



JOURNEYS

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY / FALL 2017

The Future of Landscape Protection

Parallel Passages from
Hawk Mountain

Summit Seekers
Tell Their Own Story



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JOURNEYS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY / FALL 2017

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APPALACHIAN TRAIL
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The Future of the Biennial

I KNOW THAT MANY OF YOU

attended the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) Biennial at Colby College in Waterville, Maine in August. More than 800 ATC and Trail club members, volunteer leaders, government and non-profit partners, and outdoor recreation industry representatives came together for this unique event — the largest regular gathering of hikers in this country and maybe anywhere. We were motivated, inspired, and entertained in the many workshops, meetings, hikes, excursions, and entertainment events. The more than 250 volunteers from the Maine Appalachian Trail Club and the Appalachian Mountain Club were outstanding hosts for the Biennial.



Ron with his wife
Rita Molyneux



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Ron_Tipton

The first ATC general meeting was held in Washington, D.C., in 1928, three years after our founding meeting. My initial Biennial experience was in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, in 1977, when this event reverted to every two years after 35 years of longer stretches between gatherings.

Over the years, the ATC Biennial has offered many different experiences to the A.T. community. It has been a forum for great debates on Trail management and protection and a place for the Trail clubs, government partners, and ATC staff to come together in an informal setting. Many important strategies and decisions and inspiring discussions about the future of the Trail experience happened at Biennial business meetings, as well as in informal conversations. We charted the progress every two years toward the ultimate goal of a completely publicly owned and permanently protected A.T. corridor.

However, we have decided to use a different model for the future of the Biennial. It is logical to ask why this is happening, given the success and popu-

larity of the event over the past 86 years.

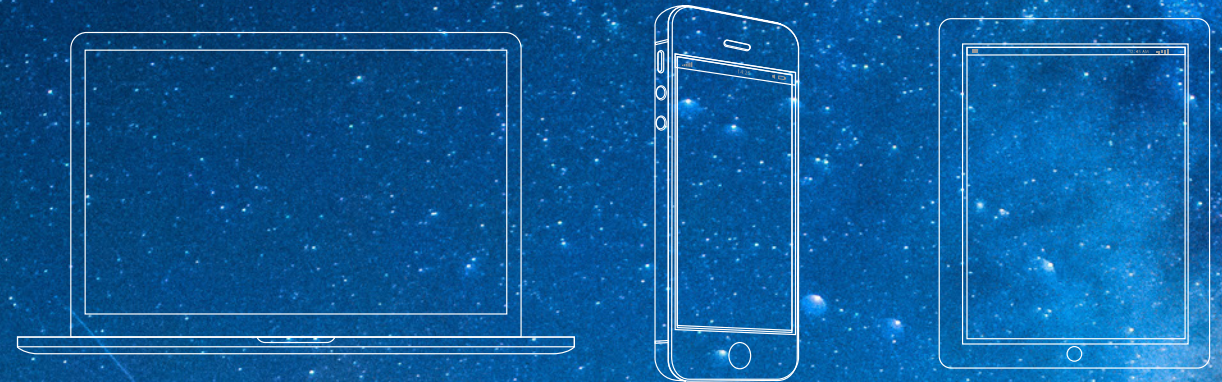
There are several reasons. First, the ATC is now required, by a recent change in the laws governing non-profits incorporated in Washington, D.C., to have a meeting of its members every year. Secondly, organizing each Biennial is a hugely challenging and time consuming two-year project for both the host Trail clubs and ATC staff. It is also increasingly difficult to find a venue for each Biennial. And there is a great deal of uncertainty and considerable financial risk in staging an event of this size.

A working group representing A.T. clubs and chaired by former ATC Board member Marcia Fairweather has spent the past two years looking at future options for the Biennial. They have recommended a new approach called A.T. Vista to begin in 2020 and happen every two years thereafter. The Vista is envisioned as a four-day event that includes hikes, workshops, excursions, and fun and will be organized by some combination of Trail clubs and local partners. The New York/New Jersey Trail Conference has agreed to take the lead on planning the 2020 Vista.

At the same time, the ATC will begin in 2018 to host an annual meeting open to all of our members. This will be a one-day event in or near a major metropolitan area and will include feature speakers, discussion of important Trail issues, and a town hall forum. The first ATC Membership meeting will be held next August in Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

This is clearly a major change from the traditional Biennial. We hope and expect A.T. Vista and the ATC Membership meeting to combine the best elements of the Biennial format and offer some new and different experiences for the A.T. community. 🏔️

Ronald J. Tipton / President & CEO



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Photo by Steven Yocom



Summit Seekers gather at a September event at Anacostia Park in Maryland. 📷 Photo by Julie Judkins

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SUMMIT SEEKERS

A pilot program focused on bridging the gaps of race, class, gender, and generations takes a growing group on a shared adventure to find and tell their own unique story on the Trail and in the outdoors.

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my  story

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Of Men and Mountains

THANKS FOR AN ILLUMINATING article about Percival Baxter and Myron Avery ("Of Men and Mountains," Summer 2017). I too am a graduate of Bowdoin College, and had the pleasure of visiting Maine's greatest mountain in the '60s and '70s. Bowdoin's Outing Club had the responsibility of maintaining a section of the A.T. back in those days. The highlight of our year was always an October trip up to Baxter State Park, just before things closed down for the winter. Until reading this article, I had no idea that Avery was also a Bowdoin graduate. And I was not aware that Governor Baxter lived until 1969. One year later, I was living in a large "frat house" on the Bowdoin campus. Years later, I learned that it had been built by the Baxter family. Bowdoin subsequently renamed it Baxter House, and it still stands today. The Baxter's were very philanthropic. Without Governor Baxter's land donation, the A.T. would have ended much farther south.

Eric Weis Wayne
NEW JERSEY

Practical Magic

I AM FEELING CONFLICTED AFTER reading "Practical Magic" (Summer 2017). You see for the last 22 years I have been doing Trail magic for thru-hikers. I had no idea that it was frowned upon. For the first 19 years I was set up in a parking lot in a nearly waterless section of New York (the Elk Pen in Harriman State Park). I gave away soda, water, candy bars, stove fuel, fruit, and a few other goodies. Over the years, I also brought chairs and since I worked for an outdoor retailer I managed to bring donated hiker food — I was also able to give away a free pair of socks to each [hiker] that came by. And in recent years, I have recharged many a phone. Even though I left no garbage, took garbage from the [hikers], and often picked up the garbage from the area I was parked, I did concentrate a few hikers in one area. I thought the only trace I left was the happy faces of the hikers I helped. I only started doing it because, on a long section hike, I received so much help, water, beer, pizza and more that I decided

to give back. So I am sorry I have apparently contributed to the degradation of the A.T. experience.

Roger "Tentman" Williamson
WEST MILFORD, NEW JERSEY

ATC'S RESPONSE:

Your thoughtful generosity to hikers is remarkable. It is the cumulative effect of ever-larger, more elaborate, and frequent hiker feeds and aid stations — which sometimes include alcohol, drugs, or a particular agenda — that begins to be problematic. In Georgia, during the peak of thru-hiker season, there is a hiker feed or aid station at nearly every road crossing. Other large, "Trail magic" events in the south attract hundreds and have been likened to "mini-Woodstocks." We are still working to find the right balance between encouraging the culture of kindness and generosity that is the hallmark of Trail magic, while encouraging self-reliance and preserving the kind of experience the A.T. is designed to provide. For our latest guidance on Trail magic, visit: appalachiantrail.org/trailmagic.

WHEN I DECIDED TO COME OFF THE Trail and seek shelter from hurricane Irma, a remarkable "Trail angel" took me in. Actually, the story behind my good fortune goes back 24 years. In 1993, we hosted a pool party for some church friends of ours in Memphis. I was standing at one end of the pool grilling burgers and hot dogs when all of a sudden my wife shouted my name as only a spouse can who wants an immediate response. I turned to see what was up and there, at

the bottom of our pool, was one of our guests, a two-year old! Without hesitation, I dove in and scooped him up before placing him on the side of the pool where others took care of him. He survived. Unbeknownst to me, that little guy grew up to love adventure, and in 2013 successfully thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail. Also, it turns out his parents moved from Memphis to a spot about an hour west of the A.T. and were the Trail angels who gave me shelter from the storm. Call it karma, serendipity, divine intervention, or just good luck, I am in awe of how magnificent life is, especially out here on the Trail.

Keith Wingard
OMAHA, NEBRASKA

CORRECTION: The byline to the Trail Story "When Sunday Smiled" in the Summer 2017 issue of *A.T. Journeys* was attributed incorrectly. The author was Andrew Davidson — we apologize for this mistake.

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.



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@kenozoic

I do most of my hiking in the fall. Less humidity + less insects = happier Ken



What an amazing labor of love the Appalachian Trail is! Think of all the years of planning & physical labor that have gone into creating it. And the constant upkeep, much of which is done by wonderful volunteers! Happy

Birthday to our American Treasure...OUR Appalachian Trail. — Linda Harney



@joeyulseth
The moment you embrace the rain, everything is perfect and almost more peaceful than without it.



I hiked on the Trail and I couldn't agree more that it is an educational experience

and something that makes memories the rest of your life. — Walter A Eshleman



@jashoftheat
Myron Avery was a determined force. So thankful for his efforts.



@runjackrabbit
The best time of day...from day break till about 9 a.m. The world is alive in that light. 🌄

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For those of us who are entrusted with its care and protection, we must embrace both our visionary and our realist sides.

trail for “tramping, camping, and outdoor recreation.” MacKaye and Avery — visionary versus realist; architect versus builder. We needed both aspects to create this treasure and I believe we still need both to take care of it now and for the future.

We need to keep working on our vision for the Trail. We must spend time exploring how we can protect our

ONCE AGAIN, I FIND THE MOST important message I must share with you all is about change. We are changing how we will gather, with the 2017 Maine Membership Meeting being the last of one we will hold following our traditional format. We are changing the leadership of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy as we move forward with our search for a new president/CEO. The volunteers, I think, feel we are often changing the way we want them to do their jobs. We are changing (or maybe for the first time creating) rules for our hikers. Our partners, in dealing with their own changes, require us to adapt as well.

I’ve been spending some time recently refreshing myself with the history of the A.T. I’ve found many of Benton MacKaye’s statements and reasons for envisioning the Trail are possibly even more applicable to the world we live in today than the one that existed in 1921. But I also have been thinking about Myron Avery. While MacKaye spoke of the wilderness utopia, Avery went to work to build an actual



SUNRISE - RIGA SHELTER, CONNECTICUT PHOTO BY W.M. HINSCH

users’ experiences, protect the Trail’s wilderness and remoteness, and ensure the idea of the Trail is one that resonates with all people. But we must also tend to the practical. We must make sure our volunteers have the training and capacity to keep the treadway open and manage the Trail and its corridor. We must make sure our hikers understand and follow Leave No Trace Principles and respect the rules and regulations of all the lands the Trail traverses. We must find new ways to bring our membership and partners together to share best practices, best Trail stories, and take a hike together.

I’ve said that the Trail never changes — but changes absolutely those who walk it. For those of us who are entrusted with its care and protection, we must embrace both our visionary and our realist sides. We must hold fast to our past and work together to move into the future, adapting and changing when needed — always with what is best for the Trail in our hearts. 🌱

Sandra Marra / Chair

DECEMBER 2, 9 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

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SUMMIT SEEKERS

TELLING OUR OWN STORY ON THE TRAIL



People of color don't hike, don't scuba dive, and we don't care about the environment. It sounds absurd to put these ill-informed myths in writing but there they were; written on flip charts and pasted on the walls as Summit Seekers tossed out ideas and stereotypes each of us had been exposed to in our lives outdoors.

