

Footnotes

Newsletter for the Foothills Trail Conservancy - - www.foothillstrail.org

Toxaway Suspension Bridge Renovation

As part of Duke Power's (now Duke Energy) construction of the middle portion of the Foothills Trail, there were many bridges built to cross the myriad rivers and creeks of the Jocassee Gorges. These bridges came in all shapes and sizes, but the granddaddy of them all was the suspension bridge over the Toxaway River. Designed by the engineering section of Duke Energy, the 225-ft bridge was built in the early 80's. Two Duke engineers, Nick Seagle and Ed Luttrell were the primary engineers for the design and construction of all the bridges, including the Toxaway bridge.

Construction on the bridge by Duke commenced in 1982 and took several months to complete. The heavy equipment necessary to carry out the project was brought down an old roadway from the Wilds camp north of the bridge site, including multiple loads of concrete in standard concrete trucks!

All the Duke Energy bridges have been inspected on a regular basis, and a recent inspection revealed that some deterioration had begun to take place in parts of the wood supporting pillars of the bridge that would cause them to be replaced. They decided this was a good time to refurbish the entire



bridge! After studying all angles of this enormous task, they also decided that the best material for the longest life of the bridge was fiberglass. This would be much lighter to transport to the site, but also would be very long-lasting. Thus, the entire supporting structures at either end, as well as the tread of the bridge, are made of fiberglass. The handrails and cross supports are the only wooden portions. The supporting cables are the only original materials.

Toxaway Suspension Bridge Renovation- continued from page 1

Now, after several decades of service, this iconic bridge, and symbol of the Foothills Trail, has been refurbished by Duke Energy. Originally built by the construction section of Duke Power, the complete overhaul of the bridge was carried out by Crowder Construction Co. of Charlotte, NC, in just 60 days, during which men and materials had to be boated and barged up Lake Jocassee! Some heavy equipment was even transported down the same roadway as it was 37 years ago!

When construction began, one of the first steps was to transport the huge main support poles to the site and strap them to the original wooden poles. This was necessary because the next step was to erect scaffolding at either end that would support the entire bridge during construction. This way the fiberglass poles would be on the inside of the scaffolding from the outset! In the meantime the cross-supports, fiberglass tread, and handrails were attached a section at a time until the “swinging” section of the bridge was completed.

Each day the Crowder Construction work crew would assemble at the Devils Fork State Park boat ramp, have a safety briefing, and then be transported up Lake Jocassee in their combination transport / tugboat that also pushed barge loads of materials to the site. Not your everyday way to get to work! Depending on the weather, especially in the hot afternoons when thunderstorms tended to build up, this could make for an interesting commute!

If there was a tricky part of the project, it was transferring the support cables for the bridge to the scaffolding in order to attach the fiberglass support poles to the base and then remove the old wooden poles. Then the cables were placed on the new fiberglass support poles. A piece of cake for these guys!

By the end of August, the actual bridge construction was finished, and what remained was to remove leftover materials, transport tons of scaffolding, clean the site, and drive the mechanized equipment back up the hillside-hugging road!

On September 9, 2019, Duke Energy had a final project inspection with Crowder Construction and formally accepted the finished bridge. During the 60 days of actual construction hikers were seldom delayed even a few minutes, and the project was finished almost 3 weeks ahead of schedule thanks to an innovative project design and work schedule. Thank you Duke Energy and Crowder Construction Company!

NEW—SILENT AUCTION!!!

This year, we will have many amazing items for you to bid on in our silent auction to raise money for the FTC! Please remember to stop by our FTC store at the meeting for great deals on all of our Foothills Trail merchandise as well. What great opportunities to get some holiday shopping done! We will be able to accept cash or check only as we don't have access to wifi at the event! Thank you for your continued support of our trail!

Foothills Trail Conservancy 45th Annual Meeting

Table Rock State Park—November 1, 2 and 3, 2019

Deadline for Registration is October 31 , 2019

(to see a map of the park, please check our website)

Every year the Foothills Trail Conservancy holds an Annual Meeting weekend for our members that is filled with exciting hikes, great speakers, delicious meals, and fellowship with other FTC members. This year's Meeting is just around the corner, and we have an exciting weekend planned for all to enjoy! To reserve a campsite, please contact Oconee State Park online. Make sure to register early to reserve your hikes and a place at the table for a great weekend of outdoor adventure and fellowship with the FTC!

