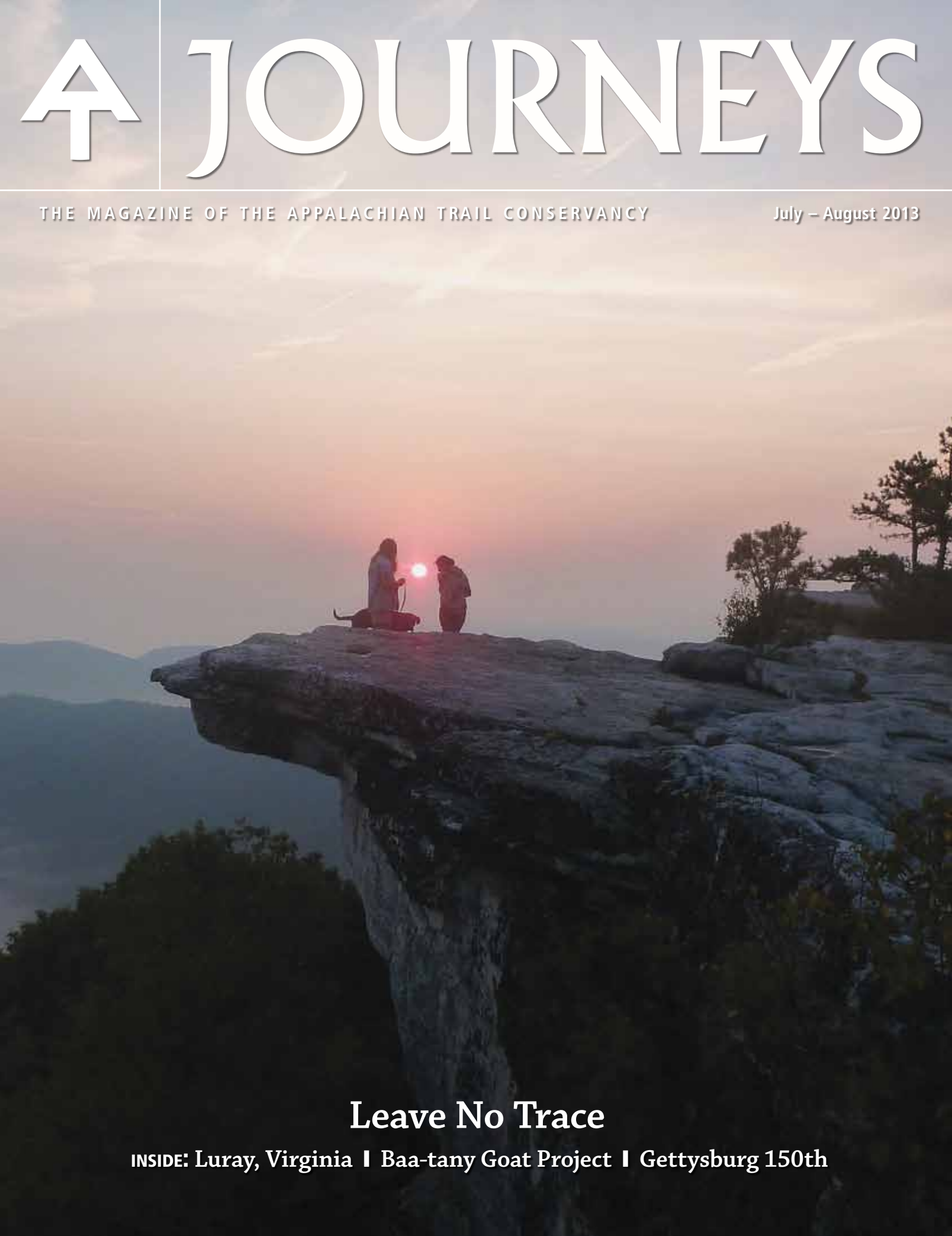


# A JOURNEYS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY

July – August 2013



## Leave No Trace

INSIDE: Luray, Virginia | Baa-tany Goat Project | Gettysburg 150th





**On the Cover:**  
A Labor Day sunrise at McAfee Knob.  
By Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
member David Carson.

# A JOURNEYS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY

Volume 9, Number 4  
*July – August 2013*

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FROM THE EDITOR |

## PURE OUTDOOR RECREATION. I HAVE MY OWN REASONS FOR LOVING THE NATURAL

world — these include (but are not limited to) a feeling of quiet escape, deep breaths in the open, fresh air, gentle breezes, gusty winds, tall shady trees, bright full moons, starry skies, birds, amphibians, reptiles, furry mammals, stunning sunrises, and serene sunsets. I also fancy campfires and taking my two dogs out to explore, and in doing so, I must be conscious of how to maintain a minimal impact on the wilderness I love. For starters, a leash is best at *all* times for both my boys and we only travel to and through places where they are allowed — and campfires are only enjoyed where permitted.

For those who love nature and the outdoors, the more wild and untouched the setting, the better the experience; but sometimes there is confusion about how to best enjoy it, yet still keep it in its most pure state. Look but don’t touch, especially in the case of wildlife, is a solid, basic, childhood rule to go by, but with hiking and camping — essentially spending hours or days “living” in the wild — there are some very carefully considered methods behind leaving a raw and beautiful setting exactly as one found it. This is not just a brief list of do’s and don’ts (although those are included); it takes some careful consideration and focused application of basic, but vital actions; and sometimes inactions. This is where Leave No Trace (LNT) ethics come in. More than a simple set of rules, these principles help to keep the outdoor environment we all adore protected and wild.

As an official non-profit partner with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is beholden to stand behind these important methods and to help educate and urge all who hike the A.T. to follow the standards they set (page 24). “In its simplest form, Leave No Trace is about making good decisions to protect the world around you — the world we all enjoy,” explains the LNT Center.

The experience that the A.T. offers is serious fun and seriously tough at times — and Leave No Trace is serious business, without which the experience would be lost. Considering the amount of people who get away on the A.T. each year, following LNT principles is vital. While the A.T. is often referred to as the “peoples’ Trail,” it is the place itself — the Trail and surrounding, protected land — that makes the experience possible. And it is the people — every single person who sets foot on every single inch of the Trail — who are responsible for leaving it as they found it. In a recent ceremony, celebrating Luray, Virginia as an official A.T. Community (page 38), a 2012 A.T. thru-hiker and local resident, Will Meade, said, “Our hope is that the designation doesn’t end with a one-day event, but builds momentum to protect the Trail and sustain a community sense of outdoor ethics.”

Because the idea of preserving the A.T. goes hand in hand with following LNT principals, the ATC supports endeavors like that of the innovative Baa-tany Goat Project, which helps to preserve native and rare flora on the grassy balds surrounding the Trail in the Roan Highlands (page 10). Also essential are A.T. ridgerunners, like Jerry Adams who, as he puts it, “are ‘boots on the ground’ to help folks safely enjoy the A.T.’s forests and footpaths, to share the gospel of Leave No Trace principles, and to keep tabs on the Trail and those using it.” (page 34) “We share directions and advice, remind people to store food in bear boxes, and to pack out their own trash. We explain that the sign saying ‘No Ground Fires’ really does mean that campfires are not allowed ... and yes, the leash law applies to your dog, too.”

It is not about what people are doing wrong — many are completely unaware of which of their actions are harmful — it’s about *gaining knowledge*, emphasizing what people are already doing right, and then paying that message forward so that it will spread like a sensational story along the entire Trail. Following Leave No Trace is a way for hikers to “possess” the Trail that they are so passionate about as intensely as they feel possessed *by* it — a sort of golden rule, ensuring a pure experience both inside and out. The best Trail magic an A.T. visitor could ever give or receive is to Leave No Trace. ⬆

**Wendy K. Probst** | *Managing Editor*

*A.T. Journeys* welcomes your comments, story suggestions, and photographs. Queries may be submitted via e-mail to [editor@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:editor@appalachiantrail.org).

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Summit of Round Bald, North Carolina/Tennessee – by Taylor Pendergrass

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One Hiker at a Time

Ideally, the increased, widespread practice of Leave No Trace principals will leave the Trail in a natural state for hikers — for both the near future and future generations.

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Now in its sixth successful year, the Baa-tany Goat Project utilizes the voracious appetites of angora goats as a means to restore the Roan Highland balds to their natural state.

An angora goat is part of a small heard whose large appetite helps to preserve native and rare flora in the grassy balds of the Roan Highlands. Photo by Jamey Donaldson



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**I READ WITH GREAT INTEREST** the recent *A.T. Journeys* article on the Rausch Gap A.T. shelter in Pennsylvania because my 18-year-old son, a hiker known as “Crazy Horse,” was able to hunker down there for two nights during “super storm” Sandy last fall. As you might imagine, his mother and I were a bit worried about him, but he emerged in fine shape. After not seeing another person for more than two full days, one of the first people he met in nearby Duncannon, Pennsylvania, was a woman who asked him where he had been. When he told her that he waited out the worst of the storm at Rausch Gap, she said that she had recently helped put the new roof on the shelter. My son said the shelter was great; and we expressed our family’s appreciation by sending a donation to the Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club. Meanwhile, Crazy Horse, completed 1,367 miles of the Trail last year, starting from Katahdin in early August 2012; he set out again from central Virginia in late April 2013 and expects to make it to Springer Mountain in late June — hopefully without any additional hurricane-related events!

*Peter Fontaine*  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

**AS A SECTION HIKER I RELY ON** the network of shuttle drivers listed on the Appalachian Trail Conservancy’s Web site to get from the car to my starting point. I find myself calling on them multiple times to cover territory, and consider them friends. None earned my friendship and gratitude more than John “the Mechanical Man” Stempa, of the northern Pennsylvania section. After finishing a February hike from the Delaware Gap SOBO (southbound), John went above and beyond to help me recover a priceless piece of personal property, my Naval Academy class ring, after I’d returned home and discovered it missing. I was certain I’d dropped it on the ground in the vicinity of my car at the trailhead. John drove over after dark on a cold Pennsylvania night and, after looking 30 minutes, found it! It’s now safely back on my finger. All of us who enjoy the A.T. owe a tremendous

amount to those who help us get around, offer assistance when crises emerge, and are our lifeline when the need arises. When I needed John’s help, he answered the call. Never have I experienced an act of kindness so personal, from a truly decent human being.

