



The Potomac Appalachian

The Newsletter of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club
 118 Park Street, S.E., Vienna, VA 22180-4609
<http://www.patc.net>

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75 Years of Service

Attention Hikers: Nepal Needs Us Now!

Let's be perfectly clear. This article is not "My Extraordinary Trip to the Himalayas," although most assuredly my six-week trip to Nepal last fall was extraordinary. This is instead an unabashed promotion for trekking in Nepal. Brace yourself for a hard sell.

When I left for Kathmandu on Sept. 23, 2002, to trek the Annapurna Sanctuary and Khumbu (Mt. Everest) region, I was a dedicated hiker; I returned a devoted trekker. Adventurous and fairly fit for a 57-year-old, I was nonetheless concerned before I went to Nepal about news reports of Maoist insurgents operating outside Nepal's Constitutional Monarchy, as well as the strenuous, ever-ascending trails, altitude sickness, and, of course, the curse foreign trekkers call "Delhi belly." Fortunately, the Roller Coaster section of the AT (roughly 14 miles between Rte. 50 and Blackburn Shelter in Virginia) provided a splendid training ground close to my home on the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Once in Nepal, endurance honed on the Roller Coaster paid off. Slow ascension with appropriate rest days headed off altitude problems, and an excellent, well-trained camp cook (plus my diligence to hand washing and just plain good luck) headed off common intestinal and stomach bugs. I felt great the entire time. And at no time did I feel endangered by the Maoists or their sympathizers. I plan to return to the high hills, low valleys, and utterly fascinating villages of Nepal as soon as professional and family responsibilities permit.

Perhaps by then the once-enthusiastic cadre of foreign tourists – especially those of us who are passionate hikers – will resume trekking in Nepal. Nepal depends heavily on outside tourism, which has dropped alarmingly in the past couple of years. American tourism in Nepal is down 50 percent. Trekking remains the best way to experience Nepal's unparalleled beauty and, more importantly, to help bring much-needed revenue to the country's struggling economy.

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CALLING ALL SAWYERS

Circle the weekend of April 26-27 and make time for the axe and crosscut saw techniques workshop at Blackburn Trail Center. This course is intended for Overseers who have wilderness trail sections or those who prefer the cold steel of a "singing saw" to a Stihl. We will cover crosscut saw basics, safe saw handling, and the proper use of a single-bit axe. We'll also discuss the many associated tools that will make your sawing safer and easier. All participants will have an opportunity to spend a day in the woods practicing their skills on an AT section. For further information, contact Dan Dueweke, 703/266-3248 or e-mail danjan@fcc.net. □



Taking a "Nepali chiyaa" (tea with hot milk) break at Annapurna Base Camp. Left, Kuruvilla Verghese with Claudine Weatherford.

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Council Fire

The PATC Council's regular monthly meeting was held on Jan. 14, 2003, at Club Headquarters in Vienna, Va. Mal Fordham, the new Supervisor of Education, Information, and Activities, reported progress regarding the current problems with the Club's Web site and online reporting. The top priority is to quickly restore message capability. Mal will chair the Computer Committee and work with Club members who have volunteered their services for computer support. He will continue to inform Council with monthly progress reports.

Administrative

Wilson Riley reported the numbers of PATC Club members receiving Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC) awards for AT maintenance: 45 vests – awarded to members volunteering 1,000 hours, 78 hats – awarded for 500 volunteer hours, and 159 patches – awarded for 100 volunteer hours.

Finance

A donation of \$6,000 was made to the Trail/Lands fund by PATC member Andy Wilson of Scottsville, Va.

At the Council meeting, Bob Williams, Supervisor of the Land Trust for ATC, presented information on the 255-acre Judge Penn tract, near Rte. 9 in Northern Virginia. The property borders the AT corridor for 1.9 miles and is for sale. ATC has found conservation buyers for all but 60 acres and has asked for a bridge loan

from PATC to help secure this tract until a conservation buyer can be found. The Council approved a motion granting the \$53,000 six-month loan to ATC.

