

PATH

Piedmont Appalachian Trail Hikers



WAYS

Fall 2003

SummerFest 2 Tackles Major Project



Before - The old puncheons behind Cumbow's were deteriorating and becoming dangerous.

Thru-hikers will now be able to hike with much drier — and less muddy — feet, thanks to everyone who made Summerfest 2 such a great success, forty-seven members and friends of PATH attending this multi-day June worktrip built a 250-foot walkway across the wetlands of the Middle Holston River, near the train tracks south of Interstate 81.

Karen Lutz, the Mid-Atlantic Representative for the ATC, out of Boiling Springs, Pa., directed the project. She was assisted by Teresa Martinez,



After - PATH crews worked in the mud for several days to complete a major boardwalk.

our ATC Representative. John Kellum, Mid-Atlantic volunteer, drove the equipment down from New Jersey. Thanks to the State of New Jersey, we were loaned the equipment to put the 49 helical screws (foundations) into the ground. Cross boards were then attached.

The final screw was put in the walkway around 11 a.m. on Sunday, June 23. At each end of the walkway, a ramp was installed to enable hikers to get up to the walkway.

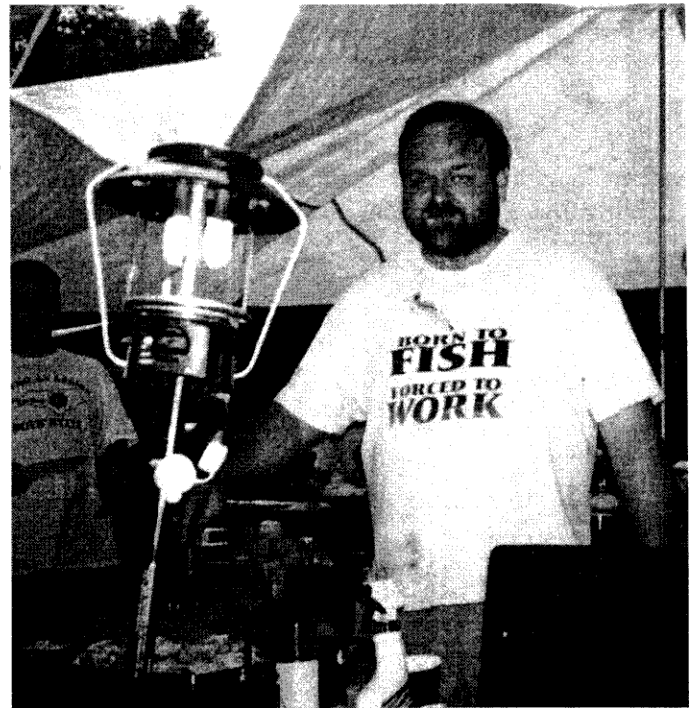
Summerfest 2 was based at the U.S. Forest

SummerFest 2 ...

Service facility in Sugar Grove, Va. PATH volunteers pitched their tents and camped and ate on the USFS area above Konnarock. Chef Jeff Tysinger and assistant chef Keith Morgan, along with assistants Sheila and Brandon Tysinger and John Hartpence, prepared and fed the masses. Each day began with breakfast at 7am. The menus included pancakes, scrambled eggs of various types, grits, sausage, bacon, cereal, juice, fruit and COFFEE. For lunch, sandwich materials, fruit, fruit and nut bars, pudding, pretzels, chips and juice were provided to take out to the trail. Suppers included main courses of fajitas, spaghetti, hamburgers, and chicken wings. There were also many different types of vegetables and salads to go along with the main dish.

On Friday and Saturday nights Valerie Hurt made some of her famous desserts. The only complaint about the meals came from Bill "Attila" Boudman, who said there was too much to eat.

Andrew Mitchell headed up Summerfest 2. It was a great success. Summerfest "T-shirts" are available for \$15. Contact Andrew if you forgot to order one.



Jeff Tysinger, SummerFest 2 Chef.

As this was also our June Worktrip other projects were completed, as follows: fixed the door at Chestnut Knob shelter, sidehilled at Davis Path, sickle barred and weed-eated south of the railroad tracks at the Middle Holston River to the stile and north of I-81 to Va. 617, installed two waterbars on the trail south of US 11, cut locust trees to make a form to hold fill dirt to get rid of standing water, lopped and used the swing blade at Va. 610 to Tilson Gap, and completed the privies at Knot Maul and Davis Path.