*Denis “Stinkbug” Powers*  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

**I GOT INTO MY A.T. JOURNEYS** magazine the other day, enjoying the great articles, but was saddened to read about Steve Longley’s untimely passing (“Crossing the River” May/June). My wife and I have hiked on several sections of the Trail but were never privileged to meet up with Steve to our [disappointment]. As I read the article I could envision the hundreds of hikers he so happily assisted across the Kennebec River. The A.T. has lost an icon, his family has lost a valued loved one, but the Trail will have his memory.

*Ken & Jan Lowe*  
TRINITY, FLORIDA

**AS SAD AS IT WAS TO READ ABOUT** the death of Stephen Longley, I was reminded of the day, June 29, 1989, I turned 60 and reached the Kennebec River to find a fellow named Bergeron waiting with his canoe. I suspect he and Stephen were good friends. I remember young Bergeron because an officer aboard our tanker the Monongahela in 1952 had that name. Tankers were named for rivers, and indeed there was a USS Kennebec. How can an old-timer, “Bob-A-Long Bob” in ’89, forget that day or any of my 1,100 miles of the A.T.

*Robert S. Corya*  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

**IT WAS A DISMAL DAY IN 2004; I** was standing on the west shore of the Kennebec River, and wondering how to get across. Not a soul around, when all of a sudden, a canoe started across towards me, from the east side. It was Steve Longley. What a welcome sight. This A.T. hiker appreciated his presence. Steve was very friendly and we took some pictures of the event, even though it was raining. He was there. We mourn

his passing at such a young age.

*Pete “Zipoff” Hirst*  
EDGEWATER, FLORIDA

**A.T. JOURNEYS IS ONE OF THE** best published magazines I read. The subjects are first class, as are the graphics. The writing is flawless. The May-June issue exemplifies it all. “Technology and the Trail” is specific and balanced. The story of “Appy” and “Pappy” is wonderfully rewarding to read. The [information] about the Walk Off the War program [in the Overlook column] is inspiring. The guidelines concerning “microscopic threats” to hikers — tick-borne illness, norovirus, and giardia — can be exceedingly helpful. The story of Steve Longley is that of a pure dedication to his job as the ferryman of the Kennebec River crossing. I hope my wife will be able to join an African American History Hike sometime (“A Pivotal Role”) — that article brought me [back] to Harpers Ferry, which I’ve wandered around several times, especially appreciating Jefferson Rock and the exhibit on John Brown.

*Charles A. Miller*  
NEW MARKET, VIRGINIA

FACEBOOK COMMENTS

I hiked the entire A.T., but in sections, over many summers when I was off from teaching high school. I found it physically and mentally challenging, but so spiritually rejuvenating. I highly recommend the Trail for its healing properties and commend each [other hiker who makes] the journey. Even though you’re in this together, be sure to hike your own hike. And take my thanks with you. 🏔️

*Shirley Gamble*

*A.T. Journeys* welcomes your comments.

The editors are committed to providing balanced and objective perspectives.

Not all letters received may be published.

Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

Please send them to:

E-mail: [editor@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:editor@appalachiantrail.org)

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# THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY (ATC) RECOGNIZED LEADERS

in conservation during our fourth-annual Awards Gala in Washington, D.C. in May. Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia and Congressman Jim Moran of Virginia served as Honorary Co-Chairs for this event. This year's honorees include Senator Susan Collins of Maine, Senator Mark Udall of Colorado, and Pamela Underhill, retired Superintendent of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Senator Collins and Senator Udall were nominated to receive the ATC's Congressional Leadership Award. Senator Collins was honored for her long history of supporting efforts to protect and preserve America's parks, greenways, and forests, particularly her efforts on behalf of the Appalachian Trail. Through her support of the Forest Legacy Program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund, nearly one-million acres have been protected in Maine alone. Senator Udall was honored for spearheading numerous programs and legislative initiatives designed to protect our precious landscapes across the United States. He has been a great friend to the A.T. through his ardent support of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, National Park Service (NPS), and the U.S. Forest Service.

Pam Underhill was honored with the Vanguard Award for her work with the NPS. She served as a federal employee for 37 years before retiring in 2012. Thirty-three of those years were spent at the Appalachian National Scenic Trail Park Office. As the A.T. Superintendent, Underhill oversaw the effort to put the A.T. on public lands. Hundreds of land tracts were acquired to protect the A.T. footpath under her leadership, leaving a lasting legacy of land conservation and a cooperative management system that will steward the lands acquired for generations to come.

L.L.Bean received the Corporate Leadership Award. L.L.Bean is one of the largest corporate contributors to the ATC and continues to support the grassroots efforts of thousands of local volunteers. Since 1982, L.L.Bean

has donated more than a half a million dollars to support the ATC's Grants to Clubs program. This program, administered by the ATC, helps support A.T. maintaining clubs and their partners to complete necessary projects along the Trail. These projects include Trail, shelter, and bridge construction, recruiting and training new volunteers, purchasing tools and safety gear, developing educational materials, and community outreach. We were also honored to have the Weather Channel's Meteorologist and Storm Tracker, Jim Cantore — an avid hiker with a passion for the outdoors — as an awards presenter at the gala this year.

Support from congressional leaders, our agency partners, and corporate supporters is critical for the success our programs. Our annual Awards Gala recognizes and thanks them for their support. ⬆

J. Robert Almand | Chair



Senator Udall and Congresswoman Capito at the recent Awards Gala.  
Photo by Matthew Barney

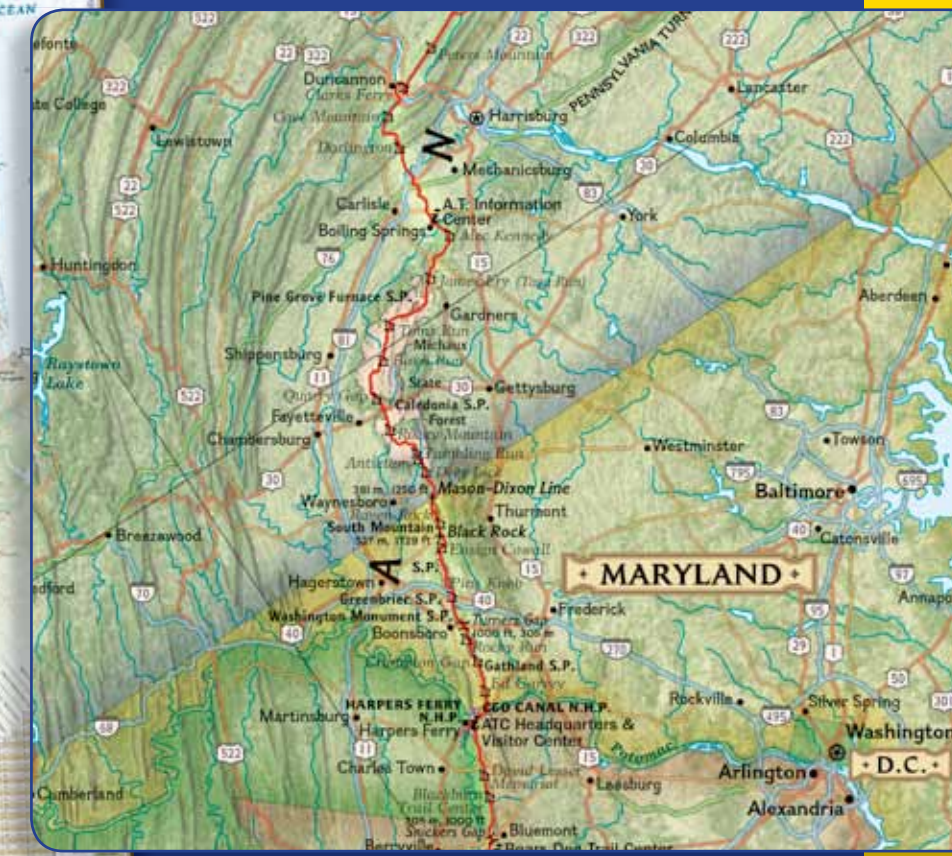


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# Beneficial Browsing

THE BAA-TANY GOAT PROJECT



*Native green alder is considered rare in the Roan Highlands.*

BY LEANNA JOYNER

**PRICKLY BLACKBERRY BRAMBLES ARE NO MATCH FOR THE** voracious appetites of angora goats that enjoy this frequent meal during their summers on Grassy Ridge in the Roan Highlands along the A.T. in North Carolina and Tennessee. They're doing their part to manage the sensitive ecosystems rife with rare, threatened, or endangered plant species endemic to this high elevation range. There are more than 800 plant species, including a native species of bentgrass that is thought to be not yet botanically described or named. "Everything that you see at eye level once you're up at Carvers Gap is essentially globally rare. That includes every forest community, every shrub bald around there. Some are rarer than others," says Jamey Donaldson, the botanist and visionary planner behind the Baa-tany Goat Project. "That's important because the blackberry bald is the only plant community that isn't globally rare."

The goats' job is to browse the woody growth, like blackberry, that competes with native species being edged out by this type of invading plants. The unique habitats of the Roan Highlands include grassy, alder, and rhododendron balds. However, these types of balds are distinct environments, and each must be managed accordingly, explains Jamey Donaldson of the project intended to restore the western balds of the Roan, from Carvers Gap to Grassy Ridge.

Jamey is in his sixth year of studying the use of goats as a means of restoring the balds to their natural state. To date, the study demonstrates native grasses are on the rise and blackberry thickets are declining. "It's more important now (than six years ago) because we have data sets that measure what we've been doing in meaningful ways. [This data] points to a lot of things specifically that mowing can't do. The risk for a number of desirable species is too high for mowing exclusively," says Jamey.

## RARE GREEN ALDER

The predominant belief is that these balds were grazed by mega fauna (such as mastodons and mammoths) in the glacial age of North America's evolutionary history and later maintained by elk, bison, and deer before European settlers started grazing livestock. Related to the glacial history of these ancient mountains is the presence of green alder, what Jamey calls the "rarest" plant community on the





mountain. “Roan Mountain has the world’s one and only southern Appalachian alder bald. It’s the one place south of the last glacial boundary besides two small areas in Pennsylvania. Roan Mountain’s green alder is 300 miles away from the closest green alder as a species and more than 500 miles away from its normal range,” says Jamey. He says the most pertinent application of the goats’ work in the protection of the rare species of alder is to walk through the thickets, selectively browsing blackberry and other flora there without compromising the alder. “It’s the thing goats can do that people and machines can’t. If we tried to use mowers, the bush hog, or a weed whacker, it would cut the community of alder itself,” says Jamey.