Among us were people from many walks and ethnicities, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Queer...most of us identified as “other” than what might be considered the norm on the Trail, tacitly defined by whiteness, afflu-

ence, or hetero-sexuality. Are these race, class, and gender definitions relevant to a bunch of folks who just want to get outdoors? Summit Seekers found this initial ice breaker exercise one of several ways we built a shared knowledge, experience, and sense of reality.

Before creating a community where “diversity” was the norm, it was as if we needed to first acknowledge some differences. The social realm experienced by people other than the usual suspects on the Appalachian Trail required that we overcome not only steep hills, rocky terrain, and other Trail challenges faced by all — but also the generally unsaid, or unspoken myths and expectations of us in the

«

Clockwise from top right: Summit Seeker ambassador Yodit Seyoum; Outdoor Afro ambassador Victor Omoniyi; SCA ambassador Darryl Fullwood; Groundwork D.C. ambassador Ramona Davis. Photos by Julie Judkins; Center: The group takes a hike at the first Summit Seeker event in Anacostia photo by McKenzie Grant-Gordon; Opposite page: Latino Outdoors Ambassador Siul Rivera (center) at the Harpers Ferry event



Rodney Stotts of “Rodney’s Raptors” educates Summit Seekers about birds of prey and falconry at the first event in Anacostia
 Photo by McKenzie Grant-Gordon



past that have typically been written by others. This was our rare chance to tell our story, our own way.

The Summit Seekers project is a collaboration between Outdoor Afro, Latino Outdoors, Groundwork USA (Groundwork Richmond and D.C.), and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). Funded by the National Park Foundation, two Summit Seeker pilot projects, one in the San Francisco Bay area and another in the greater D.C. area, recruited multi-generational participants from many walks to both introduce them to the Appalachian Trail and/or the outdoors, hiking, and camping such that new affinity groups and cohorts might flower and begin to thrive. Participants learned practical hiking and camping skills, and got to hone those skills in the outdoors while forging teams and new Trail friendships. I attended the D.C. area project and served as an “ambassador/mentor.” This is a three-part series of summit events: an initial launch gathering at Anacostia Community Museum in Washington, D.C., an A.T. Summit weekend in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia that included an orientation from the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park superintendent, a short walk through history in the town, an overnight stay on the A.T. at Blackburn Trail Center, and a third gathering along the Anacostia River in September. The A.T. Summit included opportunities to explore African-American and U.S. history, get exposed to some of the folklore of the A.T., and get acclimated to the Trail experience. The final day of the A.T. Summit gave participants airspace to create a unique agenda for their newly formed Trail cohorts, further opportunities for Summit Seekers to share their ideas, learn from each other, and to shed some light about diversity in outdoors settings.

One Summit Seeker and ATC Next Generation Advisory Council member, Tony Richardson explains it this way: “My experience was invaluable to my personal and professional ambitions...I gained new hiking partners, mentors, memories, and life-long connections; but I would have to say the most important thing I gained was *knowledge*.” He continues, “The opportunity to hear directly from youth — particularly youth of color — about their connection to public lands was extremely insightful. Who better to inform strategies for diversifying the environmental movement, than the very people we are trying to engage.”

Through my lens as an African-American hiker, which includes nearly 30-plus years of section hiking and helping to maintain portions of the Appalachian Trail, I cannot say that I have ever been confronted directly with what most people would regard as racism — which usually means overt race hatred or discrimination. On the contrary, mostly I have felt that my own presence on the Trail exposed at least some of the traditional Trail folks to a genuine mystery or a quandary. Specifically, the presence of a black person doing something that many assume black people don’t do. If I felt discomfort surrounding race, which usually is around

oblique discussions that attempt to unravel the mystery of why I am doing something that falls outside of usual expectations. It is sort of embarrassing actually.

The Summit Seekers program and ambassadors challenge these expectations. Race in America is complicated and far more than simply being shades of black and white. For example, from time to time I have found myself plodding on a narrow Trail behind clumps of unknown white hikers who sometimes insist that I walk ahead of them on that Trail. I am never sure if this is because they feel safer with a big black man walking in front of them rather than



From left: Brittany Leavitt of Outdoor Afro, and an ATC Next Generation Advisory Council member, with fellow ATC Next Generation Advisory Council members Tony Richardson and Kristin Murphy at the Anacostia Park Aquatic Resources Education Center event in July. Photo by McKenzie Grant-Gordon

behind? Is it paranoid of me to read something pejorative into this Trail behavior? For those who think that I am being paranoid or pre-judging such things I must say that an African-American in the general society, whites frequently tell me they do not see race as such and so it matters not. Yet I know from a lifetime of living as a Black person in America that people of color ignore race at our own peril. So often, for us to function in a socially appropriate way, it is incumbent for us to put whites at ease about our presence, make them feel safe, defer to their views about race, and to turn the other cheek when faced with situations that are ambiguous for us but reassuring to our white peers. It cuts both ways.

Rewind to the ATC member who assured me that he did not care what color a hiker was as long as they were willing and able to do the Trail work. It left me with the impression

that his acceptance of a racially diverse club was provisional. He only recognized as legitimate people of color who could meet his standards of performance. It is sort of like being on probation, the sense that we can participate in these clubs if we measure up to standards set by others. In a way, I felt like I was again being invited to walk in front of the other hikers on the Trail until such time as I proved myself. But if I take his remarks in a more generous context, maybe he was saying he was entirely open to black people in the club if their presence enhanced the mission and goals of the club? Not an unreasonable thing I suppose, but is it a test he also applies to whites? Obviously it is not for me to say, and had I asked him to clarify I felt he would have thought me rude or a smart alec.

Rahawa Haile is female African-American hiker who identifies as “Queer.” She recently wrote about her experiences hiking on the A.T. for an article in *Outside Magazine*. She reports several incidents and situations during her Trail sojourn where she did not feel safe, and even felt intimidated by whites along her journey who in turn felt challenged by or distrusted her presence. I think it is hard for whites unfamiliar with the embedded culture of disparity in society to imagine how places in the wild that seem neutral, hospitable, and benign to them, might take on an entirely different connotation for black or brown hikers. The subject came up during the Summit Seekers gathering as a side note to how our Trail experiences differ at times from that of white hikers and therefore our Trail experience is sometimes at odds. As fellow Summit Seeker ambassador and ATC Next Generation Advisory Council member Kristin Murphy puts it, “I gained a new perspective on what it’s like to be anything other than a white male in the outdoors and the barriers that exist for not only getting outdoors, but feeling comfortable, safe, and welcomed in nature.”

So the challenge of “diverse” people on the Appalachian Trail or in many other conservation clubs that have traditionally been white is a very complex journey. I cannot imagine a successful attempt at integrating or diversifying any activity without also examining and unpacking the world view, history, and values that, in many instances, have been developed to attract white donors, volunteers, boosters, and patrons. To rethink the prevailing culture of such affinity groups, then one must also consider whom they intend to serve at a fundamental level. The argument that these are public interest causes that serve everyone to some extent is a weak one if you consider that some clubs, while they do not discriminate against people of color, nonetheless, a traditionally all-white interest group has the distinct preference to serve whites. For this reason, I have

come to view diversity as a very separate subject from inclusion. Diversity generally seeks to attract participation from less served constituencies in order to put aside any sense that racism is tolerated within the club or group. But inclusion is focused on exploring the structure and behavioral aspects of the group, while examining how those factors can be updated to provide an equivalent and very welcoming footing for as many different types and walks of people as possible.

Where does this tent pole go? It was a question I dreaded from a Summit Seeker because, quite honestly, as a seasoned hiker/camper I am supposed to know this stuff. But quite honestly I had never seen a newfangled tent like that high-tech looking one that was brand new and just out of the packing box. In the end, we figured it out together, which spared my embarrassment. The organized chaos of people learning new skills, trying out new gear, bonding and sharing hard won knowledge was a great way to get to know new Trail buddies and bridge the various gaps of race, class, gender, and generations. These differences faded into the background as we embarked on a shared adventure together. Each one of the participants appeared to be enthusiastic about being there. All were deeply intelligent, thoughtful, and thoroughly committed to being on the Trail and determined to put forward their personal best. Each participant had a strong sense of personal worth and a deep awareness of their heritage of struggle as the descendants of immigrants, ethnic minorities, or historically disenfranchised people. To pretend that divisions of race, gender, religion, or class are not relevant on the Trail would be like pretending such things are no longer relevant in America. Obviously the newspaper headlines tell us otherwise. As an ambassador old enough to be a parent



Clockwise from left: Conservation Leadership Corps members Jen Lam and Kalen Gilliam; CLC leads a group in a stretch circle before teaching Leave No Trace principles on an A.T. hike near Blackburn Trail Center. 📷 Photo by Julie Judkins; Participants learn techniques for setting up camp at the first event in Anacostia. 📷 Photo by McKenzie Grant-Gordon

to many of them, I enjoyed sharing my skills and experiences, and I learned from them in turn.

To me, as a volunteer, hiker, and African-American, there is something inherently democratic about a foot trail that people can use to walk from one end of our country to the other for free and to experience some of the most amazing places and spaces that have yet to be destroyed by sprawl, privatization, and industrialization. The fact that the Trail is a labor of love, maintained by countless volunteers, I feel assures that its heritage and its future remains connected to a sense of values and stewardship that would and should thrive even more with deeper representation from a wider and more diverse pool of hikers, maintainers, and advocates. The prospect of any great conservation endeavor that relies solely on one class of people to save it, would seem doomed to failure as a question of logic. Trail users and its stewards must become more diverse to both survive and become authentic in its aims. The Summit Seekers have taken these steps down an entirely new trail, one of many steps being taken toward that vision. 🌱



The September 16 event at Anacostia Park was a lovely final gathering of the Summit Seekers that included a potluck lunch, a tour of the Anacostia Resources Education Center, and a river boat adventure led by the Anacostia riverkeeper. Ambassadors and partner staff were able to close the final event with a reflection circle and discussion of next steps. Ambassadors are enthusiastic about staying in touch and seeing which summit they will seek next.

Fred Tutman is a grassroots community advocate for clean water in Maryland’s longest and deepest intrastate waterway and holds the title of Patuxent riverkeeper, an organization that he founded in 2004. He also lives and works on an active farm located near the Patuxent that has been his family’s ancestral home for nearly a century. Prior to riverkeeping, Fred spent over 25 years working as a media producer and consultant on telecommunications assignments all over the globe. Fred now teaches an adjunct course in Environmental Law and Policy at Historic St. Mary’s College of Maryland. An accomplished blacksmith, farmer, and outdoor adventurer, Fred is the recipient of numerous regional and state awards for his various environmental works. He is among the longest serving waterkeeper in the Chesapeake region and the only African-American waterkeeper in the nation.

TRAILHEAD

★ ATC DIRT ★



Emma “Grandma” Gatewood holds up a tattered shirt from her solo thru-hike in 1955.

📷 Photos courtesy Lucy Seeds and Marjorie Wood



THREE DECADES of Devotion to the Trail

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) has a number of dedicated staff who have given a good chunk of their working lives to our organization. Every now and then, one of these remarkable staff chooses to hang up their phones and turn off the computer, wishing the rest of us farewell to enjoy retirement.

Twenty-eight years ago, when the ATC had a handful of staff, Susan Daniels joined the crew to help with the growing amount of administrative assignments. As her early supervisor noted: “Hiring Sue was one of the best decisions I made.” Many, many staff and volunteers couldn’t agree more. With Susan’s retirement from her position as conservation coordinator, the ATC will say a fond and deeply appreciative farewell to an unassuming, dedicated, prolific contributor to the success of our organization and the stewardship of the Trail.