Elliott Haag added the first three worms to the moldering privy at Knot Maul.

by John Hartpence



Andrew Mitchell, standing, describes the one that got away.

New Clothing Promises To Be A Bug Turn-Off

(exerpted from News & Record, Greensboro, N.C.)

A Greensboro company, Buzz Off Insect Shield, has introduced a process to treat clothing that will repel mosquitoes, ticks, ants, flies, chiggers and midges. This patent-pending process, the first to gain EPA approval, will be available initially in Orvis and Ex Officio outdoor clothing brands and was scheduled to be available by late September. The clothing should not be drycleaned but can be washed up to 25 times and still maintain its properties.

Tony Roberts Heads to MN

Tony Roberts, PATH treasurer, website guru and active trail maintainer for several years, has announced that he and his family will be moving back to Minnesota as soon as he can sell his house in Greensboro, N.C. Due to the housing marketing, Tony does not know when that would happen. Tony wants to be closer to his family members in the upper midwest.

Several of the duties he does for PATH will need to be filled by a PATH member, so any interested parties should contact Parthena Martin, PATH president, regarding the status. Tony is currently handling treasurer duties, maintaining PATH's website and updating the online membership roster. He has offered to continue to maintain the list and website, if a local volunteer can't be found.

Tony has been an active, invaluable member of PATH since joining. He will certainly be missed. But Tony promises to maintain his membership and return when possible for major summer projects.

The Last American Man

Those interested in pursuing a simpler life need to pick up a copy of "The Last American Man," a biography of Eustace Conway written by GQ magazine writer Elizabeth Gilbert. Conway, 42, was raised in Gastonia, where his family still lives. But he now lives on the 1,000-acre Turtle Island Preserve he owns not from from Boone, NC, in the mountains. The title refers to the fact that American men, particularly the Daniel Boones and Lewis & Clarks, have traditionally been independent frontiersmen who were quick-witted and resourceful and could live off the land anywhere any time. The author feels Conway represents the last of that breed.

Conway lived his college years at Appalachian State University in Boone in a teepee he designed himself. Since then, he has tried to live as close to nature as possible. He once thru-hiked the AT, catching and gathering food as he went.

Susan at the 49th

(Editor's Note: PATH member Susan Andreatta took a summer job at Denali National Park, Alaska. This is a short exerpt of one of her more poetic and reflective emails sent to us 6/8/03.)

Hello Friends,

It is a new adventure every day. Denali National Park is huge and, for the most part, very quiet. The first park superintendent, Harry Karstens, said about Denali, "There is much to offer those who understand the language of the great silent places." This is surely one of those great silent places.

Birds do call back and forth. I have heard wolves howling. Rivers bubble over rocks. The wind sometimes blows through the aspen trees, which now have new, green leaves. If I am close to the front of the park, I can hear the train arrive at the station. Other than that, silence is the main sound. I love the sound of silence.



Dawg Days Wins Blue Ribbon

Our “Bill Medlin Memorial Trail Dawg Days Event” of August 1-3, 2003 brought out the best in us (plus a lot of sweat) as we honored our dear departed co-founder and hero! Throughout the weekend Bill was warmly remembered for his cheerful, supportive attitude, his willingness to help with even the most difficult projects, and his readiness to share with all in need.

Fourteen P.A.T.H. members and friends dug sidehills, worked on steps and cleaned out waterbars on a steep and narrow stretch of the Appalachian Trail where last September so many worked together for several hours to bring Bill down to the trailhead of his final work trip on the trail he loved and supported for several decades. Also, others worked before, during, and after the actual trail digging on numerous logistics to ensure that our Sidehillin’ Event went smoothly with plenty of food, fun and fellowship for all.

Jim Houck was this year’s Early (bird) Dawg as he stopped by the cabin on Brushy Mountain en route to the USFS-PATH storage area and picked up a list of last-minute menu needs. Later in the afternoon he and I were busy preparing a veritable “dawg feast” as tents went up and our pack grew in numbers with the arrival of John Jaskolka, Roger Woolsey, Betsy Truscott, Paul Clayton, Marie Minor and Staci Johnston. Amy Roberts joined us for the Hot Dawgs Cookout, which was almost entirely consumed when the pack count was pushed to an even dozen with the arrival of Katie Floyd, Zanna Floyd and Rabon Banks.

