



The Blaze

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE APALACHEE CHAPTER OF THE FLORIDA TRAIL ASSOCIATION



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CHAPTER OFFICERS

CHAIR

Elwood McElhaney (850) 566-6830
emcelhane@embarqmail.com

VICE-CHAIR

Dawn Griffin (850) 509-6103
griffind@aol.com

TREASURER

James Kimbrel
jameskimbrel@hotmail.com

ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS

Ray Cade (850) 508-7593
raycade@hotmail.com

MEMBERSHIP

VACANT

NEWSLETTER/WEBSITE

April Edmonds (850) 519-1525
april.edmonds.35@gmail.com

PUBLICITY

Ron Harrison (850) 443-1665
ronaldwharrison68@gmail.com

TRAILS

Kent Wimmer (850) 528-5261
klwimmer2@gmail.com

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Dawn Brown (850) 668-0091
dbrown1948@embarqmail.com

Trail Updates Post Hurricane

APALACHICOLA NATIONAL FOREST – EAST AND WEST

Al and Mike Tucker have been making good progress in his section, especially with a dedicated group of volunteers that meet on the 1st Sunday of the month. We've mostly been concentrating on the far western trail section that was hit hardest by hurricane Michael where the damage was extensive.

I think what would be most helpful in ANF east and west, would be more trail masters, there are only a few in more than 70 miles of trail. No experience is necessary for these positions, Mike would be happy to bring folks out to the forest and let them choose whatever section they would like to maintain, be it one (1) mile or any length they are comfortable with. All tools and training will be provided, even transportation if needed.

~Al Ingle and Mike Tucker

ELINOR KLAPP-PHIPPS PARK

I'm glad to report that the hiking trails at Phipps Park received high priority from the city as to opening after the hurricane. A saw team from the City came in and opened our trails within a few days. Then we all went to work clearing the small brush and debris out of the trails so they were totally open.

All our trail masters are out doing a great job. They love the trails at Phipps and love working there. We have a new trail master-in -training, Jane Teuton.

If you want to do some great hiking without driving too far we're the place!!!!

~Dawn Brown, Section Leader, EKP Park



What is a trail master?

OUR MISSION:

The Florida Trail Association builds, maintains, protects, and promotes the unique Florida National Scenic Trail (Florida Trail), along with a network of hiking trails throughout the state of Florida. Together with our partners, the Association provides opportunities for the public to contribute to meaningful volunteer work, engage in outdoor recreation, and participate in environmental education. The Apalachee Chapter includes Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, and Wakulla counties.



Get on the trail and Get Your Hands Dirty

There's only one thing we love more than the trail, and that's our dedicated volunteers! Get connected today!

TRAIL SECTION

LEADERS

FNST: ANF WEST

Al Ingle (850) 509-1162

FNST: ANF EAST

Richard Graham (850) 566-5529

FNST: ST. MARKS

Dale Allen (850) 656-8050

FNST: AUCILLA

VACANT

FT. BRADEN TRACT

Howard Pardue (850) 386-1494

ELINOR KLAPP-PHIPPS PARK

Dawn Brown (850) 668-0091

TORREYA STATE PARK

VACANT

TRAIL MASTERS are responsible to Section Leader for the detailed development and/or maintenance of a segment of the FTA trail. Schedules and leads trail maintenance activities on a periodic basis to ensure good conditions of the trail all year.

TRAIL MAINTAINERS—Participates in the regular maintenance hikes performed by the Chapter Trails Coordinator, Section Leaders and Trailmasters.

FORT BRADEN

Several volunteers went out to prepare the trails for National Trails Day. I'm glad to report that the hiking trails in Fort Braden, are in fairly good condition. The Forestry office will be reblazing. The emergency spray orange blazing that they did to open up the trail after Michael and the orange flagging blazes used to temporarily designate the trail are already fading. If you are interested in helping reblaze, contact Howard Pardue. ~Howard Pardue

STATE PARKS REOPENING

Though still repairing damage, most Florida State Parks have reopened in some capacity in the wake of Hurricane Michael. They include St. George Island, Torreya, Three Rivers, Falling Waters and the launch area of St. Joseph Peninsula State Park. The campground at St. Andrews State Park is being reopened 30 sites at a time, so this is good news for paddlers on the Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail.

