



Carolina Mountain Club

Since 1923

eNews | Hike . Save Trails . Make Friends

April 2020

In This Issue

[COVID-19 and the Appalachian Trail](#)

[Closures of Public Lands Around Us](#)

[CMC Pandemic Week 1](#)

[Barnett Branch Trail Project](#)

[GPX Tracking Skill Class](#)

COVID-19 and the Appalachian Trail

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is communicating regular updates on the impacts of the COVID-19 virus on the Trail and its visitors, volunteers, communities, and partners through its website, social media, email, AT Camp, and through media partners like The Trek and Guthook Guides.

For the most up to date information, go to: wildeast.appalachiantrail.org/covid19. The patience and adaptability of A.T. clubs during this time has been incredibly heartening, especially in the move to online meetings, suspending hikes and work trips on the A.T.

The Conservancy is committed to keeping the well-being of its volunteer corps, adjacent Trail Communities, and visitors safe. The ATC will continue to monitor the situation, share information on closure statuses, and provide guidance on its website.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to Alivia Acosta at aacosta@appalachiantrail.org

Closures of Public Lands Around Us

by Danny Bernstein

The whole world seems to be closing and that includes parks, forests and even the A.T. It's important to document this. Visitor Centers and bathrooms on public lands were the first to close to keep their employees from interacting with the public.

YMCA of WNC closed on March 16, four days before all gyms were required to closed.



Great Smoky Mountains National Park closed March 24. The press release said that "approximately 30,000 people entered the park daily resulting in congested conditions at popular locations such as Laurel Falls, Newfound Gap, and Cades Cove. Visitors from across the country have flocked to the area due to Spring Break, wildflowers, and warm weather conditions."

DuPont Forest closed March 24 as well. "Closing state forests to the public is a decision I do not take lightly, and much consideration has been given to this decision," said NC Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "The bottom line is that these sites are beautiful and treasured places in our state where families and visitors can make positive, lasting memories. These state forests have experienced what many state parks and beaches have, too -- unsafe and overcrowded conditions that tax these resources. This temporary closure to the public is necessary, but rest assured, it is temporary."

The **Biltmore Estate Grounds** closed March 26. **Asheville City parks** and **Buncombe County parks** are closed as well.

Two days later, **Cherokee, Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests** temporarily shut down trailheads, access points to **Appalachian National Scenic Trail**. At the same time, most if not all NC state parks closed. The **NC Arboretum** just closed on Monday March 30.

At this time - Monday March 30 -

Pisgah National Forest is still open and so is the **Blue Ridge Parkway**. But who knows when that may change?

CMC Pandemic Week 1

by Danny Bernstein

My last hike with CMC was on the Foothills Trail led by Daisy Karasek on March 14. Two days later, the CMC Council put out a directive that all CMC hikes were canceled because of its concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic. How would this affect our members who depend on regularly scheduled hikes for their physical, mental and social well-being?

The last time CMC canceled hikes was during World War II. According to Bernard Elias, our one-time oldest member, hikes were canceled because at the time, most active CMC members were men who were fighting in the war. But what are CMC members doing during this current war?

On March 23, I sent out an email to about 40 active CMC hikers of all hiking levels to ask them about their current activities. Specifically I asked *What did you do instead of going on a CMC hike?*

Randy Fluharty, immediate past president, is lucky enough to be able to walk from his house. "Beth and I have been taking long walks in the neighborhood. Since we can go up Sunset and Patton mountains from our house, we can get a pretty good workout. I started running again on Friday."

Steve Pierce, an active hiker who has done the Smokies 900M twice, writes: "On Saturday I was one of a small group of six who "social distance hiked" on the MST from Good Rd. to Bald Knob (CMC hike # 374). On



Sunday, Janice and I rode on the BRP from AVL to NC 151 where the fog began rolling in. We did not hike on the MST due to large numbers of cars at the usual access points. We returned to Marion and walked the greenway at the Corpening YMCA. We feel it is important to try to get outside every day.”