Susan’s work grew to take on many tasks over the course of her tenure with the ATC. She became chief go-to for all staff in the conservation department and certainly for many newly hired staff who were seeking a kind soul to

help point them in the right direction. The entire staff grew to rely on Sue’s deep knowledge of the organization. As many recognized: “she’s like Google for the ATC.” Ask Sue.

Others beyond staff asked Sue for assistance every day. “Sue always answered all of the questions volunteers had,” says Ned Kuhns, former president of the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club and Stewardship Council member. “She was incredibly helpful and supportive of volunteers.” Surely many agree, as Susan was presented an award at the 2017 Biennial meeting for her contributions. This recognition was received with a standing ovation.

Many of us, including executive leadership, turned to Susan to edit and refine major documents and communications. Her editorial skills are sharp and her ability to navigate complex text is impressive. Her attention to detail and support of the Stewardship Council was instrumental in the development of numerous Trail management policies today. “Susan is not only a wise and valued source of institutional knowledge, she has also been instrumental in assuring that the Stewardship Council functions effectively,” says Beth Critton, current chair of the Stewardship Council. Among her many other responsibilities for the council, she has coordinated meetings, helped update the handbook, recorded notes, and assured that policies developed by the council and adopted by the board find their way onto the ATC website. Beyond her work on behalf of the council, she has compiled and reported hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours and has been the motivating force behind both the content and editorial quality of *The Register* newsletter. Happy Trails, Susan — you will be missed!



Susan Daniels devoted 28 years to the ATC before retiring this year



GRANDMA GATEWOOD STORY

FilmAffects and Eden Valley Enterprises are excited to announce that their film *Trail Magic, the Grandma Gatewood Story* was officially nominated last spring for a Regional National Association of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS) Emmy Award in the “Best Documentary, Historical” category. Directed by Peter Huston of FilmAffects, the story of Emma Gatewood’s solo thru-hike on the A.T. in 1955 at the age of 67 still resonates with hikers across the country. The film captures Emma Gatewood’s challenging life that led to her historic hike on the Trail. Her hike and the subsequent publicity spurred interest in Trail hiking across America. According to director Huston, Emma’s story propelled boomers in the late ‘60s and ‘70s to get out in nature and many chose to attempt the A.T. ¶ The film explores the idea of “Grandma’s on the Trail” and how that changed the way we look at personal fitness and outdoor adventure. The film, which features Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) president/CEO Ron Tipton and several other ATC staff, first aired in Ohio on PBS TV stations WVIZ and WOUB in 2016. Since then, it has been distributed to PBS stations across the country by the National Education Television Association.

For more information visit: NETAonline.org or purchase the DVD from the Ultimate A.T. Store at: atctrailstore.org

To view a clip from the video visit: vimeo.com/97931550

Hurricane Irma Damage

The massive, category five hurricane that caused widespread damage across the state of Florida in early September also significantly impacted the southern end of the A.T. Hundreds of trees fell across the Trail in Georgia and the southernmost portion of North Carolina, with pockets of damage in the Smokies and north into Tennessee. Volunteers from the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club and the Nantahala Hiking Club worked diligently to remove blowdowns. Their work was aided significantly by Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS), Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and U.S. Forest Service staff, particularly in the 50 or so miles of A.T. in federally designated wilderness areas, where chainsaws are prohibited and hand tools must be used. The Trail is expected to be cleared by mid-October. ¶ “Widow-makers” and other hazards from damaged or unstable trees will remain a concern along affected sections of the A.T. beyond the 2018 northbound thru-hiking season. A.T. campers need to be extremely vigilant about inspecting overnight sites for trees and limbs around and above them that could fall — even in completely still conditions — throughout Georgia, North Carolina, and much of Tennessee.

For more information and other Trail updates visit: appalachiantrail.org/updates



ATC 2017 CONFERENCE IN MAINE



The 2017 Appalachian Trail Conservancy 41st Conference in Maine, hosted by the Maine A.T. Club this past summer was a successful, festive, and busy event. See more highlights from the event at: matc.org/assets/mainetainer-summer-2017.pdf



Bill Park, Josh Silverman and Susie McNeely pose before embarking on one of the conference’s hikes — a 12-mile traverse across Lone, Spaulding, and Sugarloaf mountains, which celebrated the 80th anniversary of the Trail in this section — the A.T. was completed in Carrabassett Valley, Maine on August 13, 1937



Members of Congress Unite to Support the Appalachian Trail

By Lynn Davis

Congressman Don Beyer (D-VA) and Congressman Phil Roe (R-TN) co-chair the newly organized Appalachian National Scenic Trail Caucus. The bipartisan caucus is organized to unite

members in the U.S. House of Representatives in working together for the sustained protection and conservation of the A.T. ¶ Both Congressmen are experienced A.T. hikers. A longtime section hiker, Congressman Beyer recently completed the A.T.’s rugged and challenging treadway through the White Mountains in New Hampshire. And Congressman Roe frequently hikes the A.T. for its beauty and as part of his physical conditioning to summit one or two 14,000-foot mountaintops each year in the western United States. Both Congressmen recognize the importance of the A.T. in providing recreational access to millions of Americans, in welcoming travelers from around the world, and in sustaining healthy economies in communities along the Trail. ¶ The caucus kicks off as the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act nears in 2018. The Act, passed by Congress in 1968, recognized the Appalachian and Pacific Crest trails for their scenic and recreational qualities, and set up the creation of additional nationally recognized scenic trails, recreation trails, and historic trails. ¶ “The A.T. is unique as the longest continuous footpath in the U.S., and as an avid outdoorsman, I care deeply about preserving our natural resources so they can be enjoyed for generations to come,” says Congressman Roe. “All of the Members whose district contains a portion of the A.T. are vested in working together to protect the Trail in its entirety. You might say this is a ‘one for all and all for one’ caucus in looking out for all parts of the Trail.” ¶ Congressman Don Beyer adds: “The A.T. is a demonstrable part of America’s heritage and our contemporary life. It is a symbol of achievement for those who make it their mission to hike its entire length, whether one long continuous walk or a section at a time. And it is a destination for picnics, day hikes, and camping trips.” ¶ “I anticipate the caucus will be dealing with increased visitation and accompanying increased maintenance demands, along with assuring that the Trail is appropriately funded,” says Beyer.



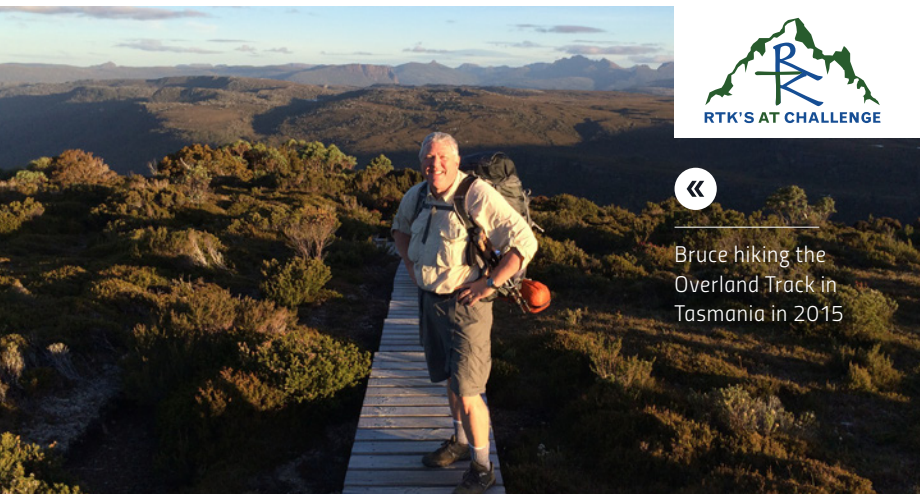
From top: Congressman Don Beyer and Congressman Phil Roe (right) on the A.T.



NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION: APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY & PACIFIC CREST TRAIL ASSOCIATION

In 2018, the U.S. will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act and the creation of the first two national scenic trails. Commemorative opportunities are being planned around the country. In order to celebrate the creation of both the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail, an event is being planned by a joint committee comprised of representatives from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and the Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA). With the passage of the National Trails System Act in 1968, America was given a gift — the creation and protection of some of Americans’ favorite places to discover the great outdoors. Trails that celebrate outdoor adventure and recreational opportunities are paramount to helping individuals live happy, healthy, and fulfilled lives. The joint event will help showcase the commitment to this gift and engage the public through a variety of opportunities on Tuesday, October 2, 2018. An event plan featuring education, awareness, fundraising and entertainment will be shared through social media, email, and online marketing. The public will learn more about the creation of both the ATC and the PCTA and be able to support the work of both.

Stay tuned for more information and get ready to celebrate with us.



Bruce hiking the Overland Track in Tasmania in 2015

RTK Challenge

After attending a presentation by Trail Legend Warren Doyle about his record-setting journey on the Appalachian Trail, Bruce Matson made a personal commitment to hike the A.T., “some day.” And while Bruce listened to Doyle talk in 1974, he will finally begin his effort to fulfill that commitment made over 40 years ago when he steps off of Springer Mountain on February 25, 2018, and begins his trek: “Returning to Katahdin.” As Bruce insists, “its never too late to chase your dreams.” Having been born and raised in the north and having guided canoe trips in the North Maine Woods (including day trips to Katahdin), in a very real sense, Bruce is using his thru-hike to reflect about how life has gone as he physically moves toward the land of his youth. Most significantly to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), Bruce is also using his hike to try to raise money for the ATC’s efforts at preserving the A.T. hiking experience. In fact, with a campaign known as “RTK’s A.T. Challenge,” like the many recent thru-hike records set, Bruce is targeting a record fundraising effort (in excess of \$250,000). “I think I would not have had the sense of gratitude and the corresponding desire to give back if I had attempted a thru-hike in my youth,” says Bruce who is looking forward to starting his hike.

Stay tuned for an update on Bruce’s hike in 2018 by visiting: returningtokatahdin.com

NEW ATC BOARD MEMBERS

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy welcomes two new members to the Board of Directors this fall: Colin Beasley and Shalin Desai. ¶ Colin will be familiar to many as a recent member of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy’s (ATC) Advisory Circle. An accomplished businessman, Colin spent most of his professional life at Verizon, ultimately working his way up to and retiring from an executive level position. He brings his entrepreneurial skills to the ATC as well as his gifts for building and harnessing synergy to our ongoing Strategic Plan. When he is not acting as a “captain of industry” he enjoys the wilds of the A.T. in New Hampshire. ¶ Shalin is a passionate long-distance hiker. In the last two years, he not only thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail, but had also completed the Pacific Crest Trail and Vermont’s Long Trail. (When we reached out to him in September for this article, he was in the middle of hiking the Continental Divide Trail.) Shalin channels the joy and energy he finds in the natural world into his work as a sales manager and strategist for the likes of TripAdvisor, Jetsetter, and Regenerative Resorts. He has a gift for thinking outside the box and for reaching out to new communities, which will be particularly helpful in expanding the ATC’s Broader Relevancy initiative. ¶ Colin and Shalin will be serving with returning Board members Sandra Marra (Chair), Gregory Winchester (Vice Chair), Elizabeth Thompson (Secretary), Mary Higley (Treasurer), Beth Critton, Jennifer Pharr Davis, Norman Findley III, Edward Guyot, Daniel Howe, Robert Hutchinson, Jr., Rubén Rosales, and Nathaniel Stoddard. We are delighted to add these men to our already talented and dedicated team and expect to see great advancements from our Board in 2018.



