

Fall 2021

Footnotes

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

Volunteers Extraordinaire

Dedication- the quality of being committed or devoted to a task or purpose.

Some people in this world find something meaningful to do, and it is so satisfying that they give up a lot of other things that they could be doing, and passionately stick with that activity for an extended amount of time.

Some of our Trail Captains are among this group and fit the definition of “dedication” to a “T”. If you have hiked the Foothills Trail, from the Fish Hatchery Road to Burrell’s Ford, then you have seen evidence of this in the fact that the section could be considered immaculate. The sides of the Trail are trimmed back so well that there is no danger of getting poked in the eye by a lengthy branch, nor is there much chance of getting soaked by wet foliage that protrudes into a hiker’s “space”.

Over the last several years, hundreds of feet of trail bed have been widened or repaired in various places to combat “trail creep”, where hikers have shied away from the high side of the trail to avoid vegetation or roots. Along with this fine, but arduous work, is the promptness with which blowdowns are removed when they block the trail. Even the blazes are kept in pristine condition!

The Trail Captains, in this case, are Jerry and Mary Harvey, who live in Easley, SC, and are the epitome of dedicated volunteers. Jerry, who has been on the FTC Board for 10 years, has also been a Trail Captain for 13 years! A retired engineer, he has assisted in various construction projects on the trail, that benefited from his professional background. All the while, he and Mary have steadfastly kept this 3.9 mile section in tip-top shape for hikers and backpackers alike.



Volunteers Extraordinaire, continued.

The co-captain of this section is Mary Harvey, who is retired from the Clemson Extension Service, and works alongside Jerry, with loppers, hoes, and fire rakes. When a blowdown is disposed of, she is the assistant sawyer for the job, helping to haul off the limbs and logs.

Mary's twin sister, Cary Caines, and her husband, Royce, became interested in this work after helping Jerry and Mary for a while. They eventually adopted their own section of the Foothills Trail. A previous volunteer had to relinquish their duties due to health reasons, so Royce and Cary took over a 2.5 mile section from the Chattooga River to the crossing of Hwy 107 at Cheohee Road.

The pair started off getting areas freed from encroaching vegetation, and then began to work on widening the Trail and beating back the trail creep. Gradually, 30, 40, and 50-ft stretches were improved, and some poorly designed sections were rerouted to improve the drainage or slope. They even trimmed vegetation to reveal a small, picturesque waterfall. Hikers who had not been on this section in recent years said that it was so improved, it was like a brand new trail!

In addition to grooming their specific sections of the trail, the Harveys and Caines are also frequent helpers on many of the "Last Saturday" maintenance work days! The Foothills Trail Conservancy constantly receives kudos for how well-maintained the trail is, and the hard work and dedication of these two couples is part of the reason. If you encounter them on the trail, or see them at an outing or at the Annual Meeting, be sure to tell them "Thank You" for their DEDICATION!



Mary



Jerry



Cary



Royce



Reducing our Footprint!



This year, we are working towards further reducing negative impacts on our environment. As part of this endeavor, we are excited to be including our new FTC tumblers in this year's meeting fees to reduce our use of wasteful styrofoam and plastic cups and bottles! ***Each Adult (and college student) registration includes ONE tumbler and the family registrations will include TWO tumblers. You will receive these upon check-in.*** Additional tumblers will be available for purchase as well. Be sure to bring your tumbler future FTC events as well to help us reduce our footprint! Thanks!