FTC Annual Meeting Schedule

Friday, November 1

9:30 a.m.	Hike Departs (See enclosed hike list)
3:00 p.m.	Volunteers gather to help set up
6:00-9:00 p.m.	Friday Night Social Hour in the Barn Potluck supper; Presentation on the Geology of the Foothills Trail by Bill Ranson , Furman Professor, and FTC Board Member

Saturday, November 2

8:00 a.m.	Breakfast in the Barn (catered by Aunt Sue's)
9:30 a.m.	Hikes Depart (see enclosed hike list) Lunch on your own
10am– 5pm	Various Activities in, and around, the Barn (Games, Puzzles, Leave No Trace activities, Etc)
5:00 p.m.	Social Hour in the Barn– BYO Special Beverages with Snacks and Drinks by FTC Silent Auction Begins Music by Brew Davis
6:00 p.m.	Supper (catered by The Hungry Hiker)
7:00 p.m.	Annual Meeting Special Guest Speaker, Jennifer Pharr Davis Business Meeting, Door Prizes

Sunday, November 3

8:00 a.m.	Breakfast in the Barn (Continental)
9:30 a.m.	Hike Departs (see enclosed hike list) Volunteers help with cleanup

FOOTHILLS TRAIL CONSERVANCY

*Hikes meet at the **designated meeting spot** at 9:30 am.
Wear suitable clothing and appropriate footwear.*

Friday

#1 ---- Jumping Off Rock. This drive leads to one of the most impressive views in all of SC, and fall colors should be rampant in the Jocassee Gorges down below the overlook. Led by **Greg Lucas**, FTC Board member and DNR Jocassee Journal editor, the outing will allow participants to see the length and breadth of Lake Jocassee. Bring lunch, snacks, and drink. A camera is highly recommended. Meet at the Pinnacle Pavilion to carpool to the overlook. 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Saturday

#2— Sassafras Mtn to Chimneytop Gap. Join **Becky Gilstrap**, FTC Board member and Trail Captain, on a tour of the newly-opened viewing tower at the summit of Sassafras Mtn, which should be surrounded by spectacular fall color! After taking in the impressive views at the highest point on the Foothills Trail, take an easy hike of about 2.7 miles, down to Chimneytop Gap. An option at this point would be to hike the 1-mile trail to see **Beech Bottom Falls**. Meet at Pinnacle Pavilion to carpool to Sassafras Mtn. Bring lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. A camera is recommended. 9:30 am to 2:00 pm.

#3— Pinnacle Lake Trail. Enjoy the fall colors and learn some natural history lessons around the Pinnacle Lake Trail with **Vic Shelburne**, retired forestry professor at Clemson University. This moderate, 1.9-mile loop trail passes through a forest that includes oak-hickory, scattered pines, and mountain laurel with a striking view of Table Rock. Bring water and a hand lens and/or binoculars. Meet at the swimming area parking lot. 9:30 am to noon.

#4— Dupont State Forest tour. Join **Bill Robertson**, the premier photographer in the upstate, on a tour of Dupont State Recreation Forest, with stops for photography at various scenic points of interest. Meet at the Pinnacle Pavilion to carpool to the Dupont Forest off Hwy 276 at Cedar Mountain. Bring lunch, snacks, water, and a camera of course! 9:30 am to 3:00 pm.

#5— Table Rock. Take a Stimulating Saturday Sashay with **Cathy Foster**, FTC Board Member and Master Naturalist. This is the hallmark mountain trail of the South Carolina upstate, and a tradition for FTC annual meetings at Table Rock State Park. At the terminus of the trail is a spectacular view of the Greenville Watershed reservoir. Keep in mind that the hike to the top of Table Rock Mountain is a VERY strenuous walk of about 7.2 miles (out and back). The Table Rock National Recreation Trail ascends 2,000 feet to the summit of the imposing granitic dome, Table Rock Mountain (3,157 feet). Meet at Carrick Creek Interpretive Center. Bring lunch, snacks and plenty of water. 9:30 am to 3:00 pm.