From top: New ATC Board members Shalin Desai and Colin Beasley



A.T. Vista: A View of Future Gatherings for A.T. Enthusiasts

Since 1925, people who cherish the A.T. have gathered to build the Trail, hike, and attend workshops on topics of common interest. Perhaps the greatest reward of these events is the opportunity to connect with other kindred spirits. At a “View from The Maine Woods,” the recent Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) Conference held in August 2017 in Waterville, Maine, an ATC task force presented the concept of “A.T. Vista” to attendees as the recognized program forum for activity on and near the Appalachian Trail. ¶ The task force, including representatives from A.T. Clubs, A.T. Communities, ATC staff, and ATC members, has been engaged during the last several months to develop a new model for an event that highlights the ways the Trail brings A.T. Communities, clubs, and hikers together while streamlining activities and rethinking the distribution of event planning responsibility. The change to the A.T. Vista comes as the ATC begins to schedule annual public board and membership meetings beginning in 2018 to comply with new rules for non-profits organized in the District of Columbia. ¶ A.T. Vista is envisioned as a four-day weekend event that retains celebrated activities such as hikes and workshops, while broadening the engagement in hosting and participation from local A.T. communities and other nearby partners. Organizers also anticipate planning activities that will increase attendance from younger and more diverse participants. ¶ The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference will host the first A.T. Vista during the summer of 2020 at Ramapo College in New Jersey. The event coincides with the conference’s centennial and offers the opportunity to pilot implement this new A.T. event. Looking forward, A.T. Vistas will likely occur every two years, with a rotational cycle that seeks host sites south and north of the Delaware Water Gap. The ATC is currently establishing the 2020 Steering Committee that will plan and produce the inaugural A.T. Vista program. In the meantime, the A.T. Vista Task Force will continue to develop the program as a special feature of the Appalachian Trail experience, and obtain feedback from others interested in being involved with the event.

For more information visit: atvista.org



BLACK BEAR AWARENESS

Due to an increasing number of serious human/bear interactions at many locations along the A.T. the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) continues to strongly recommend use of a bear canister by anyone staying overnight on the A.T. Please check the Trail Updates page on the ATC’s website. The ATC recommends canisters approved by the partners of SierraWild, a joint U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and BLM program to manage multiple wilderness areas in the Sierras.

For more information visit: appalachiantrail.org/bears and sierrawild.gov/bears



HUNTING SEASON SAFETY

Hunting regulations vary widely along the Appalachian Trail. Although the A.T. is a unit of the National Park System, it traverses a patchwork quilt of public lands managed for many different purposes. Hunting is permitted within close proximity of some parts of the A.T. in every Trail state. Many segments of the A.T. in Pennsylvania north of the Cumberland Valley and a few miles of the A.T. through the G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management area in northern Virginia are game lands managed primarily for hunting. Both hikers and hunters are advised to **“know before you go.”**

- Consult a current official A.T. map to learn which agencies own and regulate the land
- Know local hunting seasons
- Wear a blaze-orange hat, clothing, or gear visible from 360 degrees
- Avoid deer firearm season (usually October through January) by hiking in one of these national parks: C & O Canal National Historical Park, Maryland; Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, West Virginia; Shenandoah National Park, Virginia; Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia; Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee and North Carolina

For more information and to see ATC’s “2017-2018 Hunting Season Guide by State” visit: appalachiantrail.org/hunting



THE FUTURE OF LANDSCAPE PROTECTION

BY JACK IGELMAN

TO GRASP THE IMPACT OF A SUCCESSFUL LARGE-SCALE landscape partnership approach that helps preserve the essence of the A.T. experience — its view shed, access to the Trail, and the vitality of communities along it — there is no better place to examine than Maine's North Woods. "Cooperating with multiple partners to preserve large landscapes is the future of protecting the Trail experience," says the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's (ATC) president and CEO Ron Tipton. "This of course is not limited to Maine, but all the way to Georgia too." He explains that this isn't about protecting the footpath, which is already protected. It's about the larger landscape. "When you're looking at a really large area with the potential to protect thousands of acres it will almost always involve working with numerous private and public partners," he says. "It will never be the ATC by ourselves."

A key partner in this endeavor is the National Park Service (NPS) Appalachian National Scenic Trail office (APPA). "[Our] participation in A.T. Landscape Protection aligns seamlessly with the NPS promotion of large landscape conservation to support

healthy ecosystems and cultural resources," says APPA superintendent Wendy Janssen. "As Benton MacKaye wrote, '...a realm and not merely a trail mark the full aim of our efforts.'"

Walter Graff, the senior vice president of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), is someone who's not afraid of gutsy land conservation projects himself. For example, in 2001 he helped establish the largest town-owned forest in New Hampshire that encompasses over 10,000 acres in his hometown of Randolph. While that project was a grassroots community effort, it paralleled his decades-long career at the AMC, an organization that is no stranger to major conservation projects.

"When we created a town forest we did it as volunteers. That got me thinking, can the AMC do this somewhere else?" Graff said. While his contemplation would represent a new frontier in the AMC's conservation playbook, it coincided with one of the largest land ownership changes in the northeastern U.S. in nearly a century. An upheaval in the timber industry preceded the transfer of ownership of hundreds of thousands of acres of commercial timberland throughout the state of Maine in the late 1990s.

Soon, the AMC as well as other conservation advocates and organizations swept in to protect some of Maine's most special and remote places. For example, in 2003, the AMC purchased the first of several sprawling tracts that formed the nucleus of the AMC's Maine Woods Initiative (MWI) — a project that combines outdoor recreation, resource protection, sustainable forestry, and community partnerships in Maine's 100-Mile Wilderness region. In all, the MWI encompasses a contiguous stretch of over 70,000 acres of permanently conserved land. The thriving venture is one of several large-scale landscape projects that has placed in permanent protection thousands of acres of some of New England's most remote and remarkable terrain that is adjacent to or encompasses the Appalachian Trail.

The success of the MWI is an example of an ambitious approach to land protection that the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and many of its conservation partners

ILLUSTRATION KATIE EBERTS




“WE ALL CHAMPION THE SAME THING: MAINTAINING A SENSE OF PLACE, CLEAN WATER, BEAUTIFUL VIEWS, REMOTENESS — THOSE VALUES ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT TO THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE NEAR THE TRAIL AS THEY ARE TO A THRU-HIKER.”



— including the AMC, the Trust for Public Land, and the National Park Service. This kaleidoscope of organizations, from small volunteer groups to sprawling federal agencies, have championed this approach in order to protect priority landscapes throughout the A.T. corridor. Among them, the ATC has identified 10 Priority Landscapes, two of which are in Maine: the 100-Mile Wilderness and the High Peaks region. This initiative is called the “A.T. Landscape Partnership” and it includes a number of conservation organizations.

ATC’S director of Landscape Conservation Dennis Shaffer believes the MWI had major benefits to the Trail experience and aligns with the ATC’s landscape level conservation values while allowing public access, and other management decisions that could impact the A.T. “What they’ve accomplished in terms of land protection, Trail development, and a recreational economy is remarkable. AMC had a big vision and they stuck to it,” says Shaffer. “It’s a real success story of one of our partner’s doing large landscape conservation work in the A.T. corridor.”



The Monson General Store – Monson, Maine is one of many local A.T. Communities who have partnered with the ATC to preserve their unique character and special resources and to help protect those resources.  Photo by Wendy Weiger

Shaffer explains that the partnerships between the ATC and other organizations such as the National Park Service, the Trust for Public Land, the AMC, and many local land trusts and organizations managed by volunteers take many forms. He

points out that as conservation projects expand beyond the Trail corridor, they will likely become vastly more complex and will depend on a division of labor supplied by a diverse range of partners. “Our partners bring to the table a wide range of capacity and expertise. Our role with AMC has been more to help promote and celebrate the huge successes of their Maine Woods Initiative and to make the connection that this important work in Maine contributes to the entire A.T. landscape,” Shaffer explains. “But our work with partners such as AMC also goes well beyond specific projects areas like the MWI. We work closely on issues important to the entire A.T. landscape such as conservation funding initiatives, federal and state legislative issues, and active threats such as inappropriately planned pipelines or communications facilities.”

Other partners in Maine also had huge successes that contributed to protecting the A.T. landscape. In 1998, Karin Tilberg, now the interim executive director of the Forest Society of Maine, was working for the Northern Forest Alliance when there was a rather abrupt transformation in land ownership throughout the state. “We saw in two years, millions of acres sold in Maine,” recalls Tilberg. “We couldn’t get our heads around it. It was so dramatic.”

What she observed was that large timber companies were selling millions of acres of forest land in Maine’s Northwoods, a vast landscape of timberlands, lakes, and rivers that cover nearly half of the state. Much of it was privately owned and managed for industrial timber harvesting and the forest product industry had, for two centuries, produced everything from fine furniture to clothes pins and paper.

While conservation organizations had been eyeing protection possibilities in Maine for decades, much of the forest land was owned by a dozen or so large paper companies. Tilberg explains that it made sense for paper companies to own their own forest land to access a reliable supply of timber and water power. But global competition in the paper and timber industry tightened profits, triggering pressure from forest land owners to monetize their land assets. In a short period of time, fiscally battered timberland owners began to sell off tracts of land to timber management investment trusts and other buyers.

Tilberg said that for conservationists, land that had been tied up in ownership, now on the open market was a game changer. While an opportunity, there was a sense of urgency: communities were concerned that future land sales had the potential to fragment large tracts of forestland that had been owned by fewer than a dozen companies and had thus remained relatively intact and contiguous. “One key goal of local communities, forest products companies, and recreation interests was to stabilize and to prevent fragmentation. As land sells you have the potential to create more inholdings which works against forest management and you can potentially lose the [quality] of such a vast landscape,” says Tilberg.

While the timber land sell off of 98-99 was unexpected, the Maine conservation community wasn’t entirely unprepared. For years, land protection advocates had spent time connecting with locals in the remote forest gateway communities of working forests. “There were public meetings and listening sessions to talk about what people cared about,” recalls Tilberg. “In these communities people depend on working landscapes, but didn’t want to see land developed either, or to lose that sense of remoteness. What we learned was that [many goals overlapped].”

IT turned out that the revelation of building stronger ties with communities would serve them well as forest land in Maine was put up for grabs. While land conservation organizations were facing an opportunity of a lifetime, plenty of Mainers weren’t entirely comfortable with a change in the status quo of land ownership that once reigned.

Among the concerns of communities throughout Maine is the potential of being locked out of land they’ve accessed for generations to earn a living, hunt or fish, or snowmobile as part of a social compact between companies and residents. Laura Belleville, the ATC’s vice president of conservation and Trail programs, emphasizes that large-scale conservation projects won’t succeed without paying careful attention to how people live, work, and play within

the landscape. “The work that the AMC is doing in Maine really shines a light on how compatible recreational conservation goals can be with local communities,” explains Belleville. “We all champion the same thing: maintaining a sense of place, clean water, beautiful views, remoteness — those values are just as important to the people who live near the Trail as they are to a thru-hiker.”

The ATC has been working to connect communities along the A.T. to these benefits through the A.T. Community program. Several communities in Maine have been designated partners of the ATC and local Trail clubs, including Millinocket, Monson, Rangeley, and Kingfield. These communities recognize that the A.T. is a draw for visitors that want to explore this world renowned treasure and that they serve as gateways to that experience. The Trail and the surrounding landscape contribute to a recreation-based tourism economy that helps these small communities preserve their unique character and special resources. Communities are also partnering with the ATC to help protect these resources through outreach strategies such as the new A.T. visitor center in Monson.