Botanist Kevin Caldwell, with Mountains to Sea Ecological, says he now feels convinced of the Baa-tany Goat Project’s positive impact on the preservation of green alder. “I initially thought it was crazy, but the primary, visible, and empirical facts [were evident] when I saw the browsed alder thickets. Jamey pointed out the density and numbers of rare species coming up in them that the goats weren’t eating. I was instantly impressed because they weren’t found very well outside the thickets,” said Kevin.

Part of the explanation for the healthy growth of other species among the alder is the nitrogen-rich soil. Alder has a symbiotic relationship with nitrogen fixing bacteria (Frankia spp.) that enriches the soil to assist other plants’ growth. This is unlike soil tested from Grassy Bald and Rhododendron Bald. Beyond flora, the alder flycatcher, a rare bird in North Carolina and Tennessee, is being studied for its nesting distribution in the area between Carvers Gap and Grassy Ridge.

Previous page: Blackberry brambles are no match for the voracious appetites of the angora goats. From above: Great Pyrenees dogs protect the goats both off-season at nearby Shady Valley Farm and in their summer home on the Roan; Dubbed by their identification number rather than a name until their adoption each year, the goats’ qualities, from attitude to hair growth, are detailed in adoption notes provided to sponsors of Adopt a Goat — a fundraising effort that helps to support the goats’ working vacation on the bald. Photos by Jerry Greer

## THE GOATS OF ROAN

In 2012, the 27 munching mouths that toiled on Roan Mountain collectively browsed 14 acres, more than double the six acres cleared in 2008, their first year, when 34 of them were on the mountain. Counting goat days per season, Jamey says it took more than 527 days per acre when they started and now it takes 245 days per acre. Their efficiency, despite a drop in the goatherd on the mountain, is due to re-browsing of previously treated plots. As they revisit former tracts there is less and less blackberry to eat because the energy of its root system is undermined, making it a struggle to grow new leaves. Once those few bits of new growth are devoured, goats move on to other sites. Like hikers, goats appreciate the all-you-can-eat plan, so life on Grassy Ridge is good because there’s always more to eat there than in a pasture.

The distinctive shaggy hair of angora goats is part of what makes them perfect for their work at an elevation between 5,700 and 6,100 feet. They function well in cold, heat, and

*Like hikers, goats appreciate the all you-can-eat plan, so life on Grassy Ridge is good.*

rain. But, once their hair grows out, it doesn’t have as much oil to repel rain. That’s when they can get soaked to the skin. In 2008, after six straight days of rain, one goat became hypothermic. Jamey carried the goat, named G-Man, two miles off the mountain to medical care to ensure his treatment and recuperation. “I have learned that if you can pick up a goat or hug it then something is wrong.”

Not being able to hug a goat may be universal, but there are other subtleties that differentiate the goats. Some are more outgoing than others; they like hand-fed treats and being scratched behind the ears. Others don’t want to ever be touched under any circumstance. The prevailing characteristics of the goats often include curiosity, cantankerousness, and a sturdy build. Goat number 230 holds the best-all-around award. She’s a happy moaner, vocalizing her delight in most everything she does: eating, chewing cud, nursing kids, or sunning herself. She’s also sociable, strong, and has a voracious appetite (a prized trait among Baa-tany Goat Project organizers).

Other superlatives for the Baa-tany Project goats include: ambassador, most un-tamed, busy-body, best candidate for working at a petting zoo, or most likely to thru-hike the A.T. Dubbed by their identification number rather than a name until their adoption each year, the goats’ qualities, from attitude to hair growth, and history of getting separated or lost from the herd during their migration are detailed in the adoption notes provided to sponsors who support their work. Adopt a Goat is a fundraising effort spearheaded by the Friends of Roan Mountain to support the goats’ working vacation on the bald. The income from the sale of Roan Grown Mohair yarn and a children’s book, *Baa-ily Goat* also supplement the project’s operational costs.

When the goats aren’t on the bald they reside on Todd Eastin’s farm in Shady Valley, Tennessee. Their three-season residence in Shady Valley carries a monthly expense equivalent to about \$500, shouldered by Todd as part of his commitment to the project. He maintains responsibility for the health of the animals on and off the bald, administering anti-parasite medicine, sheering, trimming feet, and breeding. This year, a number of new kids born in May join their mothers on Grassy Ridge. Todd expects their exuberant antics of leaping off rocks, playing together, and clambering atop adult goats or dogs caught lounging will serve as perpetual entertainment this summer.

Todd’s Great Pyrenees dogs protect the goats where they live in Shady Valley and accompany them to their summer home on the Roan. Attended by the dogs, enclosed by a solar-



powered, electric, movable fence, and cared for by volunteer goat herders throughout the season, the goats are currently enjoying another season on the job. Partners, including the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, Friends of Roan Mountain, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, and Tennessee Eastman Hiking & Canoeing Club, among others, hope this ongoing effort will continue to benefit the 27 globally-rare plant communities of this beautiful area so that it can be enjoyed for years to come.

This year, visitors to the Roan Highlands, for goat watching or scenic hiking, may be greeted by a ridgerunner, hired by the partnership to share information about the sensitivity of this area and encourage responsible recreation by imparting Leave No Trace ethics, like staying on marked trails, keeping dogs leashed, taking nothing from the environment, and leaving nothing behind. ♡





# I TRAILHEAD I

CAIRNS ON THE NORTHERN END OF THE A.T. BY DANIEL JOHNSON.

## Prevent Future Norovirus Outbreaks

A number of A.T. hikers have contracted the highly contagious norovirus this season. The predominant symptoms are nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, and mild fever. Victims can become dehydrated and weakened, sometimes requiring hospitalization. While the symptoms usually resolve within 24 hours, they are severe and come on suddenly, making it difficult for those affected to get to sanitary facilities and making it more likely that the illness will spread. The virus is transmitted by contact with an infected person (person-to-person), contaminated food or water, or contaminated surfaces.

### How can such outbreaks be prevented?

- ▶ Practice good sanitation, including frequent hand-washing with soap and water, particularly after toileting and before preparing or eating food. Hand sanitizers do not appear to be effective against the virus.
- ▶ Follow Leave No Trace practices for disposing of human waste, far from the Trail and at least 200 feet from water sources, campsites, and shelters.
- ▶ Treat all water from natural sources, even springs. Boiling for at least one minute is best; or filter and then treat the water with purification/disinfectant tablets according to manufacturer instructions.
- ▶ Do not share water bottles or eating utensils or eat from the same food bag or dishes as others.

For more information visit: [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov) and [appalachiantrail.org/LNT](http://appalachiantrail.org/LNT)

## Another Successful SWEAT Crew Season

BY BRYAN ALPER

**YOU MAY BE A THRU-HIKER, A DAY-TRIPPER, A SLACKPACKER,** a switchbacker or a section hiker, but keep in mind that any recent Appalachian Trail hike through the Smokies has been made possible in part because of the Smokies Wilderness Elite Appalachian Trail (SWEAT) crew members who volunteered to reshape its corridor. This year, the SWEAT crew will continue to work its way through a seventh season and has already demonstrated itself as an invaluable part of Smokies management, going farther into the back country and completing work that no one else could.

Thirty-one maintaining clubs, designated by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) as the maintenance managers of specific sections of the A.T., are varied in size, organization, background, and character. However, all clubs share one common concern: the well-being of the Appalachian Trail. It is their maintenance and management of the Trail that both assures its continued existence and gives it special character. In the Smokies, the ATC works in close partnership with the volunteers of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club who lead A.T. management and maintenance of the Trail between Wesser, North Carolina and Davenport Gap, Tennessee. Through this partnership, the SWEAT Crew was developed.

Top reasons to join the SWEAT Crew vary with each volunteer. Participants could expect features and benefits to include a week-long trip with food, tools, and equipment provided at no cost, and opportunities for certification in Cross-Cut Saw, Wilderness First Aid, and as a Leave-No-Trace-Trainer. Volunteers learn about Trail construction and maintenance from A.T. professionals and get to see Great Smoky Mountains National Park like no one else.



Rewinding to 2012, a third season veteran SWEAT Crew volunteer, Joe Sanchez, talks about the reason for taking another trip. "I am here to get a different perspective to life on the Trail," he explains. "I think a lot of people take for granted the structure of the A.T. It's nice to see the smiles and comments of happy hikers when they see us working." Some volunteers apply invaluable skills that they learned

through a two-week Wilderness College, which is offered to select individuals before the start of the SWEAT Crew season. The unique and educational experience is now made possible each season by Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS) and the ATC. After hiking almost 30 miles in three days, with individual averages of 55-pound packs, water shortages due to drought conditions, and a real bad storm to deal with, the crew is reminded that the emphasis of the trip is on safety. Eye protection, helmets, gloves and all essential gear won't be compromised. Trail work is important, but it's more important to get everybody home in working condition.

Tarah Slusher, from Knoxville, Tennessee, says, "My favorite part [of the 2012 season] was the sense of community ... I loved knowing that it wasn't just about what I was doing and that I wasn't alone with my passion. I am part of something bigger than myself and helping preserve something that will be here long after I am gone, and that, I think, is what SWEAT Crew is all about." Trey Coyle and Steven Epps, season 2012 SWEAT Crew co-leaders, were essential to the performance and planning of the success of the teams in the field.

The SWEAT Crew has congregated again for this 2013 season at Soak Ash Creek, the base camp within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park for all program volunteers.

For more information visit: [www.appalachiantrail.org/crews](http://www.appalachiantrail.org/crews)



## National Trails Award

**AMERICAN TRAILS RECOGNIZES EXEMPLARY PEOPLE WORKING** to create a national system of trails to meet the recreation, health, and travel needs of all Americans. National Trails Awards are given out every two years during the American Trails International Symposium.

This year, Morgan Sommerville is completing his 30th year of service to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). After hiking the majority of the A.T. in 1977, Morgan has spent the next 30 years protecting it so millions of others could experience the Trail as it was intended. As the Southern Regional Director of the ATC — overseeing Trail management in Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee — Morgan's dedication to the Trail over three decades has protected the beloved footpath from numerous external threats, including development, mining, power line crossings, and commercial use. An unfaltering partner, he has developed and maintained a premium route suited for America's longest National Park unit, while, above all, protecting the experience treasured by the millions who set foot on the A.T.