According to the monthly budget, submitted by Treasurer Gerhard Salinger, yearly revenue for 2002 exceeded expenditures by just over \$25,000. Income for the year was about \$12,500 less than budgeted; however, expenses were also less than budgeted.

Acquisitions

In December 2002, PATC acquired the 24-acre Kestenbaum property near Old Rag and is now exploring possible uses for the land.

Cabins and Shelters

The Council approved allocation of \$10,000 to re-roof the Schairer Trail Center. Mel Merritt, Chair of Cabin Operations, explained that the skylights have been leaking for some time. The same roofer will work on both the Eaton Hollow and Schairer Trail Center roofs at the same time. He noted the Schairer repair money will come from interest accrued from the \$30,000 Ruth Schairer endowment fund, set up for repairs and maintenance.

In addition, Mel reported that Highacre house is scheduled for painting, and renovations are planned for Cliff's House this summer. He also reported that SNP has earmarked \$50,000 from the Park concessions budget to

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HEADQUARTERS

HOW TO CONTACT US FOR CABIN RESERVATIONS, MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION, AND SALES

Address: 118 Park Street, S.E., Vienna, VA 22180
Hours: Monday through Thursday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
and Thursday and Friday 12 noon to 2 p.m.
Phone #: 703/242-0315 24-hr. Activities Tape #: 703/242-0965
To receive an information packet: Extension 10
To leave a message for the Club President, Tom Johnson: Extension 40
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Bus/Metro Directions to Headquarters: When taking Metro Orange line, get off at Dunn Loring station (not Vienna, the last stop). Outside the station, find the stop for Metrobus 2T westbound in the direction of Tyson's Corner. When the bus starts down Maple Avenue in Vienna, exit at the library just past Center St. Walk half a block in the same direction the bus travels, and turn right at Park St. PATC will be on the left only a few yards down from the corner. The fare is \$1.10, but you can ride for \$.25 if you remember to get a transfer ticket at your originating station.

Tom's Trail Talk

The Vision of the Founders

Being a historian by trade, I am always looking over my shoulder. As many of you know, this has induced in me a certain reverence for our founders. This never came home to me more forcefully than the other day, when I had occasion, for the very first time, to review PATC's Articles of Incorporation.

For those of you who don't know, we were incorporated on the 16th of April, 1930, in the District of Columbia. This incorporation post-dated by more than two years the establishment of the Club in 1927. (It must have taken some time indeed to fill out all those government forms.)

The first thing that struck me about the Articles was the matter of longevity. To quote the Articles, "... the term for which it is organized is perpetual."

Perpetual. That has a nice ring to it. The nine founders probably did not realize how long that really meant. There were nine founders, and not a single one is alive today. But the Club, their creation, is alive today, almost 73 years later. How many of us can leave a legacy like that?

Two of the founders were women: Kathryn Fulkerson and Marian Lapp. By 1930 a great controversy was brewing over how much of a role women would be allowed to play. In the early years the men imposed an arbitrary ceiling of one-third. But it didn't last long. Today we find that virtually 50 percent of all PATC hikers are women. (Do we have a number for work trips?)

The central purpose of the Club, then as now, was trail construction and maintenance. The founders defined their region as "wooded and mountain regions accessible from Washington, D.C." and made reference to the Appalachian Trail. Within a year or two, the trail sec-

tion assigned to the Club was from Pine Grove Furnace, Pa., to Rockfish Gap, Va. It has never changed.

The document discussed camp sites and shelters. The founders recognized that backpackers would need someplace to sleep, and they committed the Club to providing those amenities.

But their vision did not stop with trails and shelters. The document recognized the importance of collecting data on the scenery, history, geology, botany, forestry, and wildlife of the AT. In other words, the founders recognized the need to study the trail areas and to provide information of use concerning those topics.