ANNUAL MEETING 2019 HIKES AND OUTINGS!!

Saturday, continued

#6— **Rainbow Falls.** Join **Dan Whitten**, FTC Board member and Master Naturalist, on this moderate to difficult, 4.3-mile hike to one of the iconic waterfalls in the upstate. The 100-ft waterfall has one long plunge over a cliff that is surrounded by colorful black and tan granite walls. Fall colors surrounding the waterfall should make for great photographs! Bring snacks, lunch, and a drink. A camera is certainly recommended. Meet at Pinnacle Pavilion to carpool to **Jones Gap State Park**. 9:30 am to 3:00 pm.

#7—**Maintenance Hikes.** Help out with upkeep on the Foothills Trail with FTC Board Member and Maintenance Coordinator **Andrew Gleason**. Work will be done on several places on the Trail up towards Pinnacle, as the FTC continues its rehab project funded by REI, so plenty of strong backs are needed! Bring gloves, lunch, and plenty to drink. Tools will be provided. Meet at Carrick Creek Interpretive Center. 9:30 am to 3:00 pm.

Sunday

#8— **Lake Jocassee and the Toxaway Bridge.** Join **Brooks Wade**, FTC Board member and resident Lake Jocassee expert, on a fall-color journey up the lake to the newly-refurbished Toxaway Bridge. This iconic feature of the Foothills Trail was completed in mid-September after a two-month construction process, which amazingly never closed it to hikers! It is always a pretty sight when surrounded by fall color. Brooks will, of course, provide commentary on the natural surroundings during the boat ride. Meet at the Pavilion at **9:00 am** to carpool or at the **Devils Fork boat ramp at 9:30 am** for a departure time of **10:00 am**. Bring snacks, lunch, water, and appropriate footwear and clothing. On the boat you will see Mill Creek Falls, Laurel Fork Falls, and the Horsepasture River bridge before hiking across the Toxaway bridge. **Pre-registration is required!** Call **Jocassee Lake Tours** to reserve a spot at (864) 280-5501 There is a charge of \$ 50 per person, to be paid at the time of the boat ride. This is limited to 14 people.

Scavenger Hunt and Fun for All!

Don't forget about our FUN Scavenger Hunt for ALL ages! Scavenger hunts and instructions will be available at the registration table. These can be completed at your own pace. We will recognize those who have completed the hunt on Saturday night. We would also love your feedback on this, and other family activities, as we hope to expand these activities and programs. There will also be other games and activities for families, children, and those just wanting an alternative to the hikes on Saturday. Please ask for more information and join in the fun!

Membership Renewal—Due January 31st

Annual Foothills Trail Conservancy Membership

Your membership to the Foothills Trail Conservancy is vital to the Foothills Trail, the Southeast's best hiking trail. With the Trail traversing the property of EIGHT different landowners, for 45 years the FTC has been a single voice committed to keeping this footpath well maintained. In addition, we promote the Trail to the hiking community and we publish the official trail map and guide. Your support gives us the resources and support necessary to continue these efforts. Thank you for your commitments in the past, and we look forward to your continued support.

NOTE: *Our membership year runs January through January.*

Membership Levels:

- ☐ Oconee Individual \$20
- ☐ Gorges Family \$30
- ☐ Table Rock \$50
- ☐ Chattooga \$100
- ☐ Sassafras \$250
- ☐ Pinnacle \$500
- ☐ Additional Contribution \$_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Approx. years of membership _____

Birthday: _____

For family memberships, how many members are in your family? ____

Please list names and birthdates for family members:

I am interested in volunteering. I have the following skills to offer:

Thank you for renewing your membership to the FTC!
You may mail this form with your membership and/or contribution to the

Foothills Trail Conservancy

Membership Renewal

PO Box 3041

Greenville, SC 29602

—OR—

You may also renew online at www.foothillstrail.org and click "Join Today".