Foothills Trail Conservancy 47th Annual Meeting

Table Rock State Park—November 5, 6, and 7, 2021

Deadline for Registration is November 3, 2021

(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 Table Rock 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 5

9:30 am	Hike 1 Departs (See enclosed hike list)
3:00 pm	Volunteers gather to help set up
6:00-9:00 pm	Friday Night Dinner in the Barn (BRING YOUR OWN PICNIC!) *Please bring all food AND drinks for your family. Thanks!* Presentation on the Grizzly Bears of Alaska by Heyward Douglass , FTC Executive Director

Saturday, November 6

8:00 am	Breakfast in the Barn (catered by Aunt Sue's)
9:30 am	Hikes Depart (see enclosed hike list) Lunch on your own
10am– 5pm	Hike, complete the scavenger hunt, and enjoy the park!
5:00 pm	Social Hour in the Barn– BYO Special Beverages with Snacks and Drinks by FTC Silent Auction Begins (continues until the end of the evening)
6:00 pm	Supper (catered by The Hungry Hiker)
7:00 pm	Annual Meeting Special Program about the "Maroon Bells Four Pass Loop" Trail by Heyward Douglass , FTC Executive Director Business Meeting, Door Prizes

Sunday, November 7

8:00 am	Breakfast in the Barn (Continental)
9:30 am	Hike 8 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.

HIKES ARE LIMITED TO 15 PEOPLE.

Friday

#1 - Bald Knob. Take a stimulating Friday sashay with **Cathy Foster**, FTC Board Member and Master Naturalist. This is one of the hallmark mountain trails of the South Carolina upstate, and leads to one of the most spectacular views at Table Rock State Park. At the terminus of the trail (elevation 2,849') is a sweeping view of the entire piedmont, from Greenville to Toccoa, GA. Keep in mind that the hike to Bald Knob is a fairly strenuous hike of about 6.5 miles (out and back). Meet at Carrick Creek Interpretive Center. Bring lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. A camera is highly recommended. 9:30 am to 2:00 pm

Saturday

#2 - Beech Bottom Falls and Sassafras Mtn. Join **Becky Gilstrap**, FTC Board member and Trail Captain, to see the magnificent Beech Bottom Falls, followed by a visit to the viewing tower at the summit of Sassafras Mtn, both of which should be surrounded by spectacular fall color! **Beech Bottom Falls** is a beautiful 100-ft falls reached on a relatively easy 1.1 mile trail that ends in a small viewing platform. The Sassafras Mountain viewing tower is the highest elevation in SC, at 3,553 feet, and has a gorgeous 360-degree view from the mountains to the piedmont. Meet at Pinnacle Pavilion to carpool to Sassafras Mountain. 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 **Bobbie Wilhite**, FTC Board member and Master Naturalist. 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 - Table Rock Shelter. Join **Tricia Kyzer**, FTC Board member and Master Naturalist, on a moderate hike to the iconic and historic shelter located partway to the summit of Table Rock. The shelter also offers a great view of the piedmont and park below – without having to go all the way to Table Rock. Meet at the Pinnacle Pavilion. Bring lunch, snacks, water, and a camera, of course! 9:30 am to 2:30 pm

GET READY FOR THE SILENT AUCTION!!!

It is time for our annual silent auction to raise money for the FTC!

We will have a variety of fun and unique items for you again this year.

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 find gifts for your family (or yourself)!

Please plan ahead –we will be able to accept cash or check only.

ANNUAL MEETING 2021 HIKES AND OUTINGS!!

Saturday, continued

#5 - Geology Hike. Join **Bill Ranson**, FTC Board member and retired Furman Professor of Geology, on an interesting and informative hike to see examples of various geological formations along a portion of the Foothills Trail. This will take place along a section to be determined by Professor Ranson. Meet at Carrick Creek Interpretive Center. Bring lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

#6 - Rainbow Falls. Join **Robert Stephenson**, FTC Board member and Greenville attorney, 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 Members **Andrew Gleason, Jerry Harvey, Scott Stegenga**, and others. Work will be done on several places on the Trail towards Pinnacle, as the FTC continues its rehab project funded by REI. Plenty of strong backs are needed! Bring gloves, lunch, and plenty to drink. Tools will be provided. Meet at Carrick Creek Interpretive Center. 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

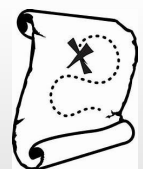
Sunday

#8 - 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 **Heyward Douglass**, FTC Executive Director, 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 am to 2:30 pm



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. Prizes are available for those who complete the hunt by Saturday evening!