Contract crews funded by the Department of Environmental Protection's Division of State Lands have been clearing log jams on the Chipola River and Econfina Creek paddling trails. Marianna and the surrounding area hopes to re-establish itself as a recreational hub that is enjoyed by paddlers and other users. Please continue to check the Florida State Parks Website for more updated closure information (<https://www.floridastateparks.org/>)

Source: Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways and Trails, May 2019

Walking the Camino Francés

Submitted By John and Dawn Griffin

Like many members of our chapter, we had the privilege of walking the [Camino](#) Frances, also called the Way of St. James, an ancient pilgrimage route which runs more than 790 km (490 miles) across the top of [Spain](#), all the way to [Santiago de Compostela](#). Traditionally, the Camino starts from your home, although nowadays, many consider the official route to begin in the town of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, just across the border in France. We chose to divide the 490 mile route into three segments spanning several years. Thankfully, we were able to complete the final 160 mile segment from Astorga to Santiago this April-May. We met wonderful people of diverse ages from all over the world and we also appreciated ancient treasures found along the Camino. The Camino Francés or French Way is the most famous of the Camino de Santiago routes and is featured in many documentaries, books and movies such as 'The Way' and 'I'll Push You'. The Camino de Santiago has been a pilgrimage route for more than 1,000 years, and there is some evidence there was a route as far back as the 8th century. It is thought that this ancient route followed the Milky Way to what people believed at the time was the end of the Earth.

According to Christianity, one of the original 12 apostles – Santiago, also known as Saint James – helped to spread the religion throughout the Iberian Peninsula. One story says that when he died, his body was put in a boat, which landed on the coast of Spain, just west of where Santiago de Compostela stands today; while another story maintains that his body was found by a Galician farmer near the town of Padrón centuries later. Either way, it is said that King Alfonso II ordered the relics be buried in a specially-built chapel, which would later become the [Santiago de Compostela Cathedral](#), and attract pilgrims from across Europe. The Camino grew in popularity in the Middle Ages, attracting over 250,000 pilgrims every year, and it became one of the three most popular Christian pilgrimages – the other two being to Jerusalem and Rome. There are many beliefs on how the route was created. Many believe it was by word of mouth, by way of pilgrims giving each other tips about the route to take. For example, advice may have been given about which towns or villages to stop at along the route; where the streams and rivers were located to find water; and the safest way to cross the mountains. Over many centuries, a path began to form from the thousands of pilgrims who had followed these tips year after year. The modern Camino was created in the 1980s by Father Elias Valiña, the priest of the Galician village of O Cebreiro, who marked the ancient route with the symbol of a yellow scallop shell on a blue background, so that pilgrims could easily find the way. We would love to share our journey with you should you have any interest in hiking the Camino Francés. *Buen Camino!*



Volunteer Opportunities



MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

Become the Membership Coordinator. Duties include: Email letters to New FTA members, members with lapsed membership, and follow-up with Non-members that attended Tuesday night programs and other activities. This position requires an active chapter membership. If interested contact Elwood McElhaney.

RAFFLE COORDINATOR(S)

Raffles are held each month to help offset some of the expenses associated with renting the facility for our monthly meetings and purchasing needed items for trail maintenance. We need a volunteer or two to coordinate obtaining donations from local businesses and selling raffle tickets during the monthly meetings. Interested or have questions/ideas? Contact Dawn Griffin, Chapter Vice Chairperson at griffindd@aol.com/(850) 509-6103



Chapter Chair....



“The Apalachee Chapter of the Florida Trail Association and I need your help in fulfilling our mission.”

The heart of a volunteer is never measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference. ~D.Hollis



This is my first column since I was honored in the March Chapter meeting by being elected to the Chapter Chairman position, so I thought it might be appropriate to tell you a little about myself. I began hiking with the club a number of years ago when I responded to a newspaper advertisement and showed up for one of Dawn Griffin's 5:30 pm Stress buster hikes. As I continued to attend those hikes, met people and developed friendships, I thought I should officially join the club since I was participating in their activities for free. As a paid up member of the Florida Trail Association, I continued to participate in the hikes, but did not attend Chapter meetings or do anything else to support the mission of the FTA – to build, maintain, protect, and promote the Florida National Scenic Trail. I thought, “Heck, as long as I pay my dues, I’m doing enough.” I didn’t realize that my dues go to the State FTA in Gainesville, but the actual trail maintenance and support is done through the local Chapters without the benefit of those funds.

As my friendships with other members grew, I began to attend monthly Chapter meetings where I saw all of the things that are done locally by a few dedicated members, and I decided that if I was going to be a Chapter member, I should become more involved. I attended training and became an Activity leader. I participated in trail maintenance and saw some of the most scenic and inspiring regions in our area. I led hikes to show these and other areas to folks who shared my interests. I began to represent the Chapter in meetings with governmental agencies to provide input into the development of new hiking opportunities in our area. This ultimately led to my nomination and election to the position of Chapter Chairman.