Lucas St. Clair, an A.T. advocate and thru-hiker in 1997, along with his family’s foundation, the Quimby Family Foundation, has been a major driver behind the creation of the 87,000 acres Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument in Maine. He said that there are lessons about large-scale conservation that can be shared whether a private- or public-led land project. “People were unsure of what a national monument would bring, as far as rules, regulations and restrictions to a property that they had access historically,” he says. “The ways that we addressed it was to meet it head on and have interactions with communities with a lot of listening to understand what was important to them. I’d say the most important thing is engagement early and often with the community that will be affected.”

So when the AMC embarked on their Maine Woods Initiative, they knew that building a recreational wilderness would also involve an understanding of the local economies that would be impacted. In the mid 1990s, the AMC was forging a multi-year strategic plan that included a recreational land base that was owned by the organization. The board’s target was 100,000 acres. Eventually, in 2003, the AMC identified a 27,000 acres tract of land that International Paper was preparing to put on the market contiguous to the Appalachian Trail. Tilberg, who was then serving as a senior conservation policy adviser to Maine Governor John Baldacci, helped lay the groundwork for the sale. Since then, the AMC has added several other chunks of land to bring it to a present total of 70,000 acres.

“Overall the response in the community has been positive, but it wasn’t easy,” Graff admits, adding that it took a decade to develop connections and become part of the communities impacted by the AMC’s project. Among the core values of the project was to recognize that the woods product industry is a backbone of the local economy. “It’s not our goal to replace timber harvesting with wilderness recreation, but rather to integrate the two.”



“COOPERATING WITH MULTIPLE PARTNERS TO PRESERVE LARGE LANDSCAPES IS THE FUTURE OF PROTECTING THE TRAIL EXPERIENCE, NOT JUST IN MAINE, BUT ALL THE WAY TO GEORGIA TOO.”

ATC'S

Tipton says that among the ATC's closest partnership is with the Trust for Public Land (TPL). Over the years, the TPL has assisted or led projects that have direct benefits to the A.T., including assisting the AMC with their first MWI purchase in 2003. Among their current projects is the protection of 2,500 acres around Bald Mountain Pond (BMP), an undeveloped lake that's prized for its natural beauty, a century-old forest stand, and its population of rare landlocked Arctic char. The protection will also secure an important buffer to the Trail and will protect the view of the pond from Bald Mountain Shelter. “You really don't want to see the lights of houses and smell gas grills. The BMP project helps maintain the sense of being in the big woods, which is what's so special about Maine,” said TPL senior project manager, J.T. Horn.

Horn said that anchoring the TPL's work along the A.T. corridor is a way to link people with the best of Maine's North Woods, but it's not the only reason for the partnership with the ATC. “Just from a mission alignment view, working with the ATC is a really good fit. Our mission is conserving land for people. One of the best places people can experience the grandeur and remoteness of the North Woods is along the Trail, so anchoring our land conservation work along one of the iconic destinations in the North Woods makes sense,” explains Horn. On the other hand, he says that there's a less flashy, but just as vital reason for partnering with the



View of Lake Onawa from Barren Ledges in Maine — protecting the landscape may be an enticing draw to future visitors both from an environmental and economic standpoint. 📷 Photo by Kim Rosenbaum



strategies — conservation easements or land swaps, for example — that don't involve buying thousands of acres,” says Tipton.

And while the scale of conservation in the North Woods may not be possible to replicate in other regions of the Appalachians, if the success in Maine serves as a guide, then engaging communities and building meaningful partnerships, will most likely remain the cornerstone of the ATC's future conservation strategy for a long time to come. 📍

For more information about the A.T. Landscape Partnership visit: appalachiantrail.org/Landscape

ATC. “At a practical level, the ATC is really helpful at creating the case for public funding for conservation. We also know that there will be an impressive cadre of volunteers to steward the land after we buy it.”

But at the core of a successful landscape-level conservation project in the A.T. corridor is helping support and bolster the communities that lie within it. Putting the environmental benefits aside, protecting the landscape may be an enticing draw to future visitors to Maine and a viable option for bolstering the vitality of communities that are looking for other ways to diversify their economic base and generate income from a working landscape. “The breadth and scope of the MWI and other projects are extraordinary, but in the eastern U.S. unique to Maine. So as we go beyond the scope of the footpath and corridor, we're looking at a combination of other

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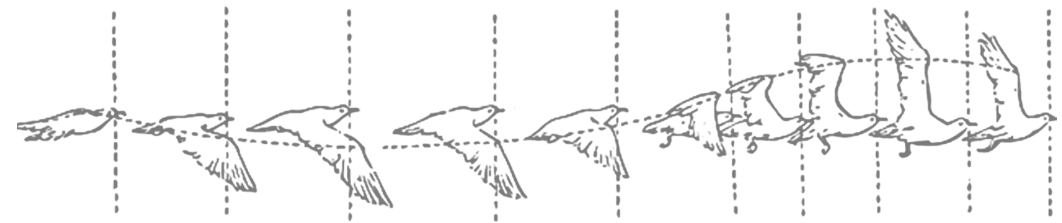


APPALACHIAN TRAIL
CONSERVANCY®



By Karen Lutz and Laurie Goodrich

AS INTREPID southbound thru-hikers make their way down the Appalachian Mountain chain this fall, few may be aware that their efforts are joined — and dwarfed — by a medium-size hawk weighing less than a pound. Dr. Laurie Goodrich at Pennsylvania's Hawk Mountain Sanctuary has launched a multi-year research project that has yielded fascinating data about this species that depends on the very same large landscape that Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and our conservation partners are diligently working to protect.



Dr. Goodrich and her colleagues have pioneered research on the raptor's spring and fall migration using tiny satellite telemetry units fitted to the birds with small unobtrusive micro-sized backpacks to collect data on the migratory habits and destinations of the broad-winged hawks. Their work has been supported by numerous sponsors including the Kittatinny Coalition, which is co-led by the ATC and Audubon Pennsylvania. And, the Pennsylvania Game Commission through the State Wildlife Grants Program.

Among these other important partners who help to protect the raptors' migratory path (and the Trail corridor) near Hawk Mountain is the William Penn Foundation, which has been a strong funding partner with the ATC since 2015 when it was awarded a grant to build constituency for protecting sections of the A.T. in eastern Pennsylvania that are within the Delaware River Basin.

Two of the fitted birds, Rosalie and Ridgena, were sponsored by the Kittatinny Coalition and have proven themselves to be interesting characters. Rosalie was named after Rosalie Edge, a "fearless environmentalist" and the founder of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in the 1930s. Ridgena was named after the Kittatinny Ridge, which the A.T. follows from New Jersey to southern Pennsylvania. They both nested on this ridge — Rosalie nested near where the A.T. lands adjoin Hawk Mountain.

The researchers have meticulously tracked the birds as they flew parallel to the Trail along the Appalachian Range, then west to Texas, and again south through Mexico and on to their wintering grounds in South America, traveling through Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Columbia, Ecuador, finally resting in the forests of Peru — almost reaching the border of Bolivia.

The southbound fall migration for Rosalie in 2016 (where she left her nest along the A.T. in central Pennsylvania) covered 5,446 miles and is equivalent to an A.T. hiker traveling from Springer Mountain to Katahdin, flip flopping



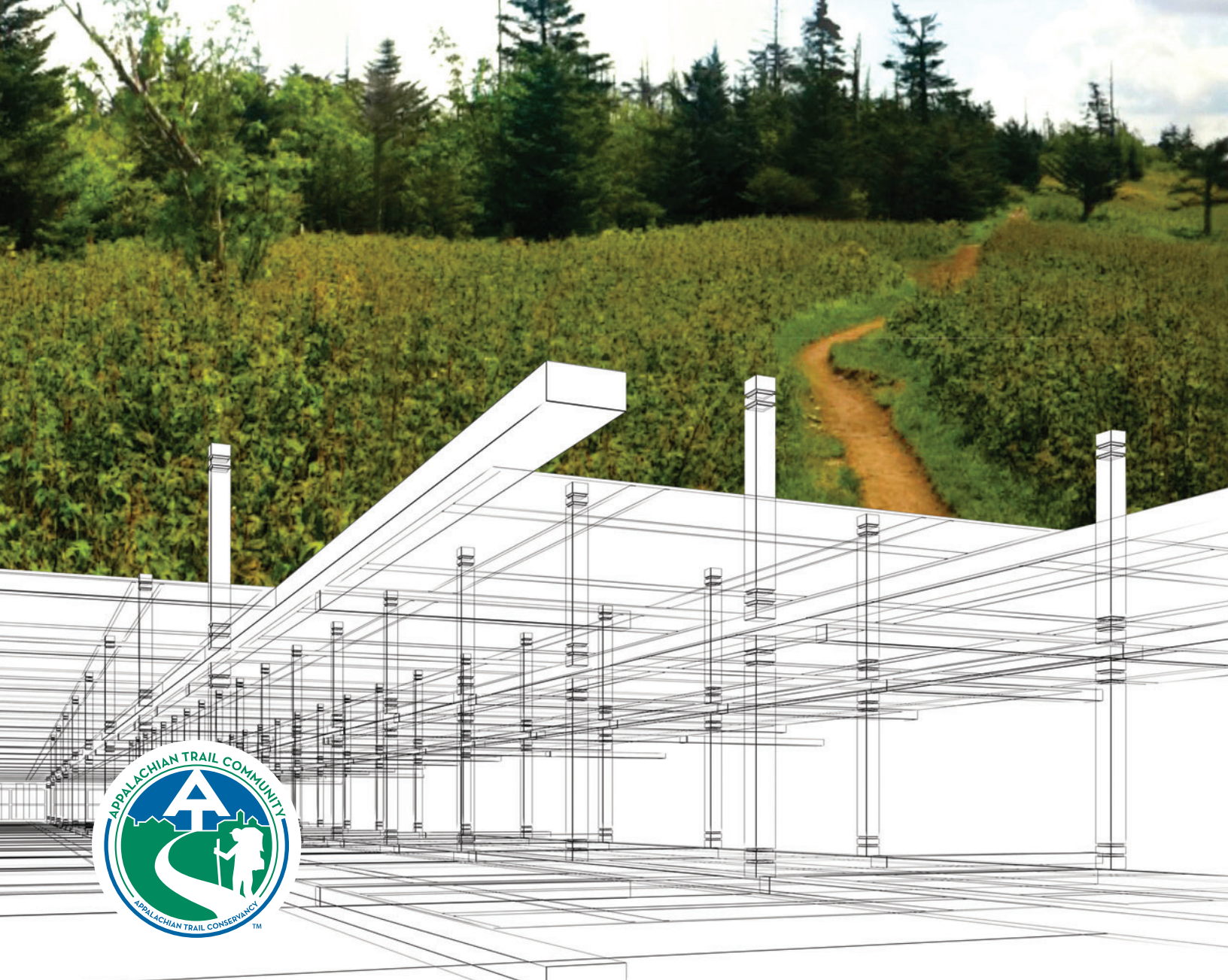
back to Springer, then flipping north again to Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania. But unlike the bipedid hikers, Rosalie covered the distance in only 157 days. She rested for a month in Parque Nacional Bahuaja Soneno in Peru. Then, this charismatic raptor left Peru on February 1, 2017 and returned to build her new nest less than a half mile from her 2016 nest alongside the A.T. where, like in 2016, she and her mate fledged two young. Following a northbound route similar to her route south, Rosalie followed the Trail that carries the famed footpath from northern Georgia. She covered 5,418 miles in a mere 83 days, arriving on April 25. Unlike her hiking companions, researchers found no evidence that ramen noodles or peanut M&Ms sustained Rosalie's effort.