Diane Jacqmin finished the pastel above, In a Hurry, and watched old tennis matches. The painting is of the England's Lake District.

Marcia Bromberg, CMC president 2012-013, is an avid swimmer. “I was fortunate that the JCC pool stayed open till the closing notice Thursday afternoon--single person per lane, no locker room access. On Saturday I led a group on my canceled Sunday half-day hike at Chestnut Heritage Preserve in SC. We drove separately and stayed far apart. We used to go somewhere to get a beer after our hikes. Now we're bringing our yard chairs which we set up at least six feet apart and drink beers we brought ourselves.” Marcia is the treasurer of the Friends of the MST board and has plenty of responsibilities in this role. 1

1 In a Hurry by Diane Jacqmin

Judy & Jim Magura hiked on Wednesday. “A few hikers did the scheduled hike led by Sharon Smith. We managed to stay at least 10 feet apart and well separated at lunch time. We hiked Saturday on the MST with two others. We went north from Mills River Overlook to Beaverdam Overlook. We saw a few families on the trail. Everyone was keeping their distance. We had our lunch at the Beaverdam parking area. Only one other person there and she was preparing to walk her dogs.” Bruce Bente is fortunate to have an acre of land on a hillside, and joint owner of a 3-acre lake with land around it. He spent the weekend doing yard work, both on his property and on the joint land. But he misses hiking.

Daisy Teng Karasek is staying fit by walking almost every day: Pilot Mountain with a few CMC members, Bent Creek and the grounds on the Biltmore Estate. On Saturday she and Karen Lachow walked their adopted section of Art Loeb Trail. She's been able to watch more streaming programs due to extra time and have several long phone conversations with family and friends.

Tish Desjardins is a dedicated A.T. trail section maintainer. She spent this past Sunday afternoon working on her A.T. section (Tanyard Gap to the Pump Gap intersection) and conversing with any thru-hikers that came along. As usual, she gets her exercise walking up and down the mountain roads in her community. She's still busy with the Forest Plan Revision draft with the Nantahala-Pisgah Forest Partnership meetings as CMC's rep and with the CMC group writing comments.

Barbara Morgan, CMC president 2016-2018, is usually a Wednesday hiker. She also hikes with an informal group of CMC friends. On Wednesday, she did a loop hike in the NC Arboretum, close to Asheville, where no carpooling was needed. “We parked at the French Broad Overlook and walked in from there. It was a beautiful day, and we enjoyed hiking and catching up with each other while keeping as much distance between us as we could remember to do. We did about 7 miles and including lunch in a quiet off-trail area, were active for maybe 3 ½ hours.”

Thomas Lucha, an enthusiastic half-day hiker, and his wife Linda decided that they could isolate by maintaining their section of the MST- (Bridges Camp Gap to Bennet Gap). “We did our Spring cleanup of blow down along our 3.2 mile section. We took pictures of the large tree blow downs for reporting to the sawyer crews while removing smaller trees with a hand saw. We all kept our distance which allowed for some unexpected social interaction in a safe setting. Best of all, we got in a 6 1/2 mile round trip hike.” Cindy McJunkin, a nurse, is concerned about contaminating others. “Saturday morning, I loaded my backpack and went out for a solo trip. I hiked to Purchase Knob and descended to the Cataloochee Valley by way of McKee Branch. I had a permit for campsite

2

#41 but found a spot to myself. I set my tent up near the creek and realized that the water sound was a balm for my anxiety.”

Sallye Sanders hiked with fellow CMC member Adrienne Chang in Pisgah NF - Thrift Cove and Grassy Road.

“On the weekend I took two neighbors on a wonderful wildflower walk on the Carolina Mountain Trail and Bent Creek Trail in the Arboretum. We saw trailing arbutus, Oconee bells, bloodroot, trout lily, little brown jugs.” Sallye echoes my biggest concern about keeping fit to hike. If I don’t keep hiking, I will lose the ability to hike uphill and hike any distance pretty quickly!!