On Saturday morning, more Dawgs — Valerie Hurt, Dave Hicks, and William Burke — were waiting at the Oâ€™Lystery parking lot ready to lend their paws as the diggin’ began! Someday this section may need a relo to alleviate some of the steepness but what the Dawgs dug in

just one day made a big dent in the more narrow areas, moved a lot of tread away from the fragile and crumbling cribbing and the sharp turn at the top of the steps is much easier to navigate. I just can’t wait for everyone to see all that was accomplished in that area alone. “Trail Dawgs” are surely man’s best friend!

Members of the Venturing Outdoors Club of Dixon, Ill., were disappointed to arrive after our labor had ended for the day. However, they did appreciate our trail-wise endeavors and joined us for the Saturday Night Cookout and Bonfire. They also camped overnight with us, shared stories of their adventures in several states, and helped cook and enjoy the Sunday a.m. Pancake Breakfast under the pavilion before leaving for a weeklong adventure on sections maintained by PATH and the Mt. Rogers AT Club. This group from over 700 miles distant enjoyed hearing about Bill’s life and his memorable impact on our club. Betsy was able to show them on a map where his ashes were scattered, an area they will visit at the end of their backpacking trip. Having the opportunity to ‘welcome’ the Venturing Outdoors Club just happened to coincide with our event honoring one of the most ‘welcoming’ persons I have ever known. As I sat among these ‘new friends’ telling them about our club, I could feel the hum of Bill’s presence. It was a brief but truly beautiful moment!

Valerie Hurt couldn’t make the cookout but sent a cake! Paul Clayton set up his laptop under the pavilion where all could view pictures of his and Marie’s most recent trip ‘out west.’ They had quite an adventure and visited some very interesting towns and parks!

Rabon Banks started and maintained the bonfire around which we passed two rounds of Bill’s Elixir. Roger Woolsey brought the lat-



Dawg Days ...

est in propane grills, which also converts to a wok! Everyone had plenty of time to share their adventures. Do ask John Jaskolka how NOT to catch an alligator while wearing a pair of flipflops.

Our last arrivals were our Youngest Dawg, Grace Shuping; her mother, Valerie Cope; and little Stinky Dawg (a Miniature Pinscher) who came Saturday afternoon to assist with our cook-out and remained late into the day on Sunday to clean up and pack out after another joyful weekend at the little cabin in Paradise Haven.

Everyone who worked to make Dawg Days the fantastic event that it became was awarded a purple "Bill Medlin Memorial Dawg Days" T-shirt with donations towards same being accepted (not to exceed \$15) only from our adult participants. This event is specifically geared to encourage and reward participation from even our youngest members, to provide a setting where all can howl without recriminations, plus an environment where each participant can form lasting friendships with their peers and others who treasure and preserve the Great Outdoors!

Thank you PATH Members, newcomers, and visitors. Each of you made a significant difference whether diggin' sidehill on the AT, cooking over the grills or as a support person preparing for our event. Joe Levsen did the mowing. Jim Houck picked up tools. Betsy Truscott hauled away trash after our fun, food and fellowship. Dave Hicks returned tools to the PATH storage area. Looking back over the weekend, it's easy for me to believe that Bill saw with joy all that was accomplished not just in his memory but for the care and perpetuation of the Appalachian Trail!

by Marcia Cope

Tim Eling Transfers

MT. ROGERS NRA, Va. — Tim Eling, the Dispersed Recreation Specialist at the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, announced he would be transferring to the Daniel Boone National Forest in Kentucky by August 22. Eling has been a key contact for PATH members.

"It will be hard to leave this area," Eling said. "I have really enjoyed working with you and all the great folks in PATH." He said Ginny Williams would be PATH's primary contact after he leaves and did not see a problem with PATH camping at the Konnarock work center and using facilities in October. A Sierra Club volunteer crew will be there during that time, too.

