

PATH WAYS

PIEDMONT APPALACHIAN TRAIL HIKERS

CLUB NEWSLETTER • MARCH 1999

PATH Prepares for 1999 Season

Burlington—PATH's board of directors held a meeting Saturday, January 23, at Quincy's Restaurant in Burlington. Attendance was good, and a lot of subjects were addressed during the 3-hour meeting.

Volunteer help is being sought for hike leaders and exhibitor recruiting during the Radford '99 ATC biennial conference in July (see related article).

The board elected to be a co-sponsor of the "Virginia's Mountain Treasures" book, which will be published, in part, by The Wilderness Society. The book, which will have photos and text relating to southwest Virginia, will be the fifth in a series of publications that identifies the wildlands of the southern Appalachians. Four of the areas in the proposed book are located along the 50-stretch of the AT cared for by PATH, including Burke's Garden, Crawfish Valley and the Beartown Wilderness. The book's author is Shireen Parsons, a consultant to non-profit environmental groups and ex-chair of Virginia's Sierra Club New River Group.

Discussion was held on a proposal that PATH adopt the 7-mile stretch of AT between County Road 615 and U.S. 52. PATH members Barry Hester and Marcia Cope are currently handling it, having taken over the duties on a temporary basis from the Virginia Tech Outing Club. Because there has been some interest from local residents of that area to start a trail maintenance club, the board decided to help recruit residents interested in starting a club and mentoring them while it gets established. Eventually they would take over the care of the trail. Meanwhile, PATH will maintain the trail.

A bunch of renegade beavers have built a beaver dam on a creek not far from the Dairy Queen on I-81, effectively submerging part of the AT maintained by PATH. PATH members who have waders and wetsuits – and a hardy nature – are encouraged to volunteer Saturday, February 27, to help build a "Clemson Beaver Pond Leveler" to remedy the problem. The work will

likely be cold and wet. Bill Boudman suggested we do a short relocation to higher ground, as part of the solution.

A proposal was made to hold periodic "Dawg Days" work-trip events for tough jobs that the assigned trail maintainers cannot do themselves. Dawg Days was an event held last year in which PATH members chipped in their time and effort to work on a stretch of the AT maintained by PATH.

The board may hold a retreat this year, possibly the first weekend in May. In 1997, the board held a weekend retreat at a vacation cabin owned by Don Childrey's father in Caswell County. The board members had a chance to get to know one another better, have a cook-out and discuss the AT and hiking, over the three-day weekend. Don has offered the use of the cabin this time, too.

Two refresher courses for four years of chainsaw certification will be held February 13 and February 20. Contact Paul Clayton for information. PATH also needs people certified in CPR and First Aid. Does anyone know

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Two "New Member" meetings will be held in March to explain PATH's functions to potential new members and to introduce PATH members.

The Triad (Greensboro, High Point and Winston-Salem) meeting will be held Tuesday, March 2, 1999, at 6:30 pm, Ronni's Restaurant, Kernersville. Ronni's is located along Business Interstate 40, South Main Street exit. The restaurant is visible from the Interstate.

Triangle (Durham, Chapel Hill, Raleigh) PATH members will host a meeting on Saturday, March 6, at 12 noon, Sal's Pizza, Hwy 54, Research Triangle Park.

What in Blazes....?

Editor's Note: In digging through my "Things that desperately need to go in the newsletter immediately" file, I found a two-year-old letter from Parthena Martin. It was a typewritten copy of a letter and poem by PATH member Guyon Phillips, who had written it to Parthena in 1990. In it, the name Ed Garvey is mentioned. I recontacted Parthena for an explanation of Ed's identity, which she later provided. Below is Guyon's letter and poem and Parthena's explanation – and a glimpse into PATH's labyrinthine history.

To: Parthena
From: Guyon Phillips

Jeanne (Phillips) and I spent a couple of days in September doing some reblazing and clipping south of the (Mt. Rogers) Visitor Center. While there, we were told Ed Garvey had walked our section, and all he had to say about PATH's countless hours in cleaning up following Hurricane Hugo was that our blazes were not consistently 2"x 6", and with sharp corners. I thought about this again while Jeanne and I were completing the Long Trial in Vermont the last two weeks, and had to chuckle to myself about such criticism. I've seen blazes from Georgia to Maine, and from Canada to Massachusetts, so I think that should qualify me about the subject of blazes in the woods. As I was walking, I put my thoughts about such remarks in a little piece of verse.

Critic's Choice

Some like them tall and slender,
Others like them short and stout
Some like to see square edges,
And other curve about.
But for the mountain wanderer,
Who's searching out the ways,
It matters not the size or shape,
If it's white and it's a blaze.