Foothills Trail Conservancy 45th Annual Meeting

Registration Form

Table Rock State Park- November 1, 2, and 3, 2019

Deadline for Registration is October 31, 2019

Participants: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please indicate the number of people for each category below.

___ Register for the entire weekend.

___ I can only attend Saturday Evening
(includes meal and activities)

___ Adults \$35 per person

___ Adults \$25 per person

___ Children (12 and under) \$10

___ Children (12 and under) \$5

___ Family \$80

___ Family \$50

___ College Student \$20

___ College Student \$12

___ Scouts \$10

___ Scouts \$7

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

I/We plan to attend the following. Please indicate the number of people:

Friday Night Social/Speaker _____

Saturday Breakfast _____

Saturday Evening Social _____

Saturday Supper _____

Saturday Meeting/Speaker _____

Sunday Breakfast _____

I would like to register for the following hikes. Please indicate the number of people:

Friday : Hike 1 _____

Saturday: Hike 2 _____ Hike 3 _____ Hike 4 _____ Hike 5 _____ Hike 6 _____ Hike 7 _____

Sunday : Hike 8 _____

Volunteers are GREATLY appreciated!!

****I can volunteer to help with:**

Setup on Friday: 3pm-5pm _____

Friday Night Social: I can bring a dish to share _____

Saturday: Breakfast: I can help with setup/cleanup Saturday morning _____

Sunday Breakfast: I can help prepare breakfast _____ I can bring a dish to share _____

Sunday Breakdown: I can help with breakdown/cleanup (10-11am) _____

Please mail your registration and payment to:

Foothills Trail Conservancy- Annual Meeting
PO Box 3041, Greenville SC 29602

More Designated Campsite Improvements By Eagle Scouts and FTC

Continuing its efforts to make improvements at designated campsites on the Foothills Trail, the FTC has again enlisted the aid of the Boy Scouts as well as the volunteer forces of the Conservancy. This has resulted in a substantial number of sites that now have benches, a steel fire ring / grill, improved tent sites, a bear bag cable, and identifying signs to make these areas much more usable and comfortable for hikers backpacking on the Trail.

In the fall of 2018 FTC volunteers teamed up with staff from REI in Greenville to add benches and improve tent sites at the newly-named "Flatrock" campsite, 2.8 miles west of Laurel Valley (a fire ring/ grill, bear bag cable, and signpost were added later). That same fall, the "Chimneytop Gap" campsite (1 mile west of Chimneytop Gap) was improved with benches and a fire ring /grill as an Eagle project by Luke Land of Troop 125 in Salem (a bear bag cable and sign were added later).



On a drizzly day in late February 2019, a group of hardy FTC volunteers added benches, a fire ring/ grill, a bear cable, and a sign a hundred yards below Virginia Hawkins Falls, which hopefully will deter hikers from camping directly in front of the beautiful falls! Then, in mid-May, two campsites were improved on the same day! FTC volunteers, with the boating help of Jocassee Lake Tours and Jim Simpson, hauled materials up Lake Jocassee and then the Foothills Trail to the campsite above Laurel Fork Falls. Benches, a fire ring/ grill, a bear bag cable, and a sign were installed in short order. Simultaneous with that FTC undertaking, Jeremy Sarasua of Troop 235 in Clemson carried out his Eagle project at the Rock Creek campsite. He and his troop members also transported materials and tools by boat to a point on the lake edge, then carried them up the Trail to the campsite. He also placed benches, a fire ring / grill, cleared tent sites, installed a bear bag cable, and added a sign.

National Trails Day (June 1) was the day that Michael Unda of Troop 235 in Clemson chose to complete his Eagle project a mile east of Sassafras Mountain at the Cantrell Homesite. His group of scout helpers were assisted by FTC volunteers in placing benches, a fire ring / grill, a bear bag cable, and a signpost. Later in June, Zabreigh Manley of Troop 135 in Salem, after a long 4-wheel ride through the Musterground area, put in benches, a fire ring/ grill, signage, and a bear bag cable at the Bear Camp Creek campsite to complete his Eagle project.