Multiclub Event

I attended the Multi-Club event Labor Day weekend in Shawsville, Va., a few miles west of Roanoke. I did not see any other PATH people. This year's event was sponsored by the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club. Multi-Club is an annual affair held each Labor Day weekend by the AT maintaining clubs of Ga., N.C., Tenn., and Va. The location varies each year, depending on which club or clubs is the host. PATH was a co-host in 1997.

The RATC did a fine job, with a good selection of hikes and excursions. The attendance this year was a bit down, based on original projections: 54 people. Organizers cited a downed website as a possible reason. One evening, entertainment was provided by Curley Ennis, a traditional folksinger from the Roanoke area. The first evening was a slide show by the Witcher family, a Roanoke family (Mom, Dad, two kids) which had hiked the AT last year. They have plans to hike the Pacific Crest Trail (Mexico to Canada, via Calif.).

by Karl Kunkel



ATC Biennial Held in New Hampshire

WATERVILLE VALLEY, N.H. — An estimated 800-plus trail maintainers and hikers from 31 clubs from Georgia to Maine gathered in this mid-state recreation resort in late July for a week of hiking, seminars, entertainment and workshops.

Six PATH members made the trek: Parthena Martin, Clint Kawanishi, Vaughn Thomas, Doc Branham, Barbara Council and Karl Kunkel. Parthena was reelected as secretary for the entire ATC.

This particular conference, held every two years, was hosted by the Appalachian Mountain Club. Attendees had a chance to rack up some New Hampshire miles of the AT, including a stretch on Mount Washington, one of the highest points east of Denver. Some PATH members chose to attack this mountain by riding the scenic and historic cog railway to the summit. Attendees either camped out at a “primitive” site two miles from the resort or buddied-up to sleep in well-appointed condos.

The conference was located near the site of New Hampshire’s famous symbol “The Old Man of the Mountain,” a geologic silhouette of a man’s face on the side of a mountain. Tragically, the Old Man ‘passed away’ in May, when the rock formation crumbled to the ground due to the ravages of time. State residents are currently trying to decide how to handle this loss. Their situation would be similar to North Carolinians losing their Hatteras Lighthouse. Not far from the Old Man site was the Flume Gorge, a major tourist attraction.

Entertainment at the conference had a New England flavor. One evening featured Bob Kilham, a historical musician from New Hampshire who dressed as an 1850s entertainer (black

frock coat, white vest, straw hat, gray striped pants) and played an old banjo and sang tunes that would have been native to the various states through which the AT goes during that period, such as Stephen Foster’s “Oh, Suzanna.” One group, Aquahtenang, performed alternative folk music. Another group, the Shaw Brothers (“New Hampshire’s Musical Ambassadors”), featured two identical twins that have been performing folk music native to New Hampshire and New England for many years. Another group was Wood’s Tea Company, billed as Vermont’s hardest working folk group.

One night was the world premier of “2000 Miles to Maine,” a documentary by Douglas Morse that followed several thru-hikers during their trek in 2002 to Maine and the people they met along the way.

The Gold Sponsor for this conference was North Carolina’s own Burt’s Bees, which handed out ample samples, such as poison ivy soap, insect repellent, shampoo bars and hand salves.

by Karl Kunkel

PATH - 2003 Calendar of Events

October 17-19 — Worktrip

November — PATH Business Meeting and potluck for all members and families.

For the most up-to-date information on PATH activities, join the PATH email mailing list. See <http://www.path-at.org/maillist.html> for subscription information.

September: Trail Neighbors' Cookout and Worktrip

O'LYSTERY SHELTER, Va. — Full bellies and empty gas cans were the order of the day, as over 40 PATH members hit overgrown trails with their weedeaters and the buffet table, with equal vigor. Projects for the September worktrip (Sat, Sept. 20) included rock stair construction, trailbuilding and weedeating.

The annual Trail Neighbors' Cookout, a salute to the residents along the PATH portion of the AT, featured guest speaker and PATH member, Steve Yonts, who has been restoring Tilson Mill, the only remaining mill of 26 that once flourished in the area. Steve, researching archival records and studying old photos, revealed that the O'Lystery Shelter was once the site of a church. He produced a photo of the church and

the congregation. He encouraged PATH members to participate in preserving local history that may go undocumented as elder residents pass on. The cookout was hosted by Marcia Cope, Paul Clayton and Sheila Tysinger.