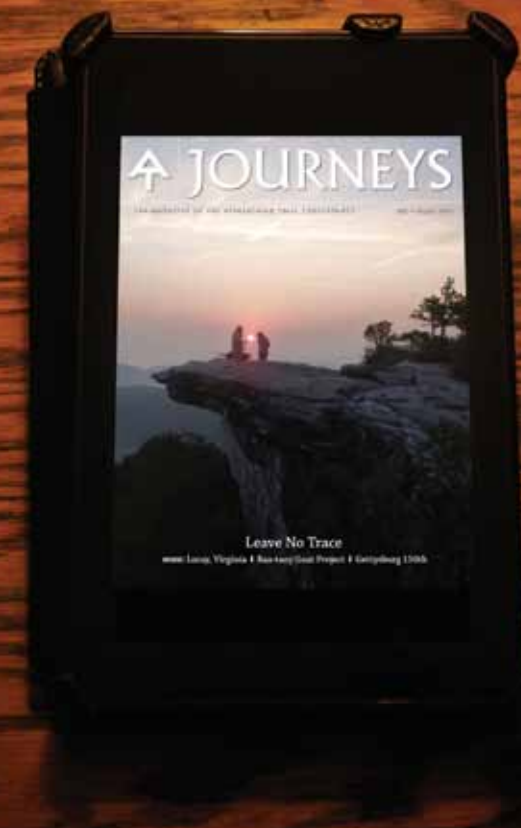
Of equal importance is the manner in which Morgan has led these efforts. Whether it be working toward a partnership with equestrians in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, or working with a diverse coalition to acquire land for the A.T., Morgan works tirelessly to ensure that all voices are heard and that resolutions are in the best interest of the Trail. He believes wholeheartedly in the grassroots effort that defines the A.T. and puts volunteers at the forefront of A.T. management.

Morgan has designed, developed, and worked consistently to find funding for programs in the southern region, which have seen the completion of significant relocations and improvements of the A.T. He is an expert Trail designer who has laid out many of the A.T.'s most celebrated Trail sections. Morgan has also never missed a year of "Hike the Hill," a congressional liaison program providing leadership for volunteers and partners to advocate for the A.T. He's assisted in the development of the U.S. Forest Service backcountry accessibility guidelines and worked to make the landmark document a reality.

Serving on the Partnership for National Trails System (PNTS) board, Morgan connects non-profit members, trail organizations, and federal agency partners to protect, complete, and steward the 30 National Scenic and Historic Trails. One of his biggest accomplishments is the acquisition of the Rocky Fork tract. The 10,000 acres was one of the largest unprotected tracts in the southern Appalachian Mountains. In cooperation with dozens of federal, local, and state partners, Morgan worked for more than 25 years to help acquire this high-elevation tract. Vital to the A.T., this unique natural resource has great economic value to the surrounding community. Last October, partners announced that more than 2,000 acres in the tract will become Rocky Fork State Park, Tennessee's 55th state park.

Morgan heads a staff of four in his regional office, and before each staff meeting he repeats his motto, "We say yes to success!" The motto defines his leadership style and reflects 30 years of positive outcomes, making America's most beloved footpath the best that it can be.

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## Wenger Departs as Executive Director

This past June, Mark Wenger, executive director and CEO of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), announced that he will depart the ATC effective July 1, 2013. This decision was based on the best interest of the organization as well as Mark's personal interest to pursue other professional opportunities. Mark will continue to support the ATC in other capacities — as a volunteer and as a supporter. Steve Paradis, former COO of the ATC, will assume Mark's responsibilities as interim executive director until a permanent replacement has been selected.

Steve's six years of prior ATC service uniquely qualifies him for this interim assignment. We greatly appreciate his willingness to provide the necessary leadership to our organization in order to ensure a smooth transition. All ongoing programs and approved initiatives will remain on track while we complete the search for a new executive director. We are confident a suitable replacement will be found by the end of this year.

The entire ATC Board, and the ATC staff, wish to thank Mark for his contributions over the past year-and-a-half and hope that you will join us in wishing him the very best in his future endeavors.

## 2013 A.T. License Plate Grants

**THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY (ATC) IS PLEASED TO** announce this year's recipients of North Carolina Appalachian Trail License Plate grants for projects that enhance the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in North Carolina. Thirty-five-thousand dollars was granted this spring to 11 individuals and partner organizations including Trail clubs, schools, botanists and ecologists, and environmental and conservation groups. Overall, A.T. specialty license plate sales in North Carolina bring the ATC about \$120,000 each year.

This year's recipients include the Carolina Mountain Club, East Tennessee State University, Friends of the Smokies, Nantahala Hiking Club, North Carolina State University, Regulus Designs, Southern Appalachian Cooperative Weed Management Partnership, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, Southern Appalachian Raptor Research, Summit Charter School, Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club, and the Wilderness Society's Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards.

Some of the projects that this grant will help support include monitoring and disease analysis of the endangered Gray's Lily along the A.T. corridor on the Roan Mountain Highlands, repair of food storage cables at Mollies Ridge and Cosby Knob shelters in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, help to support invasive plant workshops and other related activities along the A.T., complete a five-year bird monitoring project in the A.T. bald habitats, and continue the support of Summit Charter School's eighth grade A.T. water monitoring trip.

This grant program is funded by drivers who purchase and renew their North Carolina A.T. specialty license plates. Twenty dollars from each license plate is given to the ATC to support its work in the state. This money is used to fund the grant program, for A.T. greenway acquisition, and to help support the work of the Southern Regional Office of the ATC in Asheville, North Carolina. Specialty license plates for the A.T. are a way to support the ATC in its work to sustain the Trail into the future. A.T. specialty license plates are currently offered in Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia.

For more information visit: [www.appalachiantrail.org/plates](http://www.appalachiantrail.org/plates)

## Hikers Injured in Damascus Trail Days Parade

**THE MOST CELEBRATED AND LIGHT-HEARTED EVENT OF THE** annual Trail Days festival in Damascus, Virginia turned traumatic when a car plowed through the hiker parade this past May. According to news reports, an elderly driver, who police said was part of the parade, suffered a medical episode and accelerated into the crowd at 25 miles per hour. The vehicle struck more than 50 hikers, pinning at least one underneath the car. Several people rushed immediately to lift the vehicle off the hiker. Police, firefighters, paramedics, and hikers rendered aid to the victims, and a Damascus firefighter dove into the car to turn off the ignition. Within minutes, three hikers were transported by helicopter and five by ambulance to area hospitals and trauma centers. The driver was also hospitalized. Although some of the victims were initially said to be in critical condition, all were pronounced stable within a few hours of the accident, and most were released the same day. Two hikers and the driver were hospitalized for several days before being released. The long-term impacts of the injuries of the most severely injured hikers are unknown. Early reports from the town indicate the parade will continue next year, but policies and procedures for the parade will be reviewed. 📌

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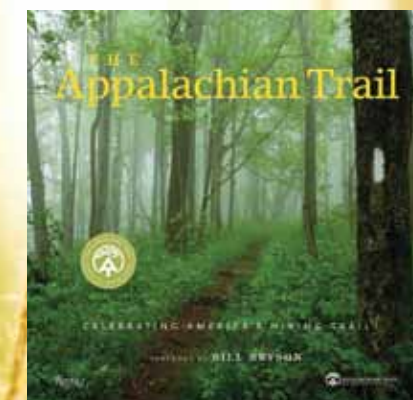
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# MONUMENTAL HISTORY

150 YEARS AFTER THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG, A PENNSYLVANIA TOWN SERVES AS A PERMANENT NATIONAL MEMORIAL TO THE SACRIFICES OF THE CIVIL WAR.

BY SANDRA FRIEND AND JOHN KEATLEY







## FROM WHERE THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CROSSES US 80

— the Lincoln Highway — on its way through Caledonia State Park, it's less than 15 miles east to a town that every American knows by name. July 1, 2013 marked the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, considered the turning point in the Civil War. After success at Chancellorsville, Virginia, General Lee's army pushed north in 1863, intending to either take Harrisburg or sweep into Baltimore and Washington to force President Lincoln to come to terms with the Confederate States of America. Merely a stop for resupply, Gettysburg became the chance meeting spot of Union and Confederate forces. After the staggering loss of 51,112 men from both armies, the Confederates retreated back across the Mason-Dixon Line, affording the Union a ray of hope.

Inside Sweney's Tavern, a curl of steam rises from a bowl of peanut soup. Known, as part of the Farnsworth House, as the place with "real Civil War food," it was a respite from days of rain on the Appalachian Trail. We hiked over South Mountain in a persistent downpour, scrambling across wet boulders and sloshing down the Trail, crossing two routes the Confederate Army used in 1863. Catching a ride from Caledonia State Park into downtown, we shed our thru-hiker identities and put on "town clothes" to explore Gettysburg on foot. Walking to dinner from the Gaslight Inn with a borrowed umbrella, we were cheered by thoughts of a warm, dry place to sleep the next two nights.

While perceived as a driving destination — thanks to the narrow lanes connecting battlefield memorials spread across nearly nine square miles of the Gettysburg National Military Park — Gettysburg provides visitors on foot an easy way to explore American history. From downtown, it takes a free trolley bus ride of 15 minutes to reach the Gettysburg National Battlefield Visitor Center, home to the country's largest museum devoted to the Civil War. Inside is a bustle of humanity, even on a weekday:

school groups, package tours, day-trippers, and die-hard history buffs like the couple we shared breakfast with, who honeymooned here 50 years ago. Perusing the museum, a masterpiece of interpretive storytelling, can take hours. It's a series of galleries, each covering some aspect of the Civil War and of the battle itself. Our tickets let us slip into the "New Birth of Freedom," a 20-minute documentary, the pre-show for a walk around the Cyclorama. Taking more than a year and a half to complete and first displayed publicly in Chicago in 1883, the Cyclorama is America's largest oil painting — 377 feet long and 42 feet high.