They also wanted PATC to provide maps and guidebooks. This central mission was initially undertaken by trail pioneer Egbert Walker, and the tradition is continued by PATC's Dave Pierce.

The founders wanted to encourage use of the trail systems they constructed. Why have trails if no one will use them?

They wanted to educate the public "in proper camping methods and forest fire prevention and to foster public appreciation and use of the Shenandoah National Park."

And that's it – six purposes. The vision focused on trail construction, but it was broader than that. The founders recognized that a structure would be needed to surround the Trail (or trails). In the founding document, one sees the origins of shelters, maps, guidebooks, Trail Patrol, the hiking program, Bob Pickett's nature hikes, Jack Reeder's history books, and much more. Their vision was one of a diverse Club to serve the public. We have never wavered in that goal. □

—Tom Johnson



Book Review: Appalachian Trail Names

Appalachian Trail Names, Origins of Place Names Along the AT, by David Edwin Lillard, 148p, soft cover, \$16.95. 37 photos, 15p resource list.

The book covers names from A to Z, from Georgia to Maine. I wonder how many people are interested in place names. One member wanted to know the origin of place names on the AT in Maryland. The author, a local member, cites other sources on place names with 15 pages of references.

In an era when places were named to commemorate historical figures, describe a place, or remember an episode, this book provides a history of places along the AT. Encountering unusual names makes one wonder how a place came to acquire its name. Take, for example, Keep Tryst Road in Sandy Hook, Md. It was first called Keep

BOOKS REVIEWED IN THE PA

Books that are reviewed in this publication are placed in PATC's library for use by members. You may want to check out our new library. □

Triest, which evolved to Trist, and now Tryst. "Keep" is an archaic word for fort; "Triest" calls to mind the Italian city. Many lean-tos are named for local people.

Jones Mt. Trail may have been named for Cadwaller Jones, who explored the central Shenandoah Valley in 1673. Annapolis was named for Anna Stuart, who became Queen of England. It is unknown how the name got to be used for Annapolis Rocks. Bear

Springs Cabin was so named by the "early settlers who knew the spring as a watering hole for black bears." Bears Den Hostel was named by the former owner because it was evocative of a Hunt Club. Some places were named for characteristics of landscape, such as Horsehoe Trail, Lovers Leap Rock, and Little Devil and Big Devil Stairs. Caledonia State Park was named by Thaddeus Stevens who was born in Caledonia, Vt. That one is an interesting story, as are others: Mary's Rock, named for the wife of Francis Thornton, an 18th century landowner; and Roan Mt., named by Scottish settlers because of similarities of the mountain ash tree and the rowan tree in Scotland. Other interesting stories are about a ghost at Scare Rock, Springer Mt., Wigwam Mt., and Hemlock Hill. □

—Carol Niedzialek

Bob Pickett's Appalachian Nature: March and the Pigeon Story

With March comes the birth of a new season. By the end of this month, spotted salamanders and wood frogs will have completed their mating for the year; mourning doves and starlings will be on their first egg brood of the year; and I will have already seen my first hepatica, bloodroot, trout lily, harbinger of spring, and cut-leaf toothwort.

If you're a late riser and miss the March natural events, you would be missing the magnificent massing of tundra swans that use the area below the Conowingo Dam along the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania as a staging area for their long migration to the tundra north of the Hudson Bay. For the first two weeks of March, up to 10,000 swans can be seen here and at the nearby Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA). For more information on the Middle Creek WMA, go to www.fieldtrip.com/pa/77331512.htm or do a search on the Internet.

Salamanders Start Their Season

For me, the inaugural event of the season is the gathering of the spotted salamanders. On the first good rain event lasting into the evening in early to mid-March, with temperatures around 40 degrees, brave the weather and visit your local vernal pools. If you hit it right, you will find hundreds of spotted salamanders writhing in masses, known as congresses, in the midst of an all-night orgy. But if you miss the night of their passionate performance, you may have to wait another year to observe them, since they will leave the pools as quickly as they arrived, returning to the underground homes they occupy the other 360+ days of the year.