Karl,

Ed Garvey is something of a legend in A.T. lore. He has written some books about the A.T. One is "The New Appalachian Trail," which came out in 1997, and another is "Appalachian Hiker II," which came out in 1978. Ed Garvey raises personal emotions in PATH because PATH was out on a maintenance trip once when he came hiking through. I think it was Gorden and Ken

and a few others who were working. Ed Garvey complained to them about our trail section, and I think it was the blazes he complained about. Garvey even mentions that meeting in his 1997 book. I think it was that encounter that led to the poem.

The reason Ed Garvey's name is associated with blazes is because his major claim to fame is as leader of the off-set blaze movement which you probably haven't heard about, since you live in the South.

Briefly, you know that in places where the A.T. makes a turn, or something unusual happens, we use two white blazes, one above the other. The original procedure of painting the double blaze was that the two blazes be in line, one directly above the other. Technically, the double blaze was simply supposed to indicate something unusual, so the hiker could be prepared for the trail making a turn, or for anything else that might need the hiker's attention.

Over time the double blaze came to be used mostly in a more limited way, indicated a turn in the trail. Ed Garvey argued, long and loud, that the two blazes should be off-set, with the direction of the off-set indicated the direction of the turn. It came down to a battle of the traditional purists in the south who insisted that the proper way to paint blazes was in-line, versus the up-start faction in the north who wanted to use off-set blazes. Several years ago, some of the northern clubs did start using off-set blazes, and blazing became inconsistent along the trail with individuals painting blazes whatever way they preferred.

In 1995 Ed Garvey pushed the issue to the point where a resolution about blazing was presented at the biennial ATC meeting in Harrisonburg, VA.

After some debate, ATC decided to allow each club to choose in-line or off-set blazing, but stipulated that whichever method was chosen had to be used consistently in that club's section. Shortly afterward, PATH held a board meeting, and being good southerners, the entire board vowed, loudly and firmly, that an off-set blaze would never be seen on our trail section.

Then about a year ago a group of us went up to do some work on Garden Mountain and discovered that somebody had gone through a section putting off-set blazes on trees. Boy did folks get upset! I don't know if we ever found out who did that.

I'm sorry that this answer is so long, but I couldn't find a quick and easy way to explain Ed Garvey. I find the whole thing interesting because of the intense emotion blazing seems to arouse in people.

Parthena

PATH Online: A Growing Presence

by Tony Roberts

"We all like to get out in the woods to enjoy nature and the peace and quiet. Isn't it ironic that more and more we need the Internet to help us do that?"

This sentiment, expressed recently by PATH member Gene Greer, is right on target. PATH treasurer Harrison Marks, who is often the club's first link with new members, says that the majority of new recruits find their way to PATH through the club's Web site. Additionally, communication among members is routinely carried out through e-mail and PATH-list, an automated e-mail discussion group.

Recognizing the Internet's importance to the club, the board recently elected to acquire an Internet domain name for PATH. We have done this, and the Internet address (or URL) for PATH's Web site has become <http://www.path-at.org/>. (Previously the URL was a difficult-to-remember appendage to one of my business URLs.)

The Web site provides a great deal of information about PATH and its history, much of it taken from the club's printed newsletters. The site also includes activity calendars and offers ways for prospective members to contact a PATH member in their area.

How popular is the PATH site? Over the past nine months, we've averaged 398 visitors a month and the trend is moving upward. The most popular pages on the site besides the main page are the newsletter page, the pages with background information on PATH and its officers, and the trail map page. Robert Rubin's "The Ballad of Rhymin' Worm" – the story of Rhymin' Worm's 1997 AT thruhike – continues to be accessed at the rate of about 50 times per month.

Although the web site is primarily visited by non-club members, I'm looking for ways to make the site more useful to club members as well. One recent addition is a quick link to the southwest Virginia weather forecasts. Next time you head up to work on the trail, visit the site to get the forecast for the next few days. I'm also planning a photo

album section in which PATH members can upload photos to share with other club members.

Another Internet feature that's been popular among club members is PATH-list, an automated email discussion group. Here's how it works: Once you subscribe to PATH-list, you receive copies of any email message posted to the list by other members. If you have something to say to the whole group, you send your message to PATH-list and it is automatically routed to everyone else.