As we boarded a National Park Service tour bus for



an interpretive tour of the battlefield, we meet our tour guide, Jim Tate. The oldest of the Gettysburg Guides — a distinct class of Civil War experts who are the official licensed battlefield guides — Jim is a robust 93-year-old who started providing tour narration in 1951. A Boy Scout when Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated the Eternal Flame at the 75th anniversary of the battle in 1938, he shook the hands of both Confederate and Union veterans. Now he shakes ours. Walking down the aisles, he engages each person in conversation. "Where do you come from? Did you have family who served in the war?" he asks. With more than 1,328 monuments, markers, and memorials to choose from, Jim shapes the tour route to our answers, adding memorable details that lend meaning to the overwhelming amount of statuary. "See this monument on your left, for the 19th Pennsylvania?" he inquires. "Look at the bird's nest. During the battle, a cannonball hit a tree and knocked a nest out of the tree, so that regiment took enough time to honor the bird's nest."

A living repository of Gettysburg history, Jim grew up digging minie balls from surrounding farms to earn a living. His grandfather is buried on Cemetery Hill. Among the tidbits he shares: women, dressed as men, fought alongside their husbands on this battlefield. A town resident watched "wagonloads of arms and legs" leaving the makeshift operating rooms set up across the street in City Hall. Across from the railroad station where President Abraham

Lincoln arrived on November 18, 1863, Jim points out the retro Lincoln Diner. "Lincoln would not go in that diner," he quips, "there are too many Booths!"

Based on the photographs of Civil War photojournalists — who are honored with a monument seen along the A.T. at Crampton Gap, Maryland — the National Park Service maintains the battlefield to look as it did in 1863. It's an overcast day and we only stop sporadically, but as we do, Jim shows us the routes taken by advancing and retreating regiments. He's pointing to where we hiked the past few days on the Appalachian Trail, the ridges cloaked in rain. Months after our A.T. side-trek through Gettysburg, we were saddened to hear that, after 62 years of guiding visitors, Jim Tate died January 15 of this year. His fellow guides buried him with honor near the battlefield he called home. In downtown Gettysburg, we walk through the battlefield. "The Union soldiers had to fall back through town," Jim Tate had explained. "If you walked around Gettysburg right after the battle you'd find bodies in alleys and buildings where soldiers were killed." We noticed the nicks in the brick on the Farnsworth House, where bullets hit the home. Along the city streets, brass markers indicate each "Civil War Building" that stood here during the battle. Nearly 2,400 people lived in the city then; today, the population has tripled. Gettysburg is the county seat for rural Adams County, whose modern claim to fame is its apple orchards.



From previous page: The Cyclorama, located inside the Gettysburg National Battlefield Visitor Center is America's largest oil painting — 377 feet long and 42 feet high. From left: The trolley takes visitors to local Gettysburg attractions; Legendary Gettysburg Battlefield guide, Jim Tate; A tour group at Gettysburg National Military Park. Photos by Sandra Friend





Clockwise from top: The A.T. in misty rain on nearby South Mountain; Civil War monuments on the edge of downtown Gettysburg; President Lincoln made his last notes on the *Gettysburg Address* at the Wills House; The Schriver House showcases the civilian side of the Civil War — photos by Sandra Friend; The Jennie Wade House Museum. Photo courtesy of Gettysburg Convention and Visitors Bureau

Following the Lincoln Trail through town, we visited the railroad station where Lincoln arrived on November 18, 1863. On the second floor of the Wills House, President Lincoln put the finishing touches on his speech for the dedication of the new Soldier's National Cemetery. Most of the building is given over to interpretation of Lincoln's visit and his famed speech, the Gettysburg Address, save the rooms in which Lincoln stayed. At the Schriver House, a private museum showcasing everyday life during the Civil War, tour guide Sue Currens leads us through the family's home. From the attic, Confederate sharpshooters aimed weapons at passerby. At the Jenny Wade House — not really her house, but her sister's — bullet holes riddle the exterior. She was the only civilian casualty of the battle, a young girl baking bread.

No matter where we stopped to eat, we practically tripped over history. In period dress, the wait staff at Sweney's seated us near a display of memorabilia from the movie *Gettysburg*. Grabbing burgers at a sports bar, we learned about "Gettysburg Eddie," who started his career with the Philadelphia Athletics, becoming a 1946 Hall of Famer. At Tipton's Grill, images captured by battle-field photographer W.H. Tipton fill the walls.

In a place shaped by a century of tourism, kitsch is inevitable. We posed with knockoff Lincoln stovepipe hats and heard the loudspeakers of the non-National Park Service tour buses as they rumbled through town. And an array of after-hours ghost tours could not tempt us from retiring early to a comfy bed. On our ride back to the A.T., I ask to stop at a curious-looking place near Caledonia State Park. Ed Gotwalt parlayed his personal collection of pachyderms into a roadside attraction in 1975, opening Mr. Ed's Elephant Museum and Candy Emporium. Inside, more than 12,000 elephant figurines line the walls. Rebuilt after a 2011 fire, the free museum started with a honeymoon gift. "My sister said

the elephant was for good luck!" said Mr. Ed. "I'm finding out that there are tens of thousands of elephant collectors in the world," he continued, "they come in here, and see this, and say 'Holy Mackerel!'" It's a clever way to pitch homemade fudge, fresh-roasted peanuts, and 400 kinds of candy to passersby, including calorie-starved hikers.

Storm clouds gathered over the National Cemetery as we plan our departure. Almost as many soldiers died in combat during this three-day battle than during the entire Vietnam War; less than a dozen southerners are interred in the cemetery. By the evening of July 4, 1863, General Robert E. Lee's wagons, carrying wounded and dying soldiers, rumbled in retreat through the pass to Chambersburg. It was



a very different walk than the week before, when the Confederacy held the upper hand. Before the armies met at Gettysburg, the Confederate cavalry burned and pillaged Caledonia, the town that surrounded the charcoal iron furnace now seen at the state park turnoff. With a new sense of our surroundings — and of the significance of the Battle of Gettysburg — we stepped out into the rain, returning to our hike. ♠





leave no trace™

*An initiative to preserve the Trail*

## ONE HIKER AT A TIME

~By Thomas W. Banks~

It was a beautiful autumn afternoon when I walked up to the Carl Newhall Lean-to in the middle of the 100-Mile Wilderness in Maine, tired but happy after a good day during a month-long section-hike on the Appalachian Trail. Several thru-hikers and a couple of section-hikers gathered around a campfire ring near the shelter. Judging from the conversation, the thru-hikers seemed to know each other well, probably having hiked together on-and-off during the previous few months. They were jovial with each other and seemed like a tight-knit group. They'd already gained more than 2,000 miles of hiking experience in their trek from Georgia.

I was surprised when they started tossing paper, aluminum foil, and plastic wrappings into the fire. Not wanting to breathe the fumes, I good-naturedly commented, "Hey, it's better to pack that stuff out, it doesn't burn very well." They ignored my advice and added more trash to the fire. I think that uppermost on their minds was reducing their pack weight by off-loading the excess garbage. (I wished, later, that I'd simply offered to pack out the trash for them, perhaps spurring more serious thinking.)

The coup-de-grace happened after dark, when most of us had climbed into our sleeping bags and I was nearly asleep. Someone in the group decided to dump more trash into the fire, including some

batteries. "Bang! Boom!" Sparks, large flames, and acrid smoke ensued. Disappointed by the group's behavior, but feeling rather alone in spite of having a lot of people around, I remained silent, brooded, and tried to sleep. The next morning, after some had left, I got up and picked through the fire ring, pulled out the unburned plastic and metal garbage and filled my gallon-sized bag with the trash. One of the hikers from the group said, "Hmmm, I guess you were right — that stuff doesn't burn very well, does it?" "No," I replied. "When you catch up with your friends today, please spread the news."

Another troubling event occurred on another day of the same trip. I'd arrived at Potaywadjo







Previous page: Tara Roberts hangs a new LNT sign along the A.T. — photo by Tom Banks. Clockwise from far right: An example of a well-dug cat hole at a Leave No Trace workshop session; ATC volunteer Dick Potteiger demonstrates how to properly hang a bear bag; Georgia A.T. ridgerunner Rhea “Razor” Patrick helps to teach LNT to hikers at Trail Days in Damascus, Virginia; The ATC’s Alison Scheiderer explains the finer points of cat hole digging. Photos by Laurie Potteiger

Spring Lean-to when I saw several experienced hikers standing in front of the shelter wielding an axe to chop down a dead standing tree. They wanted firewood, unaware that dead standing trees along the Trail should be left standing — because they benefit both the wildlife habitat and the scenery — and that the approved practice (where fires are allowed) is to gather small, dead, and downed branches that can be broken by hand, rather than

*Ideally, Leave No Trace practices will gain acceptance as the new norms for behavior and become an integral part of Trail culture.*

falling trees or breaking off branches (living or dead) to make firewood. The tree was almost completely cut through when I arrived. I was disappointed that I’d arrived too late to make a difference.

I began to wonder, pretty seriously, how hiker awareness of “Leave No Trace” techniques could be increased. If people can hike more than 2,000 miles in five or six months and still not be practicing good camping methods, there are probably a lot of hikers who lack this knowledge. While some hikers have

benefited from training in minimum-impact camping techniques through Scouting, or were exposed to outdoor ethics through family or other camping trips with a skilled mentor, many others simply have not had this training. It takes teaching and practice to learn, and without this teaching, it’s easy for harmful yet avoidable, practices to become ingrained and perpetuated. Perhaps more importantly, other hikers unwittingly learn these damaging practices by watching those who are perceived to have “Trail wisdom,” and this leads to an increased negative impact along the Trail.

The first idea that sprang to my mind was to create a position for a long-distance ridgerunner who would start in Georgia in the spring and migrate northward up the Trail as the hiking season progressed, mingling with thru-hikers and section-hikers and acting as a mentor and trainer for Leave No Trace practices. I wrote a proposal suggesting this, which led to a dialogue with Appalachian Trail Conservancy staff who steered me toward addressing the educational needs for Leave No Trace on the A.T. on an even more long-term, widespread basis. I began volunteering, and a “Leave No Trace Working Group” was formed within the Trail and Camping Committee of the ATC’s Stewardship Council. Participants included ATC staff members Laurie

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

What is a good distance to walk away from an A.T. shelter, water source, or popular campsite before widely dispersing liquid wastes such as cooking water, strained dishwater, urine, and toothpaste?

- A. 25 feet
- B. 50 feet
- C. 100 to 200 feet
- D. 1 mile

When you’re camping on the A.T., what’s the proper way to dispose of such items as teabags, coffee grounds, unneeded food, and food packaging?