I have a site I check each year, near the Audubon Naturalist Society headquarters. It is on Jones Mill Road, just inside of the beltway (in sight of the Mormon Temple). Park at the playground, take the foot-bridge over Rock Creek, and you'll find the pools at the base of the hillside. While several of the past years found these vernal pools dry, I'm counting on their being full this year!

The wood frog, like the spotted salamander, also breeds explosively, unlike most amphibian species such as spring peepers, which exhibit a more extended breeding period. The wood frog normally makes its appearance at vernal pools and permanent ponds early in March for a week of intensive courting and mating. The frogs' distinctive duck-like quacking will be heard with, or even just prior to, the more familiar calls of our spring peepers. A week or so later, count on their being joined by the snoring of the pickerel frog and, if you're lucky, the ascending trill of the vanishing upland chorus frog.

The Sad Passenger Pigeon Saga

The one March event none of us will see is the spring northern migration of the passenger pigeons. It is believed that this species once constituted 25 to 40 per cent of the total bird population of the United States. It is estimated that there were 3 billion to 5 billion passenger pigeons at the time Europeans arrived in America. The migratory flights of the passenger pigeon were spectacular. The birds flew at an estimated speed of about 60 miles an hour. Observers reported the sky would be darkened by huge flocks that passed overhead. In 1808, ornithologist Alexander Wilson observed a flock in Kentucky he estimated at a mile wide that passed him for four hours. Based on his calculations, the flock was estimated at 2.25 billion birds. These colonial birds would summer in massive cities. Surprisingly, for their staggering numbers, only 10 or 12 such encampments would exist in any year, congregating in two main

areas, one in New York or Pennsylvania, the other in the Great Lakes region. One site in Wisconsin in 1871 contained an estimated 136 million birds spread out over an 850-square-mile area.

Densities in some colonies were as great as a hundred nests per tree. One can only imagine the enormous impact on the ecology of the nesting grounds. The sheer weight of the birds (slightly larger than mourning doves, our other native dove) mangled trees by breaking off trunks. Breaking branches would kill both adults and eggs and add to the tremendous wash of guano that covered the ground. The tremendous cacophony of the birds reportedly could be sensed from miles away (as could, perhaps, the smell!).

The passenger pigeon's technique of survival had been based on mass numbers to overwhelm predators. John James Audubon wrote, "The howling of wolves now reached our ears, and the foxes, lynxes, cougars, bears, raccoons, opossums, and pole-cats [skunks] were seen sneaking off from the spot, whilst eagles and hawks of different species, accompanied by a crowd of vultures, came to supplant them and enjoy their share of the spoil." It is believed that peregrine falcons specialized in hunting passenger pigeons, as did goshawks in the more northerly breeding areas.

People Step In

However, Man changed the rules. And, with the telegraph and railroad, the fate of the colonial birds was sealed. With the knowledge of roosting site locations and with easy transportation to get to the sites, an annual mass hunting began on an unprecedented scale. By 1850 the destruction of the pigeons was in full force, and by 1860 it was noticed that the numbers of birds seemed to be decreasing, but still the slaughter continued.

A seasonal market for passenger pigeons existed for a month each year from April into May. By June, the markets were glutted with pigeons, the nesting populations were scattered, and the hunters largely dispersed.

One of the last large encampments of passenger pigeons occurred at Petroskey, Mich., in 1878. Here 50,000 birds per day were killed, and this rate continued for nearly five months. When the adult birds that survived this massacre attempted second nestings at new sites, they were soon located by the professional hunters and killed before they had a chance to raise any young.

Perhaps having an even greater impact than the hunting itself was the disruption of the breeding activity, driving adults from their colonies so that in some years there was a complete nesting failure.