Ridgena left her Kittatinny Ridge nest and flew south on August 23, 2015 and arrived at her wintering grounds in Peru on October 17 in a remarkably quick 56 days. Apparently, there she opted for the now popular ultralight packing option and cleverly managed to jettison her rather costly transmitter before taking flight back to Pennsylvania. Despite concern that Ridgena had met some unfortunate circumstance, Dr. Goodrich and her researchers positively identified her by the colored bands that they had affixed above her talons when she returned in April 2016. In the last three years, Ridgena has returned each year to nest near where she was banded on Kittatinny Ridge, while each winter she leaves again, we presume, for Colombia, following the Appalachians on her way.

Broad-wings nest in mixed hardwood and



Left: A broad-winged hawk in flight. Photo by VicBerardi; Above: Rosalie is captured at Hawk Mountain so that she can be fitted with a transmitter. Photo by Zach Bordner



VISITOR CENTER

COMING TO TRAIL TOWN USA *By Catherine Van Noy*

THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL'S ROLES ARE AS DIVERSE AS THE many hikers who venture out: a walk in the woods, a lab for discovery, a vehicle for conservation, a connecting thread for communities. The new Appalachian Trail Center in Damascus, Virginia, will likewise meet many needs.

The approximately 2,500-square-foot building slated for completion in 2019 is a collaborative project with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), the Town of Damascus, and the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation. The project represents a significant investment in an ongoing effort to expand economic opportunities through outdoor recreation across Southwest Virginia.

The center will support visitor information, exhibits, details about neighboring trails and assets, and training seminars for a range of groups including volunteers who help maintain the A.T. Programming and design will commence this fall. The facility, when completed, is also likely to assist the work of known recreational and conservation partners in the region along with adding new collaborators to the mix.

"This Center will be in a gateway community to the Mount Rogers high country, one of the most popular hiking destinations in Virginia," says Laura Belleville, vice president of Conservation and Trail Management Programs for the ATC. Damascus, often referred to as "Trail Town, USA," was a natu-

ral fit for various reasons. Proximity to the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, over 200,000 acres of national forest bisected by hiking and horse trails and scenic byways, is one. In addition, the Virginia Creeper Trail, the Trans-America National Bicycle Trail, the Iron Mountain Trail, the Daniel Boone Heritage Trail, the Crooked Road: Virginia's Musical Heritage Trail, and Virginia's Birding and Wildlife Trail all pass through or connect to Damascus.

"The center plays a key role in Damascus as the center-point for our downtown — a gravitational core," noted Gavin Blevins, town manager of Damascus and senior planner for the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission. "[It] will build upon long-standing partnerships with the ATC, U.S. Forest Service, and many other regional entities and partners who have either shown support already or with whom we are currently and continuing to work."

Collaboration is a fundamental part of any successful project and the ATC has integrated this best practice for decades with its legions of volunteer stewards. In another grade of partners, Damascus is among the 40 official ATC Trail Communities. The program, launched in 2010, recognizes communities that promote and protect the A.T.

"The Trail Center is an exciting partnership with Damascus, one of our first A.T. Communities. The center is located literally right across the street from the actual Trail as it passes through town," says Rob Hutchinson who is on the Board for ATC and chair of the Facilities Task Force, which meant working closely with staff on getting the project off the ground. Hutchinson was the primary liaison with the board in the approval process. "We will have the ability to introduce new hikers to the Trail and an opportunity to offer programs and education to experienced hikers," says Hutchinson. "Damascus has a lot of outdoor-oriented tourism, such as Trail Days, the Virginia Creeper Trail, and visitors to the Grayson Highlands. And it is not too far off of Interstate 81, which makes it an easy stop for casual tourists as well. We're anticipating a huge success for both the Town of Damascus and for ATC." Colin Beasley, an ATC Board member also played a role in getting the center to come to fruition by doing some economic analysis to understand the financial impact of the endeavor and assisted in drafting the terms of the lease as well as the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was designed to outline the strategic partnership between the ATC and the Town of Damascus. But Beasley praises Hutchinson for what he says was most of the hard work. "Rob provided a clear-headed approach

to evaluating the Damascus opportunity and a steady hand through all of the discussions, both internally and externally, with all of the stakeholders and individuals who were helpful along the way," says Beasley.

Damascus also hosts the largest annual gathering of Appalachian Trail hikers — Trail Days. The multi-day festival in May attracts about 20,000 hikers and other visitors to Damascus. Hiker workshops and services, food and gear vendors, and

concerts highlighting local and regional talents create a festival atmosphere and contribute to the event's growing popularity. The 32nd Appalachian Trail Days Festival is already slated for May 18 through 20, 2018.

Blevins and others are aiming for the center's ground-breaking ceremony that same weekend. Completion will be another spark in a comprehensive economic revitalization associated with cultural heritage and destination tourism across the 19 counties of Southwest Virginia.

Chris Cannon, executive director for Friends of Southwest Virginia, the operational arm of the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation, calls the new facility a game-changer. "By itself, the center would do incredible things by attracting new visitors and building the profile of our trails," he says. "But the complementary development on both the community and regional level will create many more opportunities for growth."

Friends of Southwest Virginia, along with a multitude of citizen groups, localities, and nonprofits has served as a coordinating organization for Appalachian Spring, a five-year

initiative to expand economic opportunity through outdoor recreation. The organization has done similar regional work through development of the Crooked Road, 'Round the Mountain: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network, and their newest trail: The Southwest Virginia Mountain Brew Trail. From mountains to music to a welcoming town, this dynamic synergy continues with the Appalachian Trail Center in Damascus. ▲



Left: The A.T. runs through Mount Rogers and directly through Damascus — which is surrounded by many other outdoor recreational trails and spaces. 📷 Photo by Stephen Outten; Below: Visitors gather for Trail Days and participate in the annual hiker parade. 📷 Photos by Dan Innamorato

A native Ohioan entering her 20th year in Virginia, Catherine Van Noy runs a strategic communications firm located near Blacksburg. She wrote a biweekly column for the *Roanoke Times* from 2003 until July of this year.

For more information about Damascus and Trail Days visit: visitdamascus.org
Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation: myswva.org/
ATC Trail Communities: appalachiantrail.org/atcommunities



LEVERAGE in partnership

THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL IS AS AMERICAN as Scouting or apple pie. These iconic fixtures in the United States, Scouting and the A.T., have a long overlapping history, where many young people gain their first introduction to the outdoors — where the beauty, challenge, and rewards are found in the exercise, strengthened friendships, and scenery of the endeavor.

The Trail has often served as the destination for Boy Scouts within a day's drive, with ambitions of ticking off a 50-mile backpack, to hike to a scenic spot they heard about, or to be among the volunteers who have the audacity to build and maintain this long-distance Trail so that others can come to confirm, "yes, this Trail can lead me all the way to Maine, or the other direction, to Georgia."

by Leanna Joyner & Brenna Irrer

To that end, the A.T. captured the imagination of two Eagle Scouts, Randy Wright and Charlie Timberlake, who set out in 2011 to hike following their respective college graduations. Meeting at age six through Scouts and being exposed to backpacking through Troop 304 in Atlanta, their connection to Scouting is so deep that even as 29-year-olds with no children of their own in Scouting, they have returned as assistant Scout Masters with an emphasis in backpacking.

"It's a different level of satisfaction being able to give back as adult leaders," says Wright who explains that their interest in exposing the current scouts of Troop 304 to volunteering on the A.T. began with the wildfires that swept through the southeast in the fall of 2016. "As much as our Scout troop uses the A.T., we

wanted to give back. It is in our backyard, and we see it as a priority."

The troop assisted the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club to make improvements to the Hawk Mountain Campsite, one of more than 332 overnight sites in the online A.T. Camping Allocation Management Program (A.T. CAMP), where groups are encouraged to register their overnight plans on the Trail. "For groups visiting the A.T., Leave No Trace starts with using A.T. CAMP to register their overnight camping plans. All Trail users are now encouraged to register their camping plans, with the goal of appropriately distributing use to protect the qualities for which the A.T. is managed," says Jason Zink, ATC's Visitor Use manager.

A.T. management is on the minds of others, too. David Bailey, vice president of Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club says "it's our future" of a partnership he has facilitated between his club and the Kittatinny Ridge Order of the Arrow Lodge. "The challenge for scouting and the challenge for A.T. maintaining clubs or other service groups is that we are all aging. Finding volunteers is something you have to constantly focus on or you won't exist," says Bailey who is excited to build on the work that the Order of the Arrow Lodge did in 2017 to improve Pipefitter's Field with another project in 2018 in the club's section.

Partnerships between Scout troops, Order of the Arrow lodges and Eagle Scouts with maintaining clubs along the length of the Trail are varied, though the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) hopes the trend in shared volunteer commitment grows. That is why the ATC participated in two scout-centered events in 2017, Winterfest in Gatlinburg, Tennessee in February, as well as the National Scout Jamboree in West Virginia in July.

As scouts walked down the Conservation Trail on the wooded shores of Goodrich Lake at the Jamboree, where the ATC exhibited alongside the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, they stopped by booths to engage in hands-on activities where they explored topics such as soil and water conservation, trails, and forestry. Participants came by the ATC exhibit to learn about stewardship and recreation on the Appalachian Trail. Scouts from across the country and abroad answered trivia questions about the A.T. and discovered how many volunteers and volun-

teer hours it takes to maintain the Trail each year. Faces of youth and adults alike lit up as they approached the 15-foot Trail map, where they identified familiar destinations and future adventures.

ATC Board vice chair Greg Winchester was happy for the opportunity to collaborate



with the Boy Scouts of America. "It was exciting to engage in one-on-one conversations with so many youth who were excited about the Appalachian Trail." He said that for two organizations with a history of inspiring young people to be involved in conservation and outdoor activities, working together is a natural partnership.

Assistant troop master Wright with Troop 304, echoes Winchester's enthusiasm. "The A.T. is one of the coolest things we have in America, and there is a lot of untapped enthusiasm for people who can get exposed to it and get involved," says Wright.