- A. Bury it, or put it in a privy hole
- B. Burn it
- C. Disperse it widely a long ways from camp
- D. Carry it out and put it in a trash can or dumpster

How far away should you walk from water sources and known cultural/archaeological sites before digging a “cat-hole” for burying human waste (feces)?

- A. 25 feet from water, 100 feet from cultural/archaeological sites
- B. 75 feet from water, 200 feet from cultural/archaeological sites
- C. 200 feet from water, 600 feet from cultural/archaeological sites
- D. 1 mile from either



began being placed on Appalachian Trail and A.T. Community signboards and shelters by Trail club volunteers who worked collaboratively with the ATC and land-managing agency staff.

We are now working toward developing an Internet teaching tool and smartphone application to spread the message in fun and compelling ways, including incentives for learning and applying Leave No Trace practices. Our goal is that this new technology will appeal to a new generation of users and become an important gateway for a multitude of hikers to access the information and, hopefully, develop a deep commitment to minimum impact hiking and camping.

Ideally, these Leave No Trace practices will gain acceptance as the new norms for behavior and become an integral part of Trail culture. If so, we will leave the Trail in a natural state for hikers that follow in our footsteps in both the near future and in future generations. The new educational media available to more users will hopefully make it easier to start a conversation with someone who could use some helpful tips, and the Trail environment will be better preserved, one hiker at a time. 🌱

### ANSWERS:

**C)** Walk 100 to 200 feet away from shelters, campsites and water sources before widely dispersing liquid wastes such as strained dishwater, cooking water, toothpaste, and urine. This distance ensures that wildlife are not drawn close to shelters and campsites, and that water sources are not polluted by greywater.

**D)** Carry out all trash and leftovers and deposit them in a trash can or dumpster, or place useful items in the hiker boxes found at Trail towns. Leave nothing behind.

**C)** Walk at least 200 feet away from water sources and 600 feet from cultural/archaeological sites before digging a “cat-hole” for burying human waste (feces). These distances ensure that water sources are not polluted and that cultural/archeological sites remain undisturbed.

Volunteer help is needed to maintain the signs and to assess how well they are being received by the public, and determine where further outreach should occur. To help in this effort, contact your local Appalachian Trail Club at: [appalachiantrail.org/trailclubs](http://appalachiantrail.org/trailclubs). For more information visit: [appalachiantrail.org/LNT](http://appalachiantrail.org/LNT) and Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics at: [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org). Tom Banks is chair of the ATC Stewardship Council Trail and Camping Committee, He can be reached at: [LeaveNoTrace@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:LeaveNoTrace@appalachiantrail.org).





## *Hidden Gems*

Michael Adamovic loves delving into the small and seldom seen parts of the landscape to capture nature in a candid display of openness, unaware of the works of man. “To photograph an animal, an insect, or even a wildflower that bends to its own whims and is truly natural, untamed in every way, is the driving force behind my work.” He believes in Thoreau’s words: “Dullness is but another word for tameness.” To him, “The Appalachian wilderness offers the chance to glimpse the hidden gems that lie all around us — the landscapes are undoubtedly stunning, but like a snowstorm, if you zoom in to examine a single snowflake, it becomes clear that the tiniest pieces of nature can, and do in fact, rival its largest and most frequently acknowledged components.”

Michael is from New York’s Hudson Valley and takes weekly hikes on the A.T. in his native state and surrounding regions. In addition to serving as a photographer, he works as an invasive species researcher for the Palisades Interstate Park Commission based out of Bear Mountain State Park.

[flickr.com/photos/copperhead-/sets](https://www.flickr.com/photos/copperhead-/sets)

*Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge, New York/New Jersey*





*Clockwise from left: Forget Me  
Not; Moth Gathering Nectar;  
Young Snapping Turtle*







*Clockwise from right:  
Purple Russula Mushroom;  
Darnier; Curious Deer*





# living the DREAM

**THE SUMMER THUNDERSTORM BLEW** through Delaware Water Gap, up and across the Kittatinny Ridge, its winds whipping the Backpacker Campsite on a steamy August afternoon. Thunder boomed and lightning crackled. Heavy wind and rain slapped the tarp against the tent. Braced inside, I pushed back hard to support straining poles, happy to be dry but knowing that storms earlier in the summer had snapped a pole, collapsed the tent, and sent the tarp sailing. The wind died as the storm moved north. A steady rain continued as I slipped outside to check for damage and see how others camped on the mountain had fared. Thankful for having gotten to shelter just ahead of the nasty weather, I knew others had not been as fortunate, and I used my emergency radio to call park police about some very soggy hikers headed their way.



I knew at least a dozen people were scattered along the four miles of Appalachian Trail back to the visitor center at the Delaware River; I was especially worried about one couple I had passed an hour earlier, just before the storm. They were moving slowly, wearing the wrong shoes, and starting to grumble about the long walk back to their car. The four miles up to Sunfish Pond was harder than they had expected and now they had to hike four miles back. Stopping to chat, because that's what ridgerunners do, I did my best to cheer them on with the news that it was only three easy miles to the bottom. They trudged on; and I moved quickly and eagerly up the Trail, heading north, excited to be starting a 75-mile hike across New Jersey, again.

Hiking with the Trail name "Grasshopper," I had thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail in 2011 and had fond memories of the five hot days I had spent crossing Jersey. Blessed with the opportunity to return in 2012 as a ridgerunner, I was living the dream — being paid to hike and spending the season with hikers, Trail volunteers, and Trail crews. I hoped to give back and help them as much as they had helped me on my long walk north. I was one of 10 ridgerunners working in the Mid-Atlantic States, hired by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), the New Jersey Parks Service, and the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference. Three of us were in Jersey. I was AT-3.

Ridgerunners are "boots on the ground" to help folks safely enjoy the A.T.'s forests and footpaths, to share the gospel of Leave No Trace principles, and to keep tabs on the Trail and those using it. We share directions and advice, remind people to store food in bear boxes, and to pack out their own trash. We explain that the sign saying "No Ground Fires" really does mean that campfires are not allowed and that "no alcohol" means just that. And yes, the leash law applies to your dog too.

We gathered in May at Scott Farm near Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania, where the ATC's Bob Sickley and Matt Rosefsky of SOLO Wilderness Medical led us through excellent but exhausting and intense 14-hour days of training in Wilderness First Aid and CPR. We backpacked to the Darlington Shelter and back, role-playing various Leave No Trace scenarios and camping nightmares to prepare for the worst that the summer might bring. We were at Backpacker campsite during Jersey orientation when I dropped a heavy rock and ripped a four-inch gash down my ankle. Hal Evans (AT-1) cleaned and bandaged my wound, and a doctor later gave me a Tetanus shot, a heavy course of antibiotics, and ordered me off my feet for three days. I recuperated

off-Trail at the house that the ridgerunners shared with firefighters and summer interns working at the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge.

Getting antsy and healing quickly, I soon headed into the woods for a summer rotation that included either spending five days at Backpacker and Sunfish Pond or patrolling a 35-mile stretch of Trail and camping with others near A.T. wilderness shelters. The trails and back roads of Jersey soon became second nature and ridgerunners were wonderfully supported and shuttled by the good



folks who work in and manage the state's four public forests, especially Rebecca Fitzgerald at High Point and Ernie Kabert at Worthington.

By August, hikes that had taken four hours were now taking three. While I was not exactly running the ridges, I was certainly moving quicker. Including my thru-hike, I had hiked more than 2,500 miles and had lived in the woods for nearly 11 months. Now I was taking the opportunity to thru-hike Jersey from south to north. I had been camped at Backpacker for five days, hiking nearby trails and keeping tabs on Sunfish Pond, a gorgeous glacial lake that attracts hundreds of hikers and tempts many to ignore the ban against camping and swimming. I had gathered trash from near the pond and in the bear boxes and was making my rounds when I encountered an Outward Bound group headed north. We had met the night before and they happily gathered again to hear me "talk trash." Holding my bag aloft, I said, "I know this isn't your trash, but this is what others have left.

Clockwise from above: Jerry explains Leave No Trace principals to an Outward Bound group he runs into on the A.T.; Jerry with "Birdman"; Sunfish Pond is a gorgeous, glacial lake that attracts hundreds of hikers and tempts many to ignore the ban against camping and swimming.



*I was living the dream — being paid to hike and spending the season with hikers, Trail volunteers, and Trail crews. I hoped to give back and help them as much as they had helped me on my long walk north.*

This is why we leave no trace.” “Leave no trace!” they shouted. “Thank you, Grasshopper,” they said in chorus as my lesson ended, and they moved on.

My shift at Backpacker was ending but I was staying in the woods, working my way north from the Delaware Water Gap in Pennsylvania to the New York border. I moved north, hoping to see a bear. The other Jersey ridgerunners had seen 40 bears between them and I was miffed at not having seen a single

one that summer — or on my hike through here the year before. My dismay was fueled by the glee of other hikers who delighted in sharing their daily sightings — “I saw a Mama Bear and three cubs this morning. Awesome.”

The Trail crosses the state line at the Delaware River and gently climbs to 1,500 feet and follows the Kittatin-

nies, a panorama of lakes and farmlands unfolding across Pennsylvania to the west and Jersey to the east. Crossing Raccoon Ridge and Rattlesnake Mountain, the Trail is rocky, but it gradually smoothes and then flattens as it moves north. An old man with a face filled with bushy white whiskers was standing in the middle of the Trail watching me approach from the south. “Howdy, Pilgrim,” I said. “With that beard, I am guessing you are a thru-hiker.” “I’m Birdman. Who are you?” came the reply in a drawl so slow I thought I was back home in South Carolina instead of New Jersey. “I’m Grasshopper. I am a ridgerunner.” He asked, “What’s that?”

“Birdman,” from Tennessee, retired from a lifetime of quarry work and was thru-hiking to Maine. At 65, he’s four years older than me. We stopped for lunch at Mohican Outdoor Center and I explained myself, making a new friend and gaining a hiking partner for the week. We walked on together and I kept going when he took a mid-afternoon break; I figured we would see each other up the Trail. Birdman rolled in late, joining me at a

primitive campsite just north of a pond near Millbrook-Blairstown Road. The next day we covered 11 miles and stayed the night at Brink Road Shelter with three camp groups, six northbound thru-hikers and four hikers headed to Georgia.