I am honored to step into my new position. I have the fire and enthusiasm to continue the fine work that was done under my predecessors. I extend my thanks to those who have actively participated in the administration and activities of the Apalachee Chapter in the past. However, we can't do it by ourselves. The Apalachee Chapter of the Florida Trail Association and I need your help in fulfilling our mission. It doesn't take a lot of effort to make a difference. We obviously want you to come out for our hikes and other activities, but we would really appreciate it if you went one step farther. Sign up to assist on one of our trail maintenance activities. I absolutely guarantee that you will enjoy it. Bring a package of cookies or some other refreshment to the monthly Chapter meetings. Stay after the meetings to help us clean up. Bring us a recommendation for a new trail to hike or a speaker. Every little bit helps, and will help you feel more like a bona fide FTA member. The benefits of belonging are countless.

I'll see you on the trail.....~Elwood

CHAPTER MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

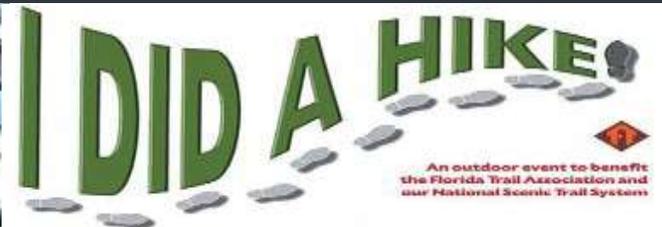
Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month starting with refreshments at 6:30 PM. Program starts at 7 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 2810 N. Meridian Rd., Tallahassee. For more information, contact ApalacheeFTA@gmail.com. Meetings are open to the public.

July 9th - 6:30-8:30 PM - “Social Meeting and Trail Tales”

August - No Chapter Meeting or Program

September 10th - 6:30-8:30 PM - Adam Fryska will share some of the recent trail updates and upcoming events/work parties for the FNST in the Florida's Panhandle. Adam Fryska is the FTA Panhandle Trail Program Manager – he coordinates trail building, maintenance, resource protection, and volunteer work along the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) from to Suwannee River State Park to the Northern Terminus of the Florida Trail at Fort Pickens in Gulf Islands National Seashore.

Exploratory Committee Volunteers Needed for IDIDAHIKE 2021



The Ididahike is an annual event and fundraiser for the Florida Trail Association designed to showcase the wonderful treasure in their backyard – the Florida National Scenic Trail. The event is usually held in the winter months and is organized by one of the state FTA chapters. In March (IDIDAHIKE’s 10th anniversary), several chapter members attended the event held outside Live Oak and hiked (the longest hike being 11 miles) along the scenic Suwannee River. It’s a one day event with multiple distance hikes (ex 3, 6, 10 miles) on the FNST. The Apalachee Chapter is interested in hosting the event in 2021- but before we make a final decision, an exploratory committee is being organized now to see if it’s possible for our area. There is a lot that goes into hosting this public event and volunteers are crucial to its success. If interested in being part of this committee (which will meet several times over the summer months), please contact Dawn Griffin at griffindd@aol.com.



Moonlight Paddle



Day Hike @ St. Marks



Day Hike @ St. Marks



Good food after a hike



Red Hills Ramble



Urban Hike



Hidden Gem Hike



You just never know who you will meet on a trail. Man with his guitar and dog.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES – JULY-SEPTEMBER

The Florida National Scenic Trail and other forest trails are part of the natural environment. Rough, uneven, and/or slippery surfaces, protruding roots, encroaching vegetation, fallen branches, mud and water, insects and other wildlife, irritating plants and other hazards may be present. **Be prepared for the weather, insects, and sun protection.** If you question whether a hike is within your ability, contact the Activity Leader. **Paddlers** must have a USCG-approved life jacket for each person and a sound-producing (whistle/horn) device on board while on the water. **Minors** under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult or guardian. Level: "L" Leisurely (1-2 mph walking pace), "M" Moderately difficult (2-3 mph walking pace), "S" Strenuous (3-4+ mph walking pace)

Unless indicated all activities are **open to the public** and **please sign up at MeetUp.com to attend.** Check our Meetup site for more details, dates, meeting locations/directions, and any last-minute announcements before starting out. LINK: <https://www.meetup.com/Apalachee-Florida-Trail-Hiking>