"And you don't need to be a major-league athlete to do it," adds Timberlake. He says hiking it is applicable for all ages, just like volunteerism — whether you're picking up litter, staining a shelter, or putting in a step. He adds, as a parting thought, that hikers can pass on their enthusiasm for the outdoors to the next generation through Scouting organizations, so that future generations have positive experiences outside and on the A.T. 🌲

Learn more about the intersection of the A.T. and scouting at: appalachiantrail.org/scouting

For more information about A.T. CAMP visit: atcamp.org



Clockwise from above: A Scoutmaster introduces the A.T. to his daughter during the recent Jamboree; Order of the Arrow Scouts worked with the Georgia A.T. Club to improve the A.T. in a highly-used section this year; The ATC's Kathryn Herndon leads an inner city Scout Troop at the Jamboree on a game of "ATopoly," where they "hiked" through all the states and learn Trail facts

⏮ The official entrance to the 2017 Jamboree where the ATC was featured as an event sponsor alongside organizations such as Leave No Trace, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Forest Service

CULTURE IMMERSION

Alex Perkins is a travel and adventure enthusiast based in Nashville, Tennessee. “A few years back, a friend of mine invited me to join her on a camping trip in Red River Gorge, Kentucky. This led me to a healthy passion for backpacking, and I have really enjoyed learning the culture,” he explains. “I am lucky to live very close to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, which contains 900 miles of wonderful, winding trails through the Tennessee and North Carolina mountains. If you are visiting the park, the 70-mile strip of the Appalachian Trail is particularly interesting because of the various types of hikers you will surely encounter.” On his most recent backpacking trip in the Smokies, Alex traveled 30 miles, sticking primarily to the Trail, where he wanted to document the hikers and their culture. “I wanted to hear their stories, and immerse myself in their lifestyle,” he says. During his hike, Alex met thru, section, and day-hikers and found that there is a wonderful camaraderie present among all of the hikers he came across. “It is as though they share a common understanding between themselves that they are each out here because they choose to be,” he says. “They share a mutual affinity for being outdoors and getting away from the stresses of everyday life. Friendships seem to flourish on the Trail — an element that I find extremely compelling in this backpacking community.” Alex hopes to get back on the Trail someday soon so he can continue to document some of the people, places, and things that inspire him the most.

alexperkinsshoots.com



Watch Alex talk about hiking, photography, and the sense of peace and camaraderie he found on the Trail at: alexperkinsshoots.com/backpacking



Lookout tower on the summit of Mount Cammerer in the Smokies (half a mile off the Trail) — built as a fire watch tower in the 1930s and manned by a fire ranger for 30 years



Cosby Knob Shelter; Below
from left: Thru-hikers
Patawon and Rocket; Alex
(self-portrait); Day-hiker
Jerry (from China); Section-
hiker Brandon





WARNING
Do not cook or eat
in this shelter.
FOOD ODORS ATTRACT BEARS



From left: Section hikers Adriana, Josh, and Nelson at Kephart Shelter



SCOTT ZIMMERMAN

Outdoor Restoration

By Beth Griffin

SCOTT ZIMMERMAN ENJOYED A childhood filled with the joys of summer camp in the mountains of North Carolina where he paddled, fished, sailed, camped, and hiked the long days away. He loved being outside with friends and recalls the fun they had “before the internet.” He was an ambitious young man, an accomplished undergraduate, and law student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Ultimately, he became a successful corporate litigator for almost 20 years in North Carolina. Scott was on a path that seemed to be a good one.

At some point along the way, however, Scott took a detour onto a dangerous

trail. It wasn’t marked with the white blaze of the A.T.’s adventure, nor was it blazed blue, leading to rest and camp. It was a trail of addiction and alcoholism. Ten years ago, Scott hit his bottom and asked for help. With the help of others, he stepped off that darkly-blazed trail onto a life-long path of recovery. A huge part of his recovery is nature in general and the white-blazed A.T. in particular.

These days, Scott is the director of a vocational and residential rehabilitative program for adults with severe and persistent mental illness. He and his dog Bleu spend most of their spare time in a yurt on a wildflower farm along the Haw River in Chatham County, North Carolina. Almost every day they hike the trail Scott and his sons built along the bank of the Haw. While Scott dreams of thru-hiking the A.T. and has been “chipping away” at sections of it, he also frequently hikes on and supports the Mountains to Sea Trail in North Carolina.

Among the things Scott credits for his recovery are time on the Trail as a hiker and as a SWEAT (Smoky Mountains Wilderness Elite A.T.) Crew member — and sharing his rekindled love for the outdoors with his family. “I am very grateful for everyone who has helped to make the A.T. what it is today,” he says. “To be only a few hours away from it is very comforting. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is outstanding. It is staffed and supported by volunteers who are passionate and extremely competent,” he says. “This combination ensures achieving — day after day — its mission to preserve and manage the Trail.” We know that the Trail can change lives and we are grateful that it helped Scott find his way back to health, family, and the power of nature. We are also grateful that Scott shares his expertise by serving on the ATC’s Land Transaction Review Committee and gives generously as a monthly donor. “I want to ensure that the Trail is there for others,” he says. “As vast and open, non-judgmental, inclusive, unbiased and, above all, magical, as it has been for me.” 🌱

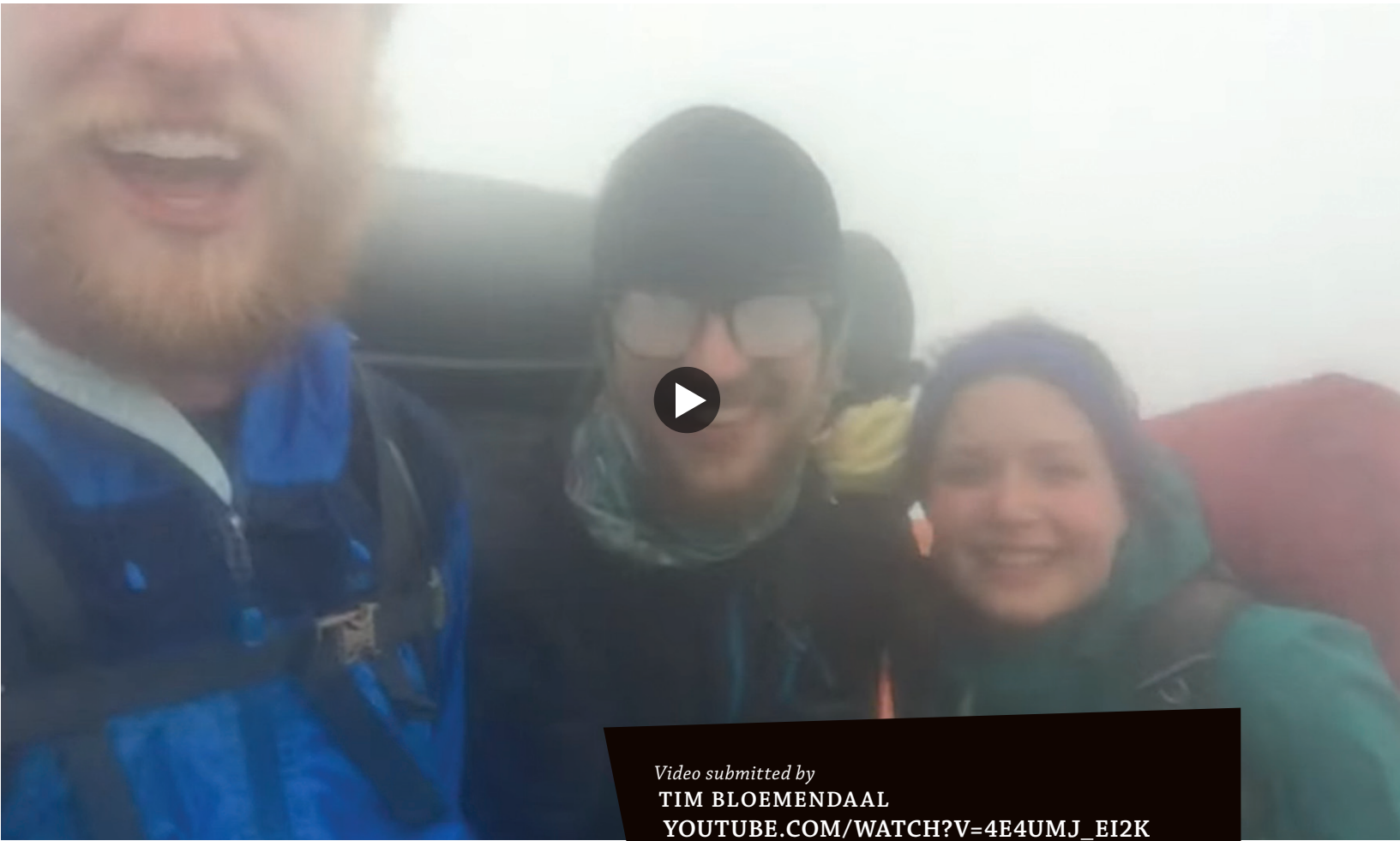
For more information on making monthly donations visit: donate.appalachiantrail.org

Scott with his dog Bleu at his home in North Carolina

FOOTAGE

Walk with us...

Help others experience the amazing moments, breathtaking beauty, 360 views, and become one with the A.T. Send us your Trail videos



Video submitted by
TIM BLOEMENDAAL
[YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=4E4UMJ_EI2K](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4E4UMJ_EI2K)

Appalachian Trail thru-hike: Springer Mountain, Georgia to Mount Katahdin, Maine. February 20 to July 4, 2016. A 2,189.1 mile journey.

Music:
- **RADICAL FACE: MOUNTAINS**
- **M83: OUTRO**

Growing Up A.T.

Living close to the Trail ensures a lifetime of short treks and big memories

By Dave Kirkwood



Above and far right: The author at Washington Monument State Park in 1958 and 2017

UPON READING AN ARTICLE, IN THE Fall 2016 issue of *A.T. Journeys*, about a family who drove nine hours to walk a 1.3-mile section of the Appalachian Trail, I became introspective. I and thousands of others with the A.T. in their proverbial back yards don't know

how lucky we are. Hikers come from hundreds or even thousands of miles, from across the U.S. and foreign countries, to seek the famous Trail while those of us who live relatively close at hand, or should I say foot, often take it for granted. I grew up and spent my entire life in close proximity to the Trail with very little thought about how special a place it really was. The article made me stop and think how much of my life has been influenced by — so much more than just a trail — the A.T.

My association with the A.T. began as far back as I can remember when my parents would take me picnicking, from our row-house in Baltimore, to places like Harpers Ferry, West Virginia and Washington Monument State Park in Maryland. Near Harpers Ferry, we would picnic at tables right along the road on the Virginia side of the Route 340 bridge over the Potomac River. At that time, the Trail crossed that same bridge and passed right in front of the picnic area before ascending Loudoun Heights on its way south. Neither the picnic tables nor the Trail are still present in that spot today. At Washington Monument State Park, which we always referred to as South Mountain, the Trail went directly past our favorite picnic pavilion and on to pass the site of the oldest monument to George Washington. The monument was built in 1827 by approximately 500 citizens from the town of Boonsboro. The group ascended the mountain during a Fourth of July celebration to construct the original 30-foot structure.

It was on these trips that I remember my father describing the Appalachian Trail as an old Indian path where Native runners could carry messages from north to south, from tribe to tribe, in an amazingly short period of time. Standing there on the Trail, knee high in leaves, I believed I stood in the unaltered route that those braves traveled. It seemed to me to go on forever in either direction.

When I was eleven, in the mid-1960s, I joined the Boy Scouts and began hiking the A.T. in earnest. My first 20-mile hike was on the same section of Trail I first marveled at years before, between Washington Monument and Lamb's Knoll, the highest point on the A.T. in Maryland. Not content with retracing our steps, the hike back took on a circuitous route

through farm fields using the monument as a visual goal. A final scramble up the rocky slope to the summit reunited us with the A.T. and our camp.

Every winter, our Troop would backpack the A.T. from Gathland State Park, in Maryland, south to Harpers Ferry, camping overnight along the way. I look back with admiration for the endurance of youth, carrying our official frameless rucksacks with padless shoulder straps stuffed with all manner of overweight items. Today's ultralight backpackers would cringe. The shapeless canvas pack held an overweight cotton sleeping bag, rolled lengthwise and lashed around the sides and top of the pack, Civil War style. Had nothing changed in the world of backpacking for the past one hundred years? We each carried half of a war surplus "duck" canvas pup tent, which assembled with buttons along the ridge. Many sleepless, rainy nights were spent contemplating the wisdom of that design. Our adolescent appetites compelled us to carry cans of Dinty More beef stew, Chef Boyardee spaghetti, Vienna Sausages and, who could forget, Spam. The latter two were roasted on sticks, over the campfire, where gasoline-like juices sent delight inducing flames into the air with each drip.

Footwear was also impractical, with many boys wearing tennis shoes on the often snow-laced Trail. Then there were the uniforms, ah the uniforms, every Scouts burden to be carried all that way for the required appearance as human beings when marching into town on Sunday afternoon.