PATH-list is useful for disseminating information about regular worktrips and special projects. The list has recently hosted discussions about Wilderness First Aid courses and how to cope with the beavers at Dry Run near Groseclose (their dams threaten to inundate parts of the trail). For information on how to subscribe to PATH-list, see the instructions at <http://www.path-at.org/maillist.html>

With PATH members spread out over several states, it's good to have an Internet connection that keeps us working together when we're not at Stony Fork. If you have questions, comments, or ideas about PATH's Internet presence, please let me know. Send your email to: webmaster@path-at.org

(Editor's Note: Thanks, Tony, for starting, maintaining and improving these websites for us. PATH supporters need to give them a close look, if they haven't already. They are very attractive and professional-looking, giving PATH a good image.)

Briefs

Robert Rubin is searching for a new home for his manuscript on his 1997 AT thru-hike. The original publisher decided not to go with it, although they did pay him for his trouble.

Participants at the April worktrip will need to meet at Konnarock (see March worktrip info for directions).

Doc Branham and Vaughn Thomas will maintain one-half of the VA 617 to Crawfish Valley section of the AT. Karl Kunkel and Paul Haag will maintain the three-mile stretch from O'Lystery due north.

The official Konnarock work camp schedule is July 8-12 and July 15-19.

UPCOMING FIRST AID COURSE

by Marcia Cope

The Wilderness First Aid Certification Course, sponsored by the ATC, will be offered at the Konnarock Camp in Sugar Grove, Va., April 24-25. The price is reasonable – \$80 for AT members, with option of CPR training on the evening of April 23 for an additional \$20. No cost for motel bills, since participants will stay in the cabins. Meals are only \$25. Normally, a course like this often costs anywhere from \$100.00 to \$150.00 plus the added cost of motel rooms and meals in restaurants. The maximum number of participants will be 20 with a minimum of 12.

Also, due to the requirement that at least one AT club member on each chainsaw crew be certified in First Aid/CPR, the ATC will award one time grants up to \$200.00 to help provide 6 to 8 persons from each maintaining club with qualified training. It is up to each club to determine how best to use these funds.

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Radford '99, the biennial conference of the Appalachian Trail Conference, is fast approaching. The event will be held July 9-16 on and near the Radford University campus in Radford, Virginia. The event is expected to draw 1,500 people from around the country for a week of discussions, seminars, workshops, visits to Roanoke and Beckley, hiking and other outdoor activities, such as rafting, caving and bicycling.

PATH will be one of the host trail maintenance clubs. One of our responsibilities is to recruit exhibitors that would be interested in displaying their products and services in an exhibition area (a large room in Heth Hall on the campus) during the conference. Exhibitors will pay a fee to the ATC. PATH member Marcia Cope is in charge of this recruiting and is in need of assistance

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However, if PATH paid \$200.00 and submitted a bill to the ATC the club would receive reimbursement and each student could receive a partial scholarship prorated to the number of participants from our club. This would further cut out of pocket expenses for each individual. This may be something the board would have to vote on, because I don't know how that would be decided. I would expect that the grant would only apply to those taking both WFA and CPR courses.

Paul Dore of Mount Rogers NRA has endorsed this course. Contact Marcia Cope at 336-876-5348 or mhcope@ibm.net for more information. *

March Work Trip

The March work trip, the first one of the year, will be held the weekend of Saturday, March 20 at Sugar Grove. For those new to Sugar Grove, this small Virginia town is the site of the Konnarock work camp, which has several cabins with bunk beds and a communal bathroom and shower area. It also has a community gathering area with a ping-pong table and a fantastic wood stove. Be sure to bring your sleeping bag and possibly a tent, should space be scarce. Remember that the temperatures are usually 10-15 degrees cooler than the low lands of North Carolina and may be cold and wet, so dress accordingly.

Here's how to get to the Konnarock work camp:

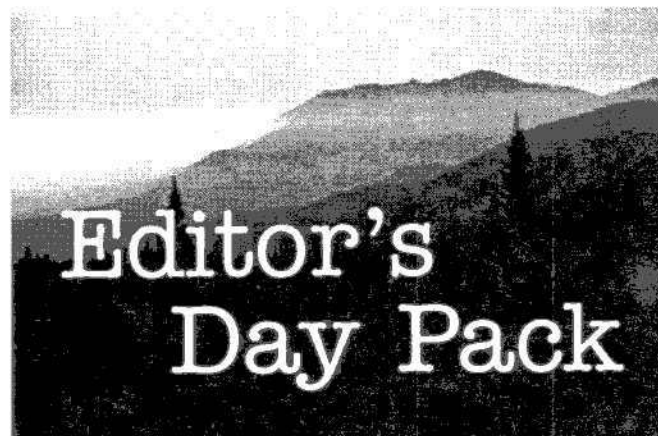
- Go south on I-81, from the I-77/I-81 intersection near Wytheville, Virginia
- After about 20 miles you will approach Marion, Virginia; take Exit 45 then turn left onto Virginia Hwy 16.
- Follow the 2-lane, winding road (VA 16) past the Mount Rogers Visitors Center
- At about the 9-10 mile distance from the I-81 exit, you will enter the town of Sugar Grove.
- Turn left onto VA 601 (about halfway through the town).
- Go about one mile, looking for the U.S. Forest Service sign on left.
- Turn left there and you will see the camp ahead.