JULY

JUL 7 SUN (S) 8:00 AM - FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL MAINTENANCE: APALACHICOLA NATIONAL FOREST WEST - Lop, mow, blaze and clear the Florida National Scenic Trail in the western section of the Apalachicola National Forest. Bring lunch, snacks, insect repellent, rainwear, sun protection, first aid kit and plenty of water. Tools and safety equipment provided. **LIMIT 10 PEOPLE. YOU MUST SIGN UP; if you don't contact one of the trip leaders in advance, you cannot join the work party.** OPEN TO PUBLIC. For more information, carpooling, and directions contact: Al Ingle (850) 509-1162, al@capitalavionics.com or Mike Tucker (850) 545-3489, tuckems@hotmail.com

JUL 7 SUN (L) ECONFINA CREEK PADDLE: BAY COUNTY - Enjoy a relaxing 6-mile paddle on the beautiful, spring-fed Econfina Creek. We will enjoy cooling off in one of several crystal-clear springs. Plan to stop at a local restaurant to enjoy the local cuisine. No Pets. **LIMIT 12. Sign up by phone only.** Contact Gwen Beatty at (850) 545-0531

JUL 9 TUES (M) 8:45 AM - PERIMETER HIKE: ALFORD GREENWAY TRAIL - Many people have hiked the individual trails of the Alford Greenway, but few have hiked the entire perimeter. Come enjoy the open fields, woods, hills, lowlands and water. Hike is ~6 miles. Meet at the Alford Greenway parking lot at the end of Pedrick Road at 8:45 AM for sign-in and instructions. We'll start the hike at 9:00 AM sharp to avoid the heat. Bring plenty of water (2 bottles are recommended), snacks, insect repellent and wear comfortable walking shoes. Minors under age 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian for the duration of the hike. Dogs on a leash are welcome. **Sign up on Meetup.** Contact: Elwood McElhaney (850) 566-6830, emcelhaney@embarqmail.com

JUL 9 TUES (L) 6:30 PM - "SOCIAL MEETING and TRAIL TALES" @ La Fiesta Restaurant. Grab dinner and meet in a relaxed atmosphere at La Fiesta located at 2329 Apalachee Pkwy, Tallahassee. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

<http://apalachee.floridatrail.org/>

JUL 12 FRI (L) 6:00 PM - ST. MARKS TRAIL BIKE RIDE: ST. MARKS TRAILHEAD - 5057 Woodville Hwy, Tallahassee, FL 1-hour/ ~6-15 miles (with option to turn around). We will meet at the St. Marks Trailhead and ride from there to any distance you like. The trail is flat paved asphalt, so it is conducive to any type of bike. Bring bike, helmet, water, snacks, insect repellent, sun protection, and rain gear as needed. **Sign up on Meetup.** Contact: James Kimbrel (850) 524-0773, jameskimbrel@hotmail.com

JUL 21 SUN (L) - SPRING CREEK/CHIPOLA PADDLE - Enjoy a relaxing 4.5-mile paddle on Spring Creek & the Chipola River. We will enjoy cooling off in one of several crystal-clear springs. Plan to stop at a local restaurant to enjoy the local cuisine. No Pets. **LIMIT 12. Sign up by phone only.** Contact Gwen Beatty at (850) 545-0531

JUL 27 SAT (M) 9:00 AM WACISSA "SPRINGS HUNT" PADDLE: HEADWATERS WACISSA RIVER - Kayak/Canoe the headwaters of the Wacissa River to find the 12 named springs. Everyone must wear a life jacket. No pets. **Sign up on Meetup.** Contact: James Kimbrel (850) 524-0773, jameskimbrel@hotmail.com

AUGUST

AUG. 4 SUN. (S) 8:00 AM - FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL MAINTENANCE: APALACHICOLA NATIONAL FOREST WEST - See July 7th description.

AUG 10 SAT (L) 8:45 AM - HIKE: APALACHEE REGIONAL PARK CROSS COUNTRY COURSE ~3.1 MILES- Apalachee Regional park includes one of the nation's premier cross country facilities that was designed specifically for cross country running, in coordination with Florida State University and the Gulf Winds Track club. It hosted both high school and collegiate country championships. We'll start the hike at 9:00 AM sharp to avoid the heat. Although there are a few hills, this should be a relatively easy hike with great scenery. Bring plenty of water and wear comfortable walking shoes. Minors under age 13 are welcome but must be accompanied by a parent or guardian for the

duration of the hike. Dogs on a leash are welcome. **Sign up on Meetup.** Contact: Elwood McElhaney (850) 566-6830, emcelhaney@embarqmail.com

AUG 13 - NO CHAPTER MEETING

AUG 16 FRI (L) 6:00 PM - ST. MARKS TRAIL BIKE RIDE: ST. MARKS TRAILHEAD - 5057 Woodville Hwy, Tallahassee, FL 1-hour/ ~6-15 miles (with option to turn around). We will meet at the St. Marks Trailhead and ride from there to any distance you like. The trail is flat paved asphalt, so it is conducive to any type of bike. Bring bike, helmet, water, snacks, insect repellent, sun protection, and rain gear as needed. **Sign up on Meetup.** Contact: James Kimbrel (850) 524-0773, jameskimbrel@hotmail.com if you need further info.