Barnett Branch Trail Project

by Tom Weaver

In February we saw the completion of a long-planned 3-day project by the Carolina Mountain Club on the Barnett Branch trail in the Pink Beds. A total of 40 CMC volunteers took part in this project, which focused on repairing the boardwalk and bridge spanning the South Fork of Mills River. Due to a logjam, high water, and the inevitable toll of time on our trail structures in such a wet and dynamic climate, the bridge's abutments had been damaged and the bridge itself was knocked off of level. These hardworking volunteers were able to raise both ends of the bridge back to level and re-establish



solid support cribbing structures beneath the bridge.



In addition, they removed over 450 feet of rotted curbing, installed over 200 feet of new raised curbing, replaced over 80 rotted boardwalk tread boards, and repaired 2 rotted joists under the boardwalk. Along with Forest Service personnel, the log jam was cleared from beneath the bridge to help mitigate streambank erosion near the bridge abutments. In addition to the bridge and boardwalk work, the Pisgah Conservancy (TPC) was able to teach CMC volunteer trail crew members how to construct a locust ladder staircase. Two of them were installed in a steep area with erosion issues. These useful, long-lasting trail structures do a great job of controlling trail erosion, maintaining tread, and providing good footing. They will be a good replacement for simple check dams which fail relatively quickly under the stress of the heavy rainfall we receive here in Western North Carolina which leaves steep, difficult-to-repair drop-offs in the trail tread. Always good to have a new tool

in the tool belt.

Thanks to all the CMC volunteers who participated in this project! Your dedication and enthusiasm are greatly appreciated by the USFS and TPC!

For a great video by Gail Snowdon, click here:

<https://youtu.be/0pmb0yXkTLs>





Please mark you calendar with something to look forward to should the social ban be lifted by July



CMC Member Event - GPX Tracking Skill

CMC Members are cordially invited to a gpx hike tracking presentation at REI in Biltmore Park on Monday, July 13, 2020 at 7:00 pm. The program will be led by CMC hike leader Bob Levy. He'll cover four topics on the use of AllTrails and Motion-X phone apps: (1) using the apps real-time, as you hike; (2) importing and exporting gps tracks to and from the two apps; (3) using AllTrails on your PC or Mac to modify old hikes or create new hikes; and (if time permits) (4) adding and accessing your personal hikes to and from the CMC website. Afterward, we'll have time for q&a. We hope you can join us. There's no charge for the event.

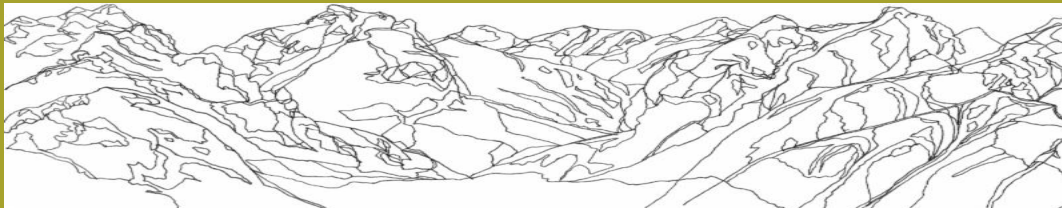
Jan Onan
Carolina Mountain Club
Council for Education and Outreach



The eNews is published on the first Friday of each month. Articles are due on the last Friday of the previous month. Send your news to eNews@carolinamountainclub.org. Please limit articles to no more than 1,000 words. You may send up to two photos as jpg attachments.

To join Carolina Mountain Club go to: www.carolinamountainclub.org. Click on "Join CMC" on the right side. Follow the instructions. Send all address and email changes to Dennis Bass at dbass3607@gmail.com. Your email changes will be automatically reflected in eNews delivery.

Carolina Mountain Club | P.O. Box 68
Asheville, NC 28802



[CMC Calendar](#) [Hike Reports](#) [Future Hikes](#)