The life history of this bird was based on mass colonial nesting sites. Bearing only one egg per brood, the remaining populations could not maintain the stock, and a final freefall into extinction occurred over the course of just some 20 years. By the early 1890s, the passenger pigeon had almost completely disappeared. Perhaps the last free-flying pigeon was shot in 1902 in McKean County, Pa., and in 1914, the last captive bird died in the Cincinnati Zoo. □

—Bob Pickett

Nepal, from page 1

Despite instances of regionalized and localized civil disturbance caused by the Maoists, and the Western media's focus on these political problems, as a trekker I was never threatened or felt unsafe. In fact, I felt safer there than I would have at home. Waiting in Kathmandu's Tribhuvan Airport, I was stunned to read that snipers were shooting people in the Washington, D.C. area. While any global traveler these days might be in danger, Nepal's Maoist leaders have repeatedly claimed that they will not harm trekkers, and to date they have kept their word.

I used a small, highly recommended, family-owned, long-established Nepalese trekking agency in Kathmandu – Crystal Mountain Treks (CMT) – to handle both treks. Dinesh Gurung and his son, Jwalant, owners and managers of CMT, bent over backwards to satisfy our requests, answer our questions, and enrich our stay. Before and during my trip to Nepal, Jwalant kept me informed about Maoist incidents and other safety issues (last year's monsoons caused a number of landslides and floods), including news stories not readily accessible to Americans. He also provided me direct e-mail contact with trekkers who had just returned from Nepal and could answer my questions. And, equally comforting, he recommended that we remain open to alternative routes, should they be necessary. Following CMT's advice, our group remained flexible in case we needed to fly to a starting point instead of travel by bus, or perhaps take a different route altogether.

CMT assigned Ram Rai as our guide. A legend in Nepal's outdoor adventure commu-



Left, Jwalant Gurung of Crystal Mountain Treks with Dawa Yangzee Sherpa at her home in Chaurikharka.



Photos by Claudine Weatherford

The Kongde Community Forest Nursery is growing thousands of seedlings to reforest the Khumbu. Jwalant's sister, Janita Gurung, a soil scientist who works for the World Wildlife Federation in Kathmandu, is helping the community with the project.

nity, Ram's two decades as a guide in Nepal, Pakistan, India, and Tibet gives him invaluable trekking knowledge and wisdom. As a bonus, Ram's lively stories about former treks guaranteed we would be entertained each evening at dinner.

Indeed, CMT's efforts to provide us opportunities to learn about Nepal and its people added a priceless bonus to the trip. From dinner invitations to Nepalese homes, to talks with wildlife and forestry program directors, to meeting one of Nepal's female mountain climbers, Dawa Yangzee Sherpa, Jwalant opened many doors. Besides being an impressive business owner and manager, Jwalant is double certified: as a travel guide and as a mountain guide.



Ram Rai, Crystal Mountain Treks' premier guide, resting en route to Annapurna Base Camp.

For trekkers up to the challenge, Nepal has classified 33 trekking peaks, ranging from 18,537 ft. to 21,325 ft., including Tharpu Chuli (Tent Peak) and Imja Tse.

This is a banner year for hikers and climbers to visit Nepal. May 2003 marks the 50th anniversary of Tensing Norgay's and Edmund Hillary's Everest summit conquest. CMT – and no doubt other Nepalese travel specialists – are offering unique treks and cultural opportunities to help Nepal celebrate. If trekking in Nepal isn't in the cards for you, consider another option that would still help Nepal regain its economic footing. Jwalant arranged an eight-day tour from Lhasa to Kathmandu for two of us prior to the treks. It was a fascinating supplement to my trip. Kathmandu is a perfect base from which to coordinate guided treks in Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, and other north Indian destinations. North Everest base camp in Tibet and the hills in Sikkim, Bhutan, and Darjeeling afford beautiful views of the Himalayas.