AUG 24 SAT (M) 9:00 AM WACISSA "SPRINGS HUNT" PADDLE: HEADWATERS WACISSA RIVER - Kayak/Canoe the headwaters of the Wacissa River to find the 12 named springs. Everyone must wear a life jacket. No pets. **Sign up on Meetup.** Contact: James Kimbrel (850) 524-0773, jameskimbrel@hotmail.com if you need further info.

SEPTEMBER

SEPT. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 EVERY MON. (M/S) 5:00 PM - A WALK IN THE WOODS: LAFAYETTE HERITAGE TRAIL PARK (PINEY Z) - This is a moderate to strenuous walk through the woods at your length (3.5 miles+ at 3-4 miles/hour is common). We rest for a few minutes at the midway point. Dogs on a leash are welcome. Bring lots of water, wear comfortable shoes, and insect repellent. Meet near the restrooms and walk

at 5:15 PM sharp. Contact: Courtney Micots (850) 300-0399, courtnaymicots@gmail.com

SEPT. 4,11,18,25 - EVERY WED. 4:15 PM (S) STRESS BUSTER BRISK WALKS ("Trails, Grub and Tall Tales."): JR ALFORD GREENWAY TRAILHEAD - Come at 4:15 PM and be ready to hike a 3.5+/- mile loop at 4:30 PM sharp. Afterwards, plan to grab some dinner. Contact: Dawn Griffin (850) 509-6103, griffindd@aol.com

SEPT. 5, 12, 19, 26, EVERY THUR. (M/S) 5:00 PM - A WALK IN THE WOODS: MICCOSUKEE GREENWAY, THORTON TRAILHEAD - This is a moderate to strenuous walk through the woods at your length (4 miles at 3-4 miles/hour is common). We rest for a few minutes at the 2-mi. midway point. Dogs on a leash are welcome. Bring lots of water, wear comfortable shoes, and insect repellent. Meet near the restrooms and walk at 5:15 PM sharp. Contact: Courtney Micots (850) 300-0399, courtnaymicots@gmail.com

SEPT 8 SUN. (S) 8:00 AM - FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL MAINTENANCE: APALACHICOLA NATIONAL FOREST WEST - See July 7th description.

SEPT 10 TUES 6:30-8:30 PM - CHAPTER MEETING/PROGRAM: ADAM FRYSKA FROM FLORIDA TRAIL ASSOCIATION - Adam will share some of the recent trail updates and upcoming events/work parties for the FNST in the Florida's Panhandle. Adam Fryska is the FTA Panhandle Trail Program Manager. He coordinates trail building, maintenance, resource protection, and volunteer work along the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) from to Suwannee River State Park to the Northern Terminus of the Florida Trail at Fort Pickens in Gulf Islands National Seashore.

We encourage you to support the Florida Trail Association by becoming a member!

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State: _____

Zip: _____ County: _____

Primary Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Sign me up for the monthly e-blaze newsletter

Check here for digital copy of "The Footprint"

MEMBERSHIPS:

Individual levels start at \$35 Family levels start at \$50. Your membership allows us to grow and expand our conservation programs.

Trail Steward (\$35) Trail Protector (\$500)

Trail Builder (\$50) Trail Champion (\$1,000)

Trail Advocate (\$100)

DONATE:

Additional Contribution: \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

By Check/Mail: Make checks payable to the "FLORIDA TRAIL ASSOCIATION" mail to:
1050 NW 2nd Street, Suite A Gainesville, FL 32601

Online Membership:
<http://flashop.floridatrail.org/membership-donations/>

Online Donations:
<https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/floridatrail>

The Florida Trail Association is recognized as a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions made to The Florida Trail Association are tax deductible. Please contact FTA or the Chapter to obtain a receipt.

National Trails Day – June 2, 2019



We would like to express our gratitude for Publix sponsoring our chapter #NationalTrailsDay event!



Chapter Newsletter Editor
512 South Ride
Tallahassee, FL 32303