I made my rounds, checking in with the counselors and scanning the wide-eyed stares of youngsters who are facing woodlands isolation, perhaps for the first time. Ever the Trail ambassador, I prepared hikers for the perils ahead, including Joe to Go restaurant in Branchville, where the Trail crosses Highway 206 at Culver Gap. This is both a prime spot for breakfast and a source of angst to outdoor types who slip from woodland solitude. “He’s a nice guy, but he does things his way. Just order your food and keep it simple,” I advise. “It’s cash only and don’t even think about asking to charge your phone or to use the bathroom.”

A camper who passed by Gren Anderson Shelter was telling others to leave their trash in the bear box, a weird twist on Leave No Trace, and I only grouse a little before packing out someone’s leftovers. A northbounder is packing a six-pack and he finishes two at the shelter, smashing his empties and then packing them away. I caution him about alcohol on the Trail. A woman in sandals struggles up Sunrise Mountain with a large pack. With a thick Eastern European accent, Mary says she is on the second day of a hike across New Jersey. She complains that her feet hurt after 24 miles the day before. “Why so far?” I ask. “I only have four days,” she replies. Mary limped in to High Point park office late the next day. Injured, she needed a ride to the train in Port Jervis. My truck was nearby and I considered giving her a lift but decided instead to help her call a cab.

At 1,700 feet, High Point is the highest spot in New Jersey and the Trail drops to the valley and cuts southeast along the New York border, across farms and through fields and forests, board walks, pasture lands, and along country roads. I covered seven miles in a steady rain, took a late morning break to dry off at Jim Murray’s shelter, and then stopped for lunch in Unionville at Horler’s Store.



Jerry’s trusty ridgerunner pack at the New York — New Jersey state line on the Trail.



The Trail passes near ridgerunner housing, so I stopped for a hot shower and a night’s respite from the rain. Up and over Pochuck Mountain the next morning, I took a mandatory ice cream break at Heaven Hill Farms and then climbed the Stairway to Heaven and crossed Wawayanda, camping near the shelter as my hike across Jersey wound down.

New York was four miles north and I planned to flip at the border and hike back to Wawayanda for a shuttle to my truck, but at the state line I met Fred Schneider, a volunteer Trail maintainer, and decided to hike down the State Line Trail with him. Lost in my reverie and feeling sassy about my walk across Jersey, I stumbled, slipped and landed hard, snapping a trekking pole, bruising my bottom, blackening an eye, and spraining my hand. The pain and indignity faded as we made it down the mountain. Fred ferried me toward Warwick and

we stopped at the Creamery, a Trail oasis where the A.T. crosses US 17A. Thank you, Fred. The chocolate milkshake was a taste of heaven.

Limping but refreshed, I caught a ride to a hiker hostel in Vernon where a Wawayanda park worker gave me a lift to High Point and my truck. I met Birdman and three other northbounders for breakfast the next morning, and then shuttled them back to the Trail and the steep hike up Wawayanda Mountain that would start their day. August melted into September, and Labor Day ended my ridgerunner summer. I camped near the High Point Shelter my last night out and then hiked 12 miles back to the house at the wildlife refuge to pack up for the long drive south. I was barely a half mile down the Trail when I saw a bear cub scamper ahead and disappear into the trees. My ridgerunning ended with my summer’s only bear. 🐻

Jerry’s tent at Backpacker camp site in New Jersey — where he hiked nearby trails and kept tabs on Sunfish Pond.

Jerry “Grasshopper” Adams happily returned to New Jersey this summer for another season as an A.T. ridgerunner.





# for the good OF THE TRAIL



PAGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

The system of Appalachian Trail Communities spread up and down the A.T. means a lot more than just dots on a map. A town that receives approval for the designation is considered a partner of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) — with the goal of working together for the good of the Trail. It's a partnership to enhance stewardship.

With several access points to the A.T. (and many other trails in Shenandoah National Park and George Washington National Forest), Page County, Virginia has established a reputation as a "hiker-friendly" area with a strong commitment to sustaining outdoor recreation. The county offers cycling, camping, horseback riding,

fishing, canoeing, cavern-exploring, and many other outdoor recreation opportunities. "By being a designated A.T. Community, Page County has stepped forward and said to outdoor adventurers, 'we are here and you are a welcomed addition to our community,'" stated Dick Hostelley, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club volunteer and resident. Based on the importance of the A.T. to the community, hiker services in town are increasing and Appalachian Outdoors Adventures, the town's outfitter, has relocated to a prominent spot in downtown Luray. The Page County town of Stanley hopes one day to provide trails connecting its local parks directly to the A.T.

On May 11th, Luray and Page County celebrated their official designation as

the 30th A.T. Community with a full day of outdoor demonstrations, information displays and an eight-person lineup of key A.T. speakers. The event received positive media coverage in the *Washington Post*, *Harrisonburg Daily News-Record*, the *Page County News and Courier* and national outdoor websites such as *outdoorhub.com* and *The Outdoor Wire*. Held in conjunction with Luray's annual Festival of Spring, the ceremony was kicked off with a welcome and thank you from Mark Wenger (the ATC's former executive director) and Wendy Janssen, the new National Park Service superintendent for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Jim Northup, Superintendent of Shenandoah National Park, also touted the resources the park provides, including more than 500 miles of trails, more than 100 miles of which are the A.T.

The town mayors of Stanley, Luray, and Shenandoah, and the Page County Board of Supervisors all cheered for the partnership taking place. Douglas Purdham, Mayor of Stanley, spoke to the crowd with conviction,

stating, "It is our responsibility to make sure [the A.T.] continues to be not only good, but great. Teaming up with such an effort like this is such a wonderful opportunity. But folks, we've got a job to do. We've got to protect our natural resources. It's not just the A.T. It's not just Shenandoah National Park. It is everything that the good Lord put our feet upon and we've got to do a better job. We are called to be stewards of this wonderful place. After all, we are all it's got."

Among the outdoor advocates present at the event were: the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Front Royal/Warren County Appalachian Trail Community, Shenandoah National Park Association, the Luray Rescue Zoo, the Boy Scouts, Shenandoah River Outfitters, Page County Fire Department, Shenandoah National Park Crosscut Saw Team, and others. Will Meade, a 2012 thru-hiker, gave the audience a taste of his journey on the Trail, describing some of the beauty and hardships he encountered. "It's all about the journey along the way. Whether I was dirty, sweaty, sore, bloody, or blistered; the beauty of it all was in the simplicity of taking it one step at a time."

What really hit home however, were Meade's comments on the people and communities: "Either here in town, or if you're out on a day hike, what makes the Trail so special is the people. When I stopped in towns along the way, the warmth and generosity of the locals that I met enriched my experienced more than I can express. I met hikers of all ages and backgrounds. There might not be a better place to meet a wonderful and diverse group of people than on the A.T. If you run into a hiker, yes, they'll probably smell, they'll be dirty, and the guys will be sporting an impressive amount of facial hair, maybe some of the women, too. But a small interaction can lift a hiker's spirit more than you can possibly know. Listen to their stories, it'll probably make you want to go out there and hike as well, or at the very least follow your own dreams. The camaraderie that exists in the A.T. community is what makes the Trail so

*"By being a designated A.T. Community, Page County has stepped forward and said to outdoor adventurers, we are here and you are a welcomed addition to our community."*



special. I'm excited for this community to be an official part of that now." Meade talked about a man who revered him as a hero, and at that time, how he'd felt like a celebrity on the Trail. He finished his remarks with, "I realized now in looking back at my journey, I'm not a hero. The heroes of the A.T. are the administrators, the volunteers, the Trail maintaining club members and the people in the community that help preserve this Trail so that a guy

like me can have an amazing experience."

Here in Page County, we're grateful to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy for the designation and to the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club for all they do to maintain the A.T. — and for the help they gave us to acquire this designation. Our hope is that the designation doesn't end with a one-day event, but builds momentum to protect the Trail and sustain a community sense of outdoor ethics. [A](#)

John Robbins is the president of the Luray-Page County Chamber of Commerce.



# Jolly Hard Work



The picturesque view approaching Fitzgerald Falls just after the projects' completion this past June.

**COMMUNITIES WITH PARKLAND TYPICALLY** have special spots within that land; places of natural beauty that draw both distant hikers and locals alike on a regular basis. Fitzgerald Falls is definitely such a spot for the community of Greenwood Lake, New York. The Falls are located just a short, one-half-mile hike on the Appalachian Trail from the A.T. crossing of Lakes Road, a short drive away from town, and within walking distance of the town's public schools.

Unfortunately, until recently, the condition of the Appalachian Trail approaching Fitzgerald Falls did not match the beauty of the setting. From Lakes Road, the A.T. partly followed an old woods road, which flooded regularly to the falls' base, where it would continue, nearly vertically, up a narrow gorge for 50 feet until it reached the top and continued on its way. Due to the steepness and heavy use, the ascent up the gorge had crumbled away long ago, leaving a narrow and unstable scramble up loose scree during the warmer seasons and a nearly impassable ice chute during the winter. Fixing the flood-prone Trail along the old

woods road was a simple matter of relocating it to higher ground. Deciding what to do about the Trail along the falls wasn't so simple. Rerouting the Trail away from the falls entirely was considered, however that would deprive visitors of the very thing many of them were there to experience. The preferred solution was to improve the route up the gorge, but with other competing priorities on the Trail in the area, the project remained in a state of limbo for more than a decade.

Welcome the Jolly Rovers, a recently-formed club of Trail crew volunteers with the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference (NYNJTC). Made up of volunteers who got their Trail work start at the Bear Mountain Trails Project (a massive reroute of the A.T. up Bear Mountain that involved the installation of more than 1,000 native stone steps), their specialization in technical rock work fit the needs of the Fitzgerald Falls project well. During the winter of 2012, the NYNJTC approached the "Rovers" about reconstructing the Trail along the falls, and, after a series of scouting trips, they eagerly adopted the project; their most ambitious undertaking since the



crew had launched a year earlier. Construction began in April of 2012, with a total of four, three-day weekends scheduled to complete the job over the next 12 months. The project presented several big challenges. Quarries, where stone could be split for steps, were more than 200 feet away from where they needed to be installed. Additionally, to move the 300-pound blocks of stone, the crew would have to install an extensive network of highlines in the surrounding trees, allowing stones to be transferred from one line to another in order to accurately fly them into the narrow gorge. Further complications would include the extreme narrowness of the gorge itself in which the work had to be done, forcing crew members to be in very tight working quarters with little margin for error.