We will have a few games and activities available for the family during our evening events and during the day on Saturday. You are welcome to bring your own as well. Please be mindful of keeping our activity area clean and organized. We will disinfect the items each evening.

Membership Renewal—Due January 31st

Foothills Trail Conservancy Membership Information

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 47 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.*

We have a variety of **Membership Levels**

- Senior/Student Individual \$15
- Oconee Individual \$25
- Gorges Family \$40
- Table Rock \$50
- Chattooga \$100
- Sassafras \$250
- Pinnacle \$500

You must be a current FTC member to attend the Annual Meeting. You may sign up for the membership at our registration table at the event if you are not a 2021 FTC Member.

**You may renew online at www.foothillstrail.org
and click “Join Today”.**

Membership forms may also be acquired at our meeting
or printed from our website and mailed to:

**Membership Renewal
PO Box 3041
Greenville, SC 29602**

Foothills Trail Conservancy 47th Annual Meeting

Registration Form

Table Rock State Park- November 5, 6, and 7, 2021

Deadline for Registration is November 3, 2021

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 \$52 per person

___ Saturday only -Adults \$41 per person

___ Children (12 and under) \$11

___ Saturday only -Children (12 and under) \$6

___ Family \$116

___ Saturday only -Family \$81

___ College Student \$32

___ Saturday only -College Student \$26

___ Scouts \$10

___ Saturday only -Scouts \$7

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

*****Reminder—registration includes reusable tumblers to use at this AND future FTC events!*****

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 help Sanitize/clean _____ Other as needed _____

Saturday: Breakfast: I can help Serve coffee/drinks _____ Sanitize/clean _____ Other as needed _____

Saturday Dinner: I can help Serve drinks _____ Sanitize/Clean _____ Other as needed _____

Sunday Breakfast: I can help Set up _____ Serve drinks/food _____ Sanitize/clean _____ Bring food _____

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

Throughout the weekend: Can help with sign in/silent auction/store or other similar duties _____

Please mail your registration and payment to:

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

GUEST SPEAKER IS FTC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Heyward Douglass



Although Heyward has visited and explored such places as Costa Rica, Panama, and Ecuador, and backpacked the AT, as well as the Sierras and the North Cascades, his recent “Grizzly Bear Photo Adventure” in Alaska definitely tops the list of the most exciting! From beginning to end, this expedition was, “totally different from anything I have ever done and may ever do again!” Every aspect of his trip was like living a dream or watching a National Geographic episode, “but you are in it!” Bobby Holliday visited the area around Denali National Park while Hey-

ward was near Kodiak. Heyward will add video footage of grizzlies and other wildlife that Bobby filmed on his trip.

After his Alaska adventure, Heyward threw on his backpack and flew to Colorado to do a short, but breathtaking, hiking trip in the mountains north of Aspen. Photographer Bill Robertson describes the area where Heyward went as one of the “most beautiful he has ever been to.” The *Maroon Bells Four-pass Loop* is not for the faint of heart, according to Heyward, but the scenery is to die for. He will take you along on his five day, four night jaunt through a Colorado wilderness.



Guidelines and Precautions for the 2021 Annual Meeting

We will be following the CDC guidelines again at this year’s meeting to ensure a fun AND safe time for all of us!