Whatever approach you prefer – whether trekking alone, with an independent guide, or through a travel agency and whether camping or staying in lodges – do keep in mind that doing business directly with Nepalese people or companies contributes vastly more to their economy than going through foreign travel companies as intermediaries. Nepal awaits you, hikers. Go now! □

– Claudine Weatherford

Please feel free to contact Claudine if you would like more details about her recent experience in Nepal: cwford@ravenrocks.com.

A Hike in Japan, Part II

The Japanese Mountains

Japan is more than 90 percent mountains. The 120-million-odd residents cram into the few broad plains near the coast, making the country seem even more crowded than it is. Mountains surround Tokyo, Osaka, Sapporo, and all other major cities. All Japanese mountains are knifed through by trains, so getting to your trailhead does not require a privately-owned conveyance. Once free of the dense mass of buildings on the flats, the mountains rise up quickly before you, and you are soon coursing through a gorge along a rushing river.

These are not the Appalachians. Japanese mountains are incredibly steep. Trails lead by switchbacks to the ridge line, then follow the ridge for miles. Dropoffs on either side of the trail remind you that you do not want to veer off the path to smell a wildflower. Climbing any Japanese mountain would be more of a technical challenge than a bushwhack.

Japan gets a lot more rain than we do, and all the mountains are thick with trees. Cypress and cedar predominate, punctuated by the odd stand of bamboo. The beauty of Japanese forests must be seen to be believed. All forests are carefully managed, and monoculture predominates. Walk through a forest of cypress, and all you will see is cypress. Hike any distance at all, and you are likely to run into foresters. You will hear them before you see them. They will be up in trees with their pruning saws, cutting off unwanted limbs. You will see the ladder



Lunch at Nenogongen. Mina Goodrich and Larry Dean.

reaching up into the tree, with a pile of limbs at the bottom. This is partly economical (the Japanese waste nothing) and partly cultural – the Japanese want to control everything. They probably view their forests as giant bonsai reservations.

Chattering

In Japan you spend a lot of time on trains. As you whiz by the faceless suburbs with their buildings seemingly jammed up against the train windows, you wonder how to while away the hours. In our case we engaged in discussions about the Japanese language. One morning I announced to a startled crew that I could teach them Japanese in one easy lesson. The secret is the Japanese propensity for incorporating foreign words into their language. About half of all good English nouns are already ensnared in the Japanese embrace. If you want something, all you have to know is, how is it pronounced? There are a few simple rules that can be learned in minutes. Here's an example of some Japanese pronunciations.

- McDonald's is now a good Japanese word. It is pronounced Maku-donarudo. Simple, huh? Another:
- Excellent (the name of our hotel) is pronounced Eku-serento.
- And Bayer Aspirin is, of course, Bayaru Asupeereen.

Pretty soon we began talking about the signs we were seeing. The Japanese use four different alphabets (more accurately syllabaries), but the most complex by far is Kanji. Kanji is, essentially, the characters that were borrowed from the Chinese back when the Japanese had no writing system of their own. So we began a little exercise called "Fun with Kanji." Our first example was a Kanji character that was, simply, a rectangular box. That, I said, means "mouth." Oh – simple. Right. Everyone began looking for it and found that it was employed in the words for entrance and exit. Now they could find their way in and out of a Japanese train station. Another was the same box with a vertical slash through the middle. That meant "center," "central," or "middle." Pretty intuitive. It is also the first character in the word for China, which the Chinese have always called the Middle Kingdom. This Kanji is used all over Japan for many different purposes, including a rail line that we used frequently – the Chuo (Central) Line.



Photos by Tom Johnson

Take Dera, with stone lantern fore and bamboo grove aft.

Solitude

One gorge north of Okutama is Okumusashi, a forest preserve. Trails wind through the mountains, but the area is less frequented than its more famous neighbor to the south. For our last hike in the Tokyo area, we decided on a trail through Okumusashi that led to two Buddhist temples, Nenogongen and Take Dera.