A member of the Bland Co. Volunteer Rescue Squad visited with his emergency vehicle to show PATH the five backpacks, fully stocked with gear, that the squad bought with funds donated by PATH after the squad helped retrieve the deceased Billy Bob Medlin from the woods during last September's worktrip.

by Karl Kunkel

BOOK REVIEW

A Blistered Kind of Love:

One Couple's Trial by Trail

by Angela and Duffy Ballard

The Mountaineer Books

\$22.95, 272 pages

An old pearl of wisdom says that two people wanting to know if they are truly compatible should take a long trip together. Husband-and-wife writing team Duffy and Angela Ballard took such a journey prior to committing to marriage. But their trip was a 2,655-mile hike that extended from the California-Mexico border to the Canadian border. Their route — the famous Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail — would take them through the deserts and mountains of California, the Cascade Range of Oregon and the dark green forests of Washington.

The book is a day-by-day journal of this five-month adventure. The entries include a

history of the PCT, the characters encountered along the way, hiking buddies, frustrations, defeats and victories, discussions of gear selection, and the unique communities they would visit.

But what made this book stand out from the growing ranks of other self-discovery hiking books was the dual authorship. Each one wrote a separate account of a particular incident, providing a different perspective with sometimes surprising results to the reader. This book was such a page-turner that the co-authors would have

been hard-pressed to write anything more exciting even if it had been a fiction thriller.



August Worktrip: Light Crew, Heavy Load

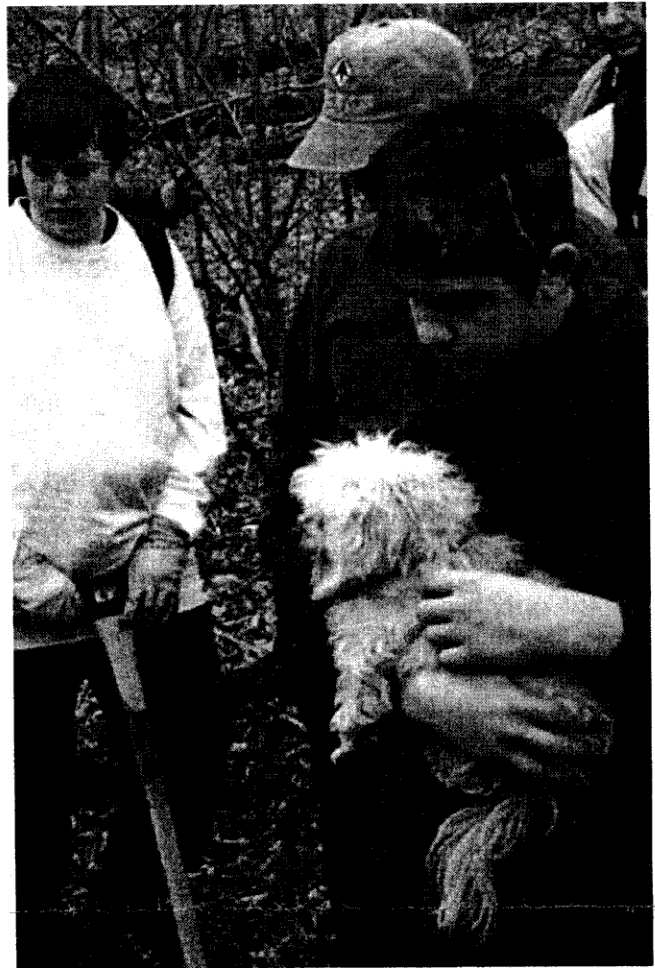
Twelve PATH workers showed up to work in the hills of southwest Virginia for the August worktrip.

The main body, consisting of Steve Coombs, Richard Bostic, Keith Morgan, Valerie Hurt and Jim Houck, worked at the trailhead near the Dairy Queen at Groseclose along I-81. They installed log dams (partial turnpikes) and dug and cleared ditches to channel water across the trail at the low points.

David and Martha Emrey worked at the Davis Cemetery. They had their work cut out for them as the grass and wild flowers were quite high. No line was available for the weedeaters, so they did what they could with swing blades. They also worked on repairing the fence. There is more to do at the cemetery.