- ◆ Masks should be worn at all times while inside.
- ◆ Seating will be spread out to assist with social distancing guidelines.
- ◆ **Friday night’s dinner will NOT be potluck. Please bring your own food and drinks for your family/group to be enjoyed in the Barn.**
- ◆ Food and drinks for other meals will be served by catering staff and/or FTC volunteers.
- ◆ Please be aware of those around you and practice social distancing (6 feet apart) with people that are not in your family/group.
- ◆ We will have cleaner and hand sanitizer throughout the meeting for you, and our cleaning volunteers, to ensure your environment is as clean as possible!
- ◆ We appreciate your patience with our volunteers and staff as things may move a bit slower while we are taking these added precautions for your safety

Maintenance by Eagle Scouts, FTC volunteers, Baylor School, and GNHA

If there was a positive side to the Covid-19 Pandemic, it was that it got people out in the woods and onto the trails, in particular our Foothills Trail! It also contributed to a banner year for members of the FTC to volunteer for maintenance on our “Last Saturday” workdays. In January, FTC volunteers combined forces with an Eagle project at Burrell’s Ford to widen and repair 1,200 feet of the Trail and the spur to King Creek Falls! At the end of February, a large volunteer turnout made it possible to clear out almost all the blowdowns on the Fork Mountain Trail that had been on the ground for years. This had to be done with cross-cut saws because chainsaw work cannot be done in a wilderness area. Another session of trail widening and repair took place in March, east of Sloan Bridge, and June had volunteers working from US 178 to Chimneytop Gap to clear trailside vegetation and make repairs to steps and bridge tread.

Baylor School, from Chattanooga, TN, arrived on May 23 with 125 students. They divided in to groups of around 25 and cleared vegetation as well as widened and repaired trailbed for 5 days! They did a huge amount of work!

In addition to the Eagle project done in January, there were six more Eagle projects completed. A project in February at Pigpen Falls removed a section of old step treads and installed new ones, along with clearing vegetation along several areas of the Trail. In April, a staircase below Sassafras Mountain was removed entirely and replaced with a much more substantial one. Then, in May, two Eagle projects were completed by two scouts in the same troop on the same day! They both built bridges over Tamassee Creek, which is between Jumping Branch and Oconee State Park. That was a busy day, but it was made somewhat easier by FTC volunteers helping to carry in materials.

After a hot summer, the final two Eagle projects were completed; one scout built two bridges east of the Whitewater River – a smaller one of stacked timbers, and a larger one over a deep ravine. These replaced badly worn structures. The last Eagle project repaired an area that was badly eroded by a spring flowing from the side of the Trail along the Chattooga River. A drain pipe was installed, and very substantial rock steps from the surrounding hillside were added over it. The trail above the site was widened and moved over to align with the steps.

On the day the Eagle Scouts built two bridges, a contingent of FTC volunteers removed thick vegetation encroaching on the Trail along Laurel Fork Creek from Virginia Hawkins Falls all the way to Laurel Fork Falls. This was made possible because the Conservancy had recently purchased two Stihl gas-powered hedge trimmers that made for much quicker, more efficient removal of the thick growth.

Right in the middle of the hot, humid summer the FTC was also involved in a fund-raising / public service project. Pickens County, in a effort to remove unsightly litter from certain stretches of highway, offered non-profit groups the opportunity to be paid for doing this! The FTC put out a call for volunteers and 44 members showed up on a Saturday in July, and picked up litter on TEN miles of US 178! This raised \$ 2,500 for the Conservancy! Way to go FTC members!

Also, the Greenville Natural History Association (GNHA), a very active hiking group in Greenville, has become the “Trail Captain” for the section from Table Rock to Sassafras Mountain. They have done a lot of work clearing the Trail within the park, have done maintenance work, and helped report on blowdowns and trail conditions on the way to Sassafras. Many thanks to them for the hard work!





A group from the Baylor School, who sends students each year to help work on, and enjoy, the Foothills Trail.



A backpacker tests out the new steps installed near Sassafras.



Eagle Scout, Ethan Fisher, on the new bridge and steps.



Eagle Scout project steps at Sassafra.

Foothills Trail Conservancy
PO Box 3041
Greenville, SC 29602

WWW.FOOTHILLSTRAIL.ORG

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SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to all our Trail Captains and hard-working volunteers who ensure the trail stays maintained and in tip-top shape.