Only recently, in mid-September, a group of FTC volunteers trucked up through the DNR Camp Adger area in order to reach the "Lighthouse" campsite below Drawbar Cliffs. This frequently used campsite now has a fire ring / grill, benches, newly created tent site areas, a bear bag cable, and signage.

All of these improvements and additions should make for a much more pleasant experience for hikers that come from near and far to hike and backpack on the "Jewel in the Crown" - our highly acclaimed Foothills Trail!

2019 ANNUAL MEETING PICTURE SHOW

Do you have some great pictures of your fun along the Foothills Trail? At the 2019 Annual Meeting we will have a slideshow of digital pictures taken along the Trail. You may email pictures to info@foothillstrail.org or bring the picture files on a standard USB thumb drive and we'll load them onto a picture show computer.

The digital slideshow will run at various times throughout the weekend. By sending your pictures, you are also giving us permission to use them on our social media sites, such as Facebook and Instagram, as well as our website. Thanks!

FEATURED GUEST SPEAKER AT 2019 ANNUAL MEETING

Jennifer Pharr Davis

Jennifer Pharr Davis is a lover of long-distance trails and good stories. As a hiker, she has covered tens of thousands of miles on every continent but Antarctica. In 2011 she hiked 47 miles a day for 46 straight days to set the “fastest known time” on the Appalachian Trail. She also backpacked 550 miles while pregnant with her daughter and hiked 1,200 miles while nursing her son!

At age 24 Jennifer founded Blue Ridge Hiking Company to make trails accessible to hikers of all ages, genders, and ability levels. Her company is 11 years old, includes two locations, and takes over 1,500 people on hikes each year. Jennifer has authored seven books and written articles for the New York Times, Outside and Backpacker Magazines. In 2012 she was named a National Geographic Adventurer of the Year. Jennifer lives in Asheville with her husband, Brew, their daughter Charley and son Gus.

Brew Davis to provide Annual Meeting music

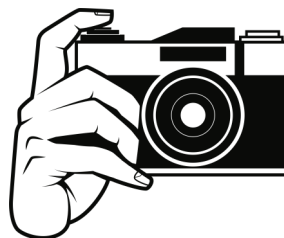
Keeping the performances in the family for the 45th Annual Meeting, Jennifer’s husband Brew, an accomplished musician, will perform songs from his first album during the afternoon Social Hour.

Brew Davis is an Asheville-based singer-songwriter who has always done things a little differently. Case in point . . . he grew up in Nashville and didn’t start songwriting until he moved away from Music City. He did return to it, though, in 2017 to record his first album. That was a 12-song, self-titled Americana effort, kind of a triangulation of bluegrass, Texas country, and folk music. It got airplay across the U.S. and as far away as Canada and Europe – ultimately landing at # 64 on WNCW’s end-of-the-year Top 100. In the spring of 2019, he recorded album # 2 called “Another Scarecrow Learning How to Fly”, which is scheduled to be released in early 2020. Brew is married to Jen Davis, who dragged him kicking and screaming into long distance hiking a decade ago. Now he has fallen in love with it and has never looked back. With Jen, he has hiked several thousand miles of trails in the U.S. and Europe, and is halfway through section-hiking the A.T.



Photography Contest

We will be holding a photography contest this year at our annual meeting. If you are interested in submitting a photograph that shows the beauty of our trail, please email us at info@foothillstrail.org to get the rules and submission information.



Foothills Trail Conservancy
PO Box 3041
Greenville, SC 29602
WWW.FOOTHILLSTRAIL.ORG

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FOLLOW THE FTC ON FACE- BOOK, INSTAGRAM, & TWITTER



Be sure to check out the Conservancy's page on Facebook and follow our Instagram for the latest in activities, updates, notices, and plenty of photos of interesting and beautiful places on the Foothills Trail. There is a link to the page on the FTC website homepage. Just scroll down a little ways and the Facebook logo is on the left. Click on it and it will connect you to the page.

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Andrew Gleason, maintenance coordinator, and all our Trail Captains who worked extra hard to keep the trail in tip-top shape.

