. Through the A.T. Community program, the ATC seeks to assist communities with sustainable economic development through tourism and outdoor recreation while preserving and protecting the A.T. The Franklin A.T. Community Council is the local group that promotes Franklin as an A.T. Community. It is composed of local business owners, persons working in local government, and other members of organizations which support the A.T. The NHC is represented on this council. Our current representative is Tim Lindler. Businesses located in and around Franklin which give back or have plans to support the hiking community can become Community Supporters and receive benefits which are laid out in the materials that follow. The Franklin A.T. Community Council is currently seeking to increase the number of Community Supporters. To that end, an explanatory application packet is included for printing on the next two pages. If you know of any businesses or organizations that might qualify and be interested, please deliver a packet to them and ask them to complete it. It takes just a few minutes, costs them nothing, helps support Franklin and the hiking community and benefits the business/organization as well. Thanks, in advance, for your help.





A Happy Trail Town Community is one that ...

"...embraces a trail and sees the value of it and takes steps to invest in it."

– shared by author Amy Camp, "Deciding on Trails: 7 Practices of a Healthy Trail Town,"

March 3, 2022, issue of Macon County News.

Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) oversees the **Appalachian Trail Community Program** along with the entire trail. But Franklin is unique in that it is one of the first trail towns for northbound hikers to stop, rest, resupply, and enjoy. **Franklin Appalachian Trail Community Council (FATCC)** was also the very FIRST registered A.T. Community.

We do not want local businesses to miss out on this free opportunity to promote their goods and services to hikers. These hikers not only appreciate businesses when they pass through but many return, year after year, with friends and family, especially when they come to realize Franklin's welcoming and accommodating community spirit.

Franklin's A.T. Community Council is made up of Community Supporter representatives and members of various AT-related and local government entities. What do they do?

- the month-long, spring Franklin's A.T. Mile110 Celebration.
- organize community engagement around the A.T. and hikers
- meet and work with the Nantahala Hiking Club, Nantahala National Forest Service, The Town of Franklin, Macon County, and other community organizations
- volunteer to aid in these various activities and be ambassadors of our community

Why become an A.T. Community Supporter?:

- to connect with hikers and the A.T. Community and let them know what your business offers
- to consider involvement in great community opportunities
- to create a presence on the ATC website and various A.T. organizations' social media

What's next? Easy as 1, 2, 3!!!

STEP 1: Check out Franklin and what businesses are already Community Supporters:

STEP 2: Learn more about the benefits of being a Community Supporter:

STEP 3: Fill out the online Application:



or visit: <https://appalachiantrail.org/explore/communities/franklin-n-c/>

THEN

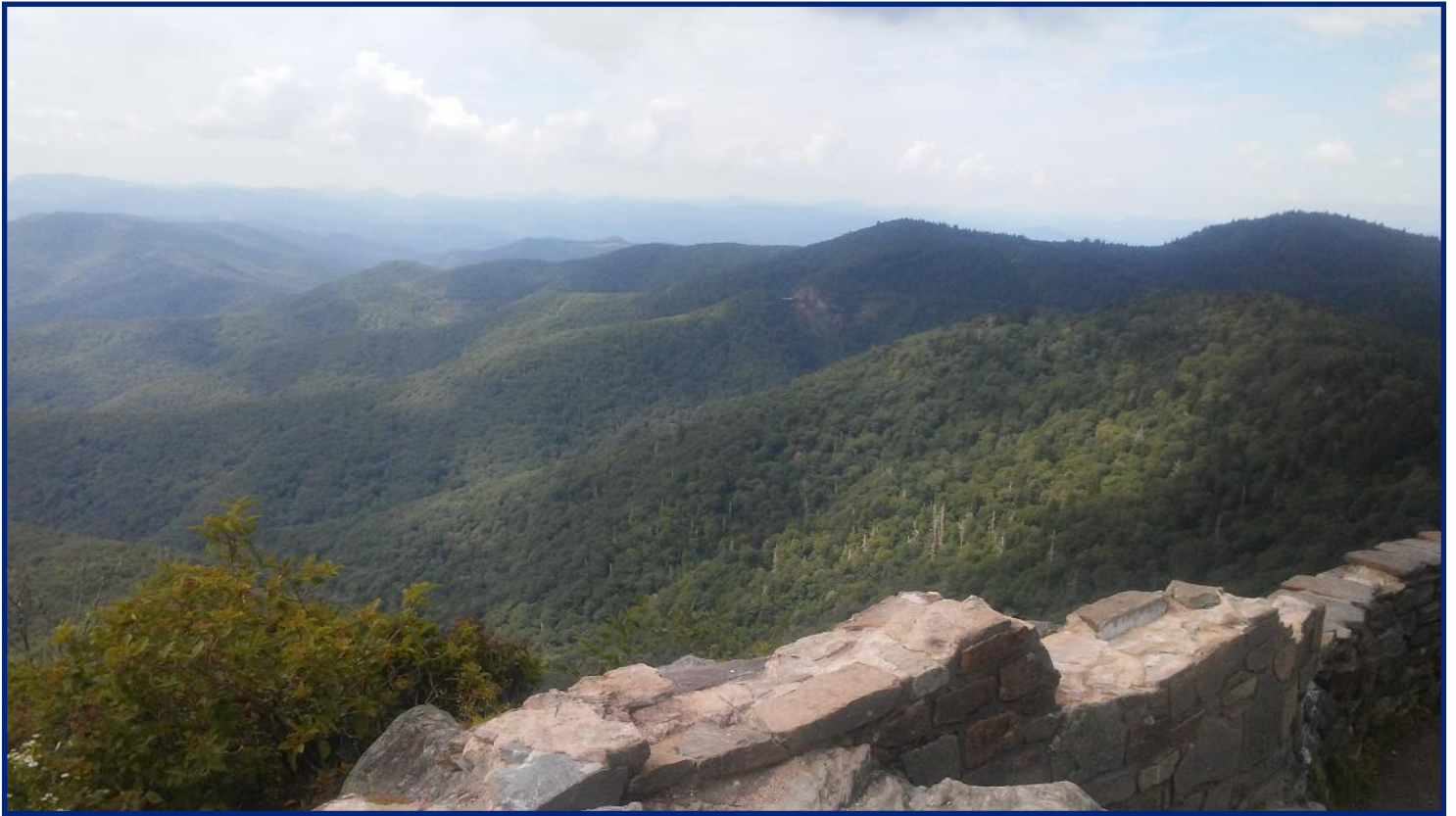
-expect to receive an A.T. Community Supporter sticker, certificate and other A.T. goodies

-feel free to attend monthly meetings and/or be added to our email list to stay up to date on council happenings

For more information, email FATCC at franklinatcc@gmail.com.

Instagram: [franklinatmile110](https://www.instagram.com/franklinatmile110)

Facebook: [@FranklinATMile110](https://www.facebook.com/FranklinATMile110) · Community



The view from Devil's Courthouse, July 16, 2022.



NHC hikers on Devil's Courthouse hike, July 16, 2022.



From Old Bald Mountain hike, July 13, 2022, led by Robin Lurie.



NHC hikers on Old Bald Mountain Hike, July 13, 2022.



NHC hikers on August 13, 2022 hike from Rock Gap to Glassmine Gap, led by Gail Lehman.



All three photos taken at hike to Martins Creek Falls, August 21, 2022, led by Chris Federico.



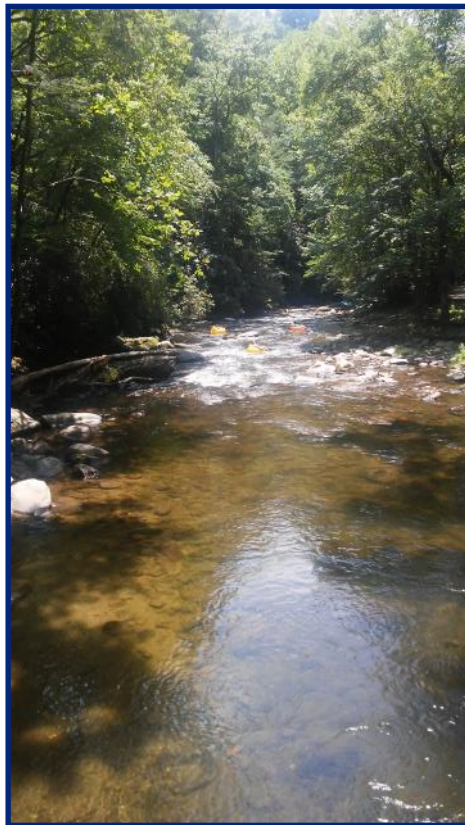
NHC hikers on Coweeta Hydrological Lab hike, September 23, 2022, led by Katharine Brown.



All three photos from VRI hike to Bly Gap .



Hike to High Falls on July 23, 2022, led by
Robert Barnable.



Hike to Deep Creek/Indian Creek
Loop, July 30, 2022, led by Gail
Lehman.

Happy Fall!!!