There When We Need Them

Paul Clayton, PATH president, recently uncovered a PATH membership roster from 1983. He compared the names with those on the list today and saw several on both lists. We at PATH salute the following PATH members for their years of loyalty and support for helping maintain the AT and the spirit of the AT:

Maxine Blackwood
Dave Bland
Danny Booker
Gordon Burgess
Don and Kathryn Chatfield
Bob and Lib Conner
Barbara Council
William H. Craft
Allen DeHart
David Emrey
Henry and Doris Ford
Tom and Polly Harris
Eric and Martha Hoekstra
Thomas and Marian Jerdee
Hollyce and Marvin Kirkland
Richard and Camille Laurence
Danny Lineberger
Bill Medlin
Guyon and Jeanne Phillips
Ken Rose
Randell and Ruth Sample
Walter Taylor
Walter Trogon
Sam and Flossye Turner

(Our apologies for any misspellings. Our penance will be extra side-hilling. Ed)



The new year 1999 came roaring in and hasn't slowed down a bit. Before we know it, it will be mid-March and we will all be slogging through the mud (or dust) at the Konnarock work camp in Sugar Grove, Va., preparing for our first work trip. This is the first newsletter for 1999, and we've tried to get as much as possible with information that is as timely as possible. There's a big time lag in getting this printed and mailed, so if you do have access to the Internet, check out the on-line newsletter PATH member Tony Roberts started and has excellently maintained. It is as up-to-date as anything related to PATH activities you will find. So call up: www.path-at.org. Following my first newsletter last fall and my comments about the low-tech cut-and-paste technique I was using, PATH member Carla Osborne of Raleigh stepped forward and volunteered to lay out the newsletter for me. I'm very grateful for that. Over the past few weeks, I've been e-mailing articles to her, and she has been laying out the paper from those things as they come in. Transforming an e-mail message into printable article form and fitting it on a blank page is no small feat on Carla's part. Because neither of us is sure how many pages we will need, we've both been winging it. So, if the paper looks good, put an extra marshmallow on the fire for Carla. She will have earned it. Meanwhile, we always welcome letters, accounts of past trips and hikes and virtually anything else related to PATH, the AT and the world of hiking, in general.

You can e-mail me at karlkunkel@aol.com or send by regular mail to: Karl Kunkel, 1508 Waverly Street, High Point, NC 27265
336-882-8711

Keep your socks dry, and I'll see you in March.
Karl Kunkel

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any trainers?

PATH currently has 1 buzz saw, 11 weed eaters, 7 chain saws and some loppers (used for cutting branches and beef jerky) which are in various states of need-of-repair. Bill Boudman, who maintains much of the equipment, recommended that PATH members consider buying their own loppers. He recommended sold steel-handled loppers, as the most durable. Some PATH members use the loppers to try to cut branches that are too thick, ruining them.

Noted author Don Childrey wants to remind PATH members that his well-received "Uwharrie Lakes Region Trail Guide" is available from him, as are maps of the Uwharries and Fred Morgan's "Ghost Tales of the Uwharries." Don's e-mail address is dchildrey@ac.net or try <http://dtcpublishing.ac.net/> (or you can pick up the phone and dial 910-489-3668). Don has sold about 850 copies of the book.

The treasury balance is \$3,075.73 for the end of the 1998 year. ❖

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from other PATH members to call potential exhibitors. Exhibitors can include both nonprofit organizations and commercial companies that would be of interest to the hiking community, such as outdoor outfitters, book sellers, environmental organizations, and so forth. If anyone can help, please call Marcia at 336-876-5348.

Approximately 80 hikes will be held during the conference. Several co-leaders and back-up leaders are needed, as of press time, according to Bill Foot, hike coordinator. Anyone interested should contact him at 804-384-0013 or happifeet@aol.com

The ATC is currently looking for a keynote speaker.

Entertainment will be provided by musicians John McCutcheon and Curly Innis, as well as folklorists and other speakers who will, no doubt, have some interesting fireside stories to tell.

A registration form and a complete program of events will be printed in the March issue of "Trailway News." ❖

Don't forget to visit the PATH website at <http://www.path-at.org/>

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