Paul Clayton, Marie Minor and Staci Johnston visited trail neighbors, inviting them to the annual September trail neighbors' cookout.

Marcia Cope and Betsy Truscott worked on Marcia's section, repairing some washed-out areas. Marcia's cabin was the base camp. Friday and Saturday evening meals were jam-packed with food, beverages and conversation. Sleep came easy with 64-degree temperatures.



Aslan on the trail with Scouts in March '03

Aslan Passes Away

(Editor's note): Aslan, John Hartpence's little dog, served as PATH's unofficial mascot for 10 years. She died in July at the age of 15. We asked John to include a few final words about Aslan.

"Aslan began coming to PATH in 1993. She put in over 2,000 hours on the trail. She walked the AT from Damascus to Pearisburg, Va. She walked our section of the trail many times. Mike Analosky, USFS Ranger assigned to the AT out of Wytheville, presented her a volunteer patch for her many hours of service. She was the only dog to be given this patch in Southwest, Va. Aslan made her last trip to the trail at Summerfest 2 in June."



What is PATH?

Piedmont Appalachian Trail Hikers, Inc., is a nonprofit club that maintains a 58-mile section of the Appalachian Trail in southwest Virginia. PATH's members live in North Carolina and Virginia, mostly between Charlotte and Raleigh, North Carolina. The AT is a 2,000-mile-long footpath that runs along the crest of the Appalachian Mountains from Mount Katahdin in Maine to Springer Mountain in Georgia. The AT is maintained by more than 30 volunteer groups, such as PATH.

PATH looks after 58 miles of the AT in the southwest Virginia counties of Smyth, Wythe, Bland, and Tazewell.

Members typically meet at a Friday night camp-out, the third weekend each month during the spring, summer, and fall. Saturday mornings, the members are assigned to teams that clear weeds, saw through fallen trees, rebuild footbridges and relocate portions of the AT. The group usually meets in either the US Forest Service's Stony Fork Campground, in the Jefferson National Forest in Wythe County, Virginia or at the ATC's Konnarock Work Camp near Sugar Grove, Va.

Members also sponsor day hikes and backpacking trips for members and others interested hiking, and the outdoors and host an annual cookout with our "trail neighbors" each fall.

PATH volunteers are men, women and children of all ages, as well as unseen volunteers that support our mission through monetary contributions. PATH brings people together that share common interests and become new friends.

To make the PATH experience more enjoyable for the interested, we recommend contact with a PATH member before a first outing.

The PATH member can suggest proper equipment and clothing and help with directions.

PATH's annual dues are \$15.00 for an individual, \$17.50 for a family, and \$10.00 for students. Any donations to PATH, are tax-deductible.

PATH has a website (www.path-at.org) which provides information that allows members and friends to communicate with each about the trail, maintenance, hiking, camping, and gear.

Contacts:

- * President: Parthena Martin 919-967-4449 (Chapel Hill)
- * Vice President: Paul Haag 336-922-3664 (Winson-Salem)
- * Secretary: John Hartpence 919-839-8623 (Raleigh)
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Board Positions Available

The PATH board of directors met on Sept. 20. A two-person nominating committee was established to help fill upcoming available positions. Those positions are President, Treasurer, Webmaster, PATHways print newsletter editor and two board positions.

Parthena Martin has done a fine job as president, as has Tony Roberts as treasurer, webmaster and mailing list coordinator. Karl has been newsletter editor for about four years and feels some new blood is needed in that position.

If interested — and PATH does need your help for those positions — contact Vaughn Thomas (atblazers03@yahoo.com 336/768-3314) or Steve Coombs (coombs@duke.edu 919/493-3263).

Welcome New Members

PATH welcomes the following new members who have joined the club in the last couple of months. We can't wait to see you on the trail!

David Roberson family, Ayden, NC
Ken LaFlame family, Pinebluff, NC
Rabon Banks, Rural Hall, NC
Bill Sadler family, New Bern, NC
Debby Burns family, Raleigh, NC
Lyn Norris, Greensboro, N.C.
Warren Davis, Beaufort, NC
Terry Fuger, Dixon, IL
Brenda James



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