Boy Scout safety standards had also not developed at that time. We hiked unsupervised, being dropped off at the A.T. trail-head by several of the adult leaders. You see fathers in those days were often a long working, hard drinking, chain smoking lot, think *Mad Men*, who's ability or willingness to hike miles of Trail were limited. On Sunday, at the Route 340 bridge between Maryland and Virginia we would leave the A.T. to follow the railroad tracks into a tunnel before crossing the Potomac River to our destination, since the Trail did not go through the historic town of Harpers Ferry in those days. In the privacy of the tunnel we would change into our crumpled uniforms, as required by the adults

waiting on the other side. We would then march, in all our disheveled glory, across the railroad bridge into town. There was no dedicated pedestrian extension in those days, where the current A.T. crosses the river, so we straddled the wooden boards alongside the tracks hoping no train would come along to vibrate us off the bridge and into the river. Once in town, we would climb to the Hilltop House to reunite with the adults and the reward of an all-you-can-



No matter where I find myself on the A.T., it always feels as familiar to me as the stretch five minutes from my house.

eat fried chicken dinner with all the trimmings. This was the hotel restaurant's special every Sunday afternoon and our filthy rabble, clean uniforms aside, no-doubt thrilled the well dressed, after church, regulars. The establishment, I'm sure, was equally pleased when twenty or so teenage boys devoured everything in sight and sent the days revenues into the red.

As an adult, I traveled farther afield to hike all the A.T. within a day's travel of my home. I eventually completed all of the Trail from central Pennsylvania to the southern end of Shenandoah National Park in Virginia. Over the years, I also hiked the A.T. in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, the northern terminus at Kathadin in Maine and, most recently, the southern terminus at Springer Mountain in Georgia. I

was visiting friends at their home in southwestern North Carolina when they took me out for a day hike. I was pleasantly surprised when we pulled up the parking area for Springer not knowing that we were so close to Georgia, much less the famous mountain where so many begin their thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail.

I now live, at the base of Lamb's Knoll in Maryland, a few miles from the Trail as the crow flies. I maintain one of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club cabins there. I hike most Wednesdays with the Mountain Club of Maryland, who frequent the Trail in this and adjacent states. Rarely a month goes by that I haven't set foot on some small portion of the 2,190-mile Trail. No matter where I find myself on the A.T., it always feels as familiar to me as the stretch five minutes from my house. I guess it is the realization that no matter where I am on the

Trail, if I follow it in the right direction of course, it will always lead me home.

When all is said and done the Trail has been an important part of my life without ever completing a thru or section hike or, for that matter, even hiking all that much of it. You see, unlike those who come thousands of miles to follow their dreams of hiking the entire Trail or drive nine hours for a 1.3-mile jaunt, for those of us who live close by, it's just there. It has always been there, at least in my lifetime, and it will always be there, thanks to the efforts of thousands of individuals working tirelessly to assure its protection and maintenance. For us, the Appalachian Trail is part of who we are, our lives are changed by spending so much time on or near it and we would be different people without its presence. 🌲

“OPPORTUNITY MAKERS,” ALTHOUGH not a commonly used term, are those individuals who see opportunities for positive change and grab the brass ring to make things happen. At the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) we are so fortunate to have “Opportunity Makers” all around us. They are those individuals who donate their time, talent, and treasure to make our organization run smoothly all while protecting and maintaining the almost 2,200 miles of the Appalachian Trail. Our thousands of members, donors, and volunteers embody this mission as they come together to do something much bigger than any individual.

So, as we head into the autumn and early winter months, I ask you to consider what kind of Opportunity Maker are you, or will you become? This premise is much more than wealth, or titles, or lots of contacts—although we appreciate those things too. Creating opportunity is our capacity to connect around each other’s better side to bring out our charitable efforts. As I recently stepped into a new role as the ATC’s vice president of Membership and Development, I hope to further foster those behaviors that so many of you already do — to reimagine our fundraising so that we are constantly utilizing our best talents, resources, and time to accomplish even greater things together.

With this in mind, we have much to be proud of and excited by in the coming months. This past summer, the Membership and Development Department, as well as countless volunteers, board members, and ATC staff executed several events, including our final Biennial Conference with the guidance of the Maine Appalachian Trail Club and the Appalachian Mountain Club. Proudly, more than 800 attendees joined us to enjoy hikes, excursions and workshops during the August 4 to 11 event at Colby



College in Waterville, Maine. This fall, we take on new initiatives including our Tribute Garden located at the ATC’s Headquarters in Harpers Ferry. The garden will be a permanent public memorial honoring those who have walked on, helped protect, or been inspired by the A.T. It will be a space where loved ones, volunteers, members, hikers, and staff can be celebrated and remembered. It also will serve as a beautiful and fitting place to commemorate the generosity of donors who support the ATC’s legacy and future. Groundbreaking for this project will kick off in spring of 2018. We will also ramp up our Planned Giving program and are putting a plan of action together to celebrate individuals who generously provide support to the ATC through legacy giving via their estate planning. Look for more on this in the coming months. Finally, we welcome a new team member to our Membership and Development staff — Chris Blosser, director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, who will be strengthening our corporate and foundation giving programs.

I am encouraged by our new opportunities and I hope you will help further shepherd the ATC’s success. There is no gift too small, as small gifts combine to do great things! Remember, as Dave Liniger, noted motivational author once said, “You can’t succeed coming to the potluck with only a fork.” It truly does take a village. 🌱

Tiffany Lawrence / Vice President of Membership & Development



Tiffany hiking at the ATC 2017 Conference in Maine

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HIKING PARTNERS

About to be 77-years-young A.T. section hiker seeking other senior(s) who prefer slack packing or limited backpacking to hike in Pennsylvania and Vermont over the next two years. We used the two-car system. I've completed eight states and 1,475 AT miles. Let's compare goals. Contact: grandpaharveydennenberg@yahoo.com.

LOST AND FOUND

Found: **GPS system on Bigelow Mountain** in Maine in early August. The finder will be glad to make arrangements to send to you if you contact me and identify it. Please contact: cymru@kuhcom.net.

Found-**Military watch** at Bobblets Gap shelter in Virginia in September. Contact: (828) 883-9278 to identify.

FOR SALE

AT Café in Millinocket, Maine.

Successful restaurant located in the Trail town closest to the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail. Millinocket is the gateway to Baxter State Park and the new Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. The opportunities for outdoor recreation are abundant in this spectacular outdoor recreational area. Featured in *Backpacker* and *Downeast* magazines including other noted publications. Building housing the restaurant includes three apartments for rental income/

owner housing. All equipment included. Work 6 months and travel or operate year round. Please direct inquiries to: Jay Peavey Team, Realty of Maine; (207) 478-0084; jaypeavey@midmaine.com.

For sale: prosperous **hiker hostel located on the A.T. in Damascus, Virginia**. Well-equipped and established. For information call Chuck at: (406) 407-1272 or chuckbissonnette@gmail.com.

Black Bear Resort, Hampton, Tennessee for sale — 4/10 of a mile off MM 418.5 — 2 Bunk houses, cabins, and cottages — 23 acres in mountains \$599,000. Contact: (423) 725-5988; blackbearresorttn.com or reserve@blackbearresorttn.com.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Steve Johnson, aka “Fob,” has published Volume 2 of his book *Sir Fob W. Pot's Journey to Katahdin*, detailing his 2016 A.T. thru-hike. It's now available on Amazon. See his “Author Steve Johnson” Facebook page for photos, interviews, and more details. ⬆

Public Notices may be edited for clarity and length.



editor@appalachiantrail.org

Public Notices

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Harpers Ferry, WV 25425-0807



DURING THE 15 YEARS AFTER MY wife, soulmate, and best friend Stacey was first diagnosed with cancer, we never asked about the prognosis. We focused only on the diagnosis, our treatment options, and additional steps to improve overall health. As a result, when we had the rare chance to move where we wished four years after Stacey's breast cancer had first spread to her liver and lungs, (Stage four) we had no idea that based on the numbers, her survival at that moment was already unlikely. Bound by the averages, we may have never seized the opportunity to find a simpler and more active life.

It started innocently enough, with the Google search: “Where should I move?” followed by an anonymous survey that narrowed the choice to 25 towns. We already knew the region where we hoped to settle and after visiting about a half-dozen towns on the list found only one of interest. That town was Abingdon, Virginia. While this was happening, Stacey had two people from entirely different social circles recommend the book

“As I See It” is a column from guest contributors representing the full range of ATC partners, members, and volunteers. To submit a column (700 words or under) for consideration:



journeys@appalachiantrail.org

or write to Editor/As I See It

Appalachian Trail Conservancy

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Harpers Ferry, WV 25425



Doug and Stacey at Acadia National Park in Maine

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle by Barbara Kingsolver. I don't think she had ever received even one book recommendation from anyone, let alone two in one week for the same book. She read it and then excitedly told me to read it too. In short, the book describes the simpler life we sought, and at the very end the author thanks everyone at the Abingdon Farmers Market. We were never strong believers in faith or fate but as far as we were concerned, all roads led to Abingdon.

We had enjoyed hiking together for many years, particularly in the national parks out west, but our home in central New Jersey was two hours from the A.T. so we didn't go there very often. That all changed immediately upon our arrival in Virginia. We didn't plan it in advance, but our move coincided with the 2011 ATC Biennial Conference held at Emory & Henry College, just a few minutes from our new home, so, for about a week, we enjoyed the conference during the day and unpacked boxes in the evening. It's there that we got our first introduction to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), heard about the A.T. clubs, and learned more about the area trails, trail heads, and general lay of the land than we could possibly have done otherwise.

Within about a year, we became members of the Mount Rogers A.T. Club, soon found ourselves going out with the maintenance group every Wednesday, and quickly became involved in nearly all aspects of the club. In just a few years, Stacey volunteered over 800 hours as a Trail maintainer, section monitor, boundary monitor, remover of invasive plants, rare plant monitor, and even served on the club board.

The cliché is that someone “battles” cancer. Stacey pinned it to the ground by the ears and denied nearly every symptom of the disease or treatment the least satisfaction. Ev-

ery health professional we met during our time in Virginia did a double take when we described Stacey's medical history. During each visit to the oncologist, a nurse takes vital signs and asks a series of question to assess fatigue, pain, and other symptoms. Stacey invariably rated every symptom a zero, but once said her fatigue level was about a two...“but we did hike about nine miles yesterday, does that count?” The reply was that it didn't and her fatigue would be reported as a zero.

On one occasion a friend, seeing Stacey wearing a bandanna around her head, asked her if she was sick again. Stacey quickly replied, “I'm not sick, I just have cancer.” That was vintage Stacey. Her personality was bubbly, she had an infectious laugh and a smile that spread to all around her.

Until the last year or so, we continued going out on club work trips together and monitoring our own section in addition to hiking, kayaking, tending to a large garden, traveling, and volunteering with several local organizations. Stacey passed away on June 19th of this year, just two days before our 25th anniversary. A memorial for her will be established at the new Trail Center to be built in Damascus, Virginia in 2018.

It's never been more clear to me that our move and active lifestyle, much of it involving the Trail and the club, our diet, and Stacey's unfailingly optimistic attitude all played a major role in extending our time together for many years beyond what was thought possible — and in time I may find more solace in this. With her close to my heart and in honor of her memory, I will remain active in life and with the club, and will continue to monitor our section from Elk Garden to Thomas Knob shelter. While thinking about Stacey, one of our good friends was reminded of a quote that I think says it best: “The Devil whispered ‘You can't withstand the storm.’ The warrior replied, “I am the storm.” Stacey was the warrior. ⬆

Doug Levin
LIVES IN ABINGDON, VIRGINIA.

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