In June of 2013, the Rovers completed their



From left: The rebuilt stone staircase; The hard working yet fun-loving Jolly Rovers Trail crew.

fourth and final trip, finishing all components of the project with a total of 25 crew members contributing more than 1,300 hours of skilled labor. The ascent up the falls alone came in at just under 60 stone steps with several sections supported by stone retaining walls; three large step-stone crossings across streams flowing from the bottom of the falls were also installed along with the re-vegetation of heavily-eroded areas outside the Trail's corridor. During each work trip there was never a shortage of local students, families, and thru-hikers passing through. Seeing a project get used by such a wide variety of people and knowing this will remain the case for centuries to come is always rewarding, but getting to regularly meet and interact with that community while working makes that connection stick all the more profoundly. While this project is finished, we look forward to many more projects on the Trail in the future, and all the other communities that we'll inevitably get to meet. ⬆

To learn more about the Jolly Rovers visit: [jollyrovers.org](http://jollyrovers.org) or [nynjtc.org](http://nynjtc.org)

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PHOTO BY JOHN CAMMEROTA



**AS APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY (ATC) BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Chairman Bob Almand discusses in his “Overlook” column, the ATC held its Fourth Annual Leaders in Conservation Awards Gala in Washington, D.C. this past May. Widely attended by a very influential audience, the awards gala is not only one of the ATC’s largest fundraising events, but it is also a perfect opportunity for us to showcase our work and the work of those individuals and partner agencies that assist us. This audience includes many of our corporate partners such as Expedia,Inc., Walmart, Toyota North America, Bavarian Inn, Patton Boggs, Honeywell, Summit Global Ventures, Brown Advisory, and many others (see the complete list on page 45), as well as members of our bipartisan Congressional Trail Delegation. This is a rare night in Washington, D.C. when partisanship is put aside and folks come together to celebrate the Appalachian Trail and the people who protect it.

Though this is only the gala’s fourth year — a relatively young event by D.C. standards — each year it gets better. By better, I mean that each year we gain new corporate supporters, not only for this event, but for the A.T. itself. In fact, as I am writing this, I am working with the folks at the D.C. Expedia, Inc. office who



Amy and Senator Collins celebrate the A.T. at the Fourth Annual Leaders in Conservation Awards Gala this past May.

approached me at the gala and asked me to help them organize a volunteer/hike opportunity for their employees. Getting people out on the Trail and exposing them to the beauty and tranquility of the A.T. is the first step to get them to care. When people care, people help.

Better too, in that for the first time in the four years of the gala we had approximately a dozen members of the United States Congress in attendance, which included those honorees and co-chairs from both sides of the aisle. You see, on the Trail, politics is put aside and the focus is the Trail itself, not party lines. The Appalachian Trail, and spaces like it, needs friends — donors like you, corporations, and members of Congress. As everyone’s budgets continue to get slashed, it becomes increasingly vital that we, the ATC, are relevant. The more friends we have, the better we are and the better the Appalachian Trail becomes. 🌲

**Amy McCormick** | *Assistant Director of Membership & Development*



MARCH – APRIL 2013

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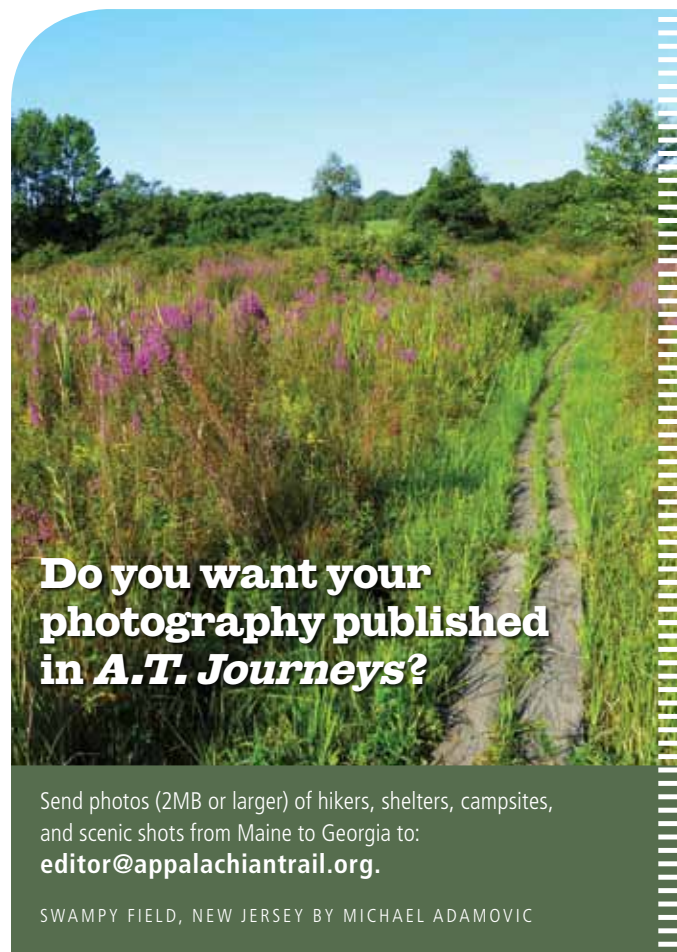
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Send photos (2MB or larger) of hikers, shelters, campsites,  
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**editor@appalachiantrail.org.**

SWAMPY FIELD, NEW JERSEY BY MICHAEL ADAMOVIC

## I PUBLIC NOTICES

### Hiking Partners

Looking for older (I'm 75) **female backpacking partner** that doesn't care about miles per day and wants to take time to stop and smell the flowers. Starting August 1 to mid Sept and heading north from Fontana Dam. Contact Judy at: Ohio@gmail.com.

### For Sale

Lodge and Hostel for sale: **White Mountains Lodge and Hostel** directly on the A.T. in Shelburne, New Hampshire. See it on www.whitemountainslodgeandhostel.com. For information, including asking price and financials, contact: rgsomerville@gmail.com.

### Lost & Found

Lost/left propped against a shrub at the north end of the James River Foot Bridge on 5/12/2013: a **pair of Leki trekking poles**, black with gold lettering and black duct tape rolled up against the foam grips. These poles have kept me hiking for many, many miles and I would dearly like them back. Contact Luann at: creeksonglmd@yahoo.com.

### For Your Information

Wolf Pen Gap Country Store & Trail Hostel is located in Suches, Georgia just two miles from Woody Gap and five miles from Jarrard Gap. We noticed that many hikers have to schedule their hiking around the five miles of "canister-required" territory and came up with a very workable solution. **We rent the required bear canisters** and hikers can then leave them at Mountain Crossings (Neels Gap). This way hikers can have the necessary equipment but not have to worry about the cost or weight of a canister that they only need for a short distance. For more information call: (706) 747-2271 or visit: www.wolfpengapstore.com.

**Jeff Alt Book Signing**, July 7, 1-3 p.m. at the ATC Visitor Center in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Come meet the author of *A Walk for Sunshine and Four Boots One Journey*. Get a signed copy of his latest book, *Get Your Kids Hiking*, which is full of advice on how to engage kids with the great outdoors. For more information visit: appalachiantrail.org/events.

**Jennifer Pharr Davis Book Signing**, July 14, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the ATC Visitor Center in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Come meet Jennifer and get a personal signed copy of her newest book: *Called Again*. This book recounts how the love and support of her husband Brew saw her through the challenges of her 46-day thru-hike of the A.T. For more information visit: appalachiantrail.org/events.

**Harpers Ferry "Step Into Autumn" Festival** September 21-22. Come out for weekend festival September 21-22 that will provide unique opportunities to tour historic sites in and around Harpers Ferry by bicycle and on foot. Saturday you can sign up for a guided "Pedal Through the Past" (pre-registration required) and listen to music in the evening. On Sunday afternoon, you can participate in a "Hike Through History" self-guided event with interpreters stationed throughout Bolivar and Harpers Ferry. For more information, visit [www.appalachiantrail.org/events](http://www.appalachiantrail.org/events). ⬆

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Public Notices  
P.O. Box 807  
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425-0807



Terri with Torin  
at the completion  
of her hike.

complete sets of clothing where most people carry at most, two. So I was named "Five Pair."

Triple T and I were able to laugh about our expectation of walking on a lush carpet of pine needles while we hiked up the rocky Trail and made our way across streams. The views we encountered were awesome but I struggled with breathing as we hiked up the mountains. As those first five days wore on, Triple T reached peace with the fact that Mom was going to be gone for quite awhile but now understood the grand adventure ahead.

I took more than 7,500 pictures, met lots of new friends, and was able to share it with Triple T, family, and friends through a journal managed by my husband. Triple T joined me in the middle of the hike from Harpers Ferry through the entire state of Maryland experiencing the various sleeping arrangements: shelters, hostels, B&Bs, and tenting. We hiked with a pack of frozen hotdogs and marshmallows to share with fellow hikers who helped build a campfire his last night. When I asked my son if he wanted me to come home now, he said "No! You have to finish it ... just hurry up."

Torin visited me again in New Hampshire for few days but only hiked up the Trail to meet me. After a couple zero days, I said good-bye again to Triple T and back to the A.T. I went, wishing he could have been there for it all. While sad to part from him again, I knew that I had to continue for us both. On August 24, 2012, Triple T rejoined me and we hiked the last day together, summiting Katahdin two days shy of five months from when we took our first step off the top of Springer Mountain. "That last mountain was so hard...but worth it," he said. "I'm proud of you Mom." Hopefully, some day Triple T will relive our grand adventure with his children. ⬆

*Terri O'Brien and her family*  
LIVE IN INDIALANTIC, FLORIDA.

"As I See It" is a monthly column from guest contributors representing the full range of ATC partners, members, and volunteers. To submit a column for consideration, please email [journeys@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:journeys@appalachiantrail.org) or write to Editor/As I See It, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, P.O. Box 807, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425.





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# Help to preserve and protect the A.T.

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BRANDON "BANJO" DICOLA AND STEPHEN "MELTDOWN" OUTTEN IN THE ROAN MOUNTAIN HIGHLANDS – BY MATT "2/3" BUCHAN