We begin the trip at Ikebukuro, a chaotic urban center on the Yamanote Line, the elevated train that rings central Tokyo like a beltway. Ikebukuro is best known for Sunshine City. It is one of the tallest buildings in Japan, and one of the upper floors houses an outrageously expensive aquarium. Commuters course through the station on their way to points north and west of the city. Standing in Ikebukuro during rush hour is like living in the center of a hurricane.

After the typical long train ride, we dismounted at Agano, a small town in the center of the Okumusashi region. At first we were on narrow roads that poked into the hillsides surrounding Agano. We left the last little road at a small arched stone bridge and headed up a very steep trail. Half an hour of hard climbing brought us to the first summit, and soon we were at Nenogongen. The temple is guarded by two huge wooden statues, leering gods painted a fierce orange. We ate lunch on the crest of the mountain, under a fiery red momiji (Japanese maple) with rare eastward views. It was a beautiful

See Japan, page 7

Japan, from page 6

day, cloudless but with a gentleness to the sky that softened the colors. We walked over to the temple, which was somewhat less eventful than the deities that guarded it. Mina rang the huge gong, and the sound spread through the trees. We tossed some coins into the collection box, just to keep the gods happy.

We were soon back on the trail, walking a ridge line toward Take Dera, our second destination of the day. We came across some foresters working on the trail, and we stopped to chat for a few minutes. They were interested in our Club, and we discussed the American way in which volunteers do trail work. Other than that, there was nothing but the mountains and the trees. It took us about an hour to reach Take Dera.

Take (pronounced talk-kay) Dera means bamboo temple. It sits in a smallish ravine scooped out of the high mountains and it is famous for the stands of bamboo that enshroud the temple buildings and the grounds. It is completely silent and serene. There is no finer place in Japan.

Another hour's walk takes us to the bus stop at Kodono, a wide spot on a narrow Japanese mountain road. The descent is steep and treacherous in spots, and we needed our sturdy boots and hiking poles to stay upright. Nevertheless, we met a young man on the trail, decked out in typical business attire – blue suit with black oxford shoes and

an umbrella. He outlegged us on the trail, and we met him again, sitting at the bus stop in Kodono. So much for being properly outfitted for a hike.

The End

In two weeks, we managed to squeeze five hikes into our packed schedule. Every one was done in gorgeous fall weather, in the middle of what the Japanese call the *kojo* season (fall colors). In November the landscape seems to soften in the sharply angled sunlight. Fuji viewing is at its grandest, and hiking is at its most pleasant. We interspersed our hiking with shopping, sight-seeing, and visits to Japanese hot springs and public baths. We stayed in Tokyo for seven days and in Kyoto for five. In Kyoto we stayed in a Japanese inn, called a *ryokan*, where you pad about in slippers and sleep on futons on the floor. The proprietress, Mrs. Yuhara, is an old friend, and we spoke fondly of the days gone by and of the groups of American hikers who have stayed at her inn.

If there were one piece of Japan that we could have taken back with us, it would probably have been the public transportation system that leaves the American train system in its well-deserved shame. But there is also a part in each of us that secretly yearns for the baths – that steamy pleasure that ends a tiring day with a long soak in a very hot tub, chatting with friends and recounting the experiences of the day. □

—Tom Johnson



The jump-off point for the Okumusashi hike. Pictured are (left to right) Chris Nolen, Randy Swisher, Carol Schaeffer, Larry Dean, Mina Goodrich, and Joanne Murphy.

This May Be The Perfect Spot For A Special Event



The Blackburn Trail Center, conveniently located just one hour from the Capital Beltway in Round Hill, Va., is a perfect location for all types of events. Consider holding your next milestone birthday party, family reunion, wedding, or graduation party at this lovely cabin in the woods.

Blackburn can accommodate up to 100 people for a day event and has indoor lodging space for 30 people and at least 30 more using tent sites and the adjoining campground. The “gourmet” kitchen provides you with two propane gas stoves (one of restaurant-quality with six burners, griddle, and double oven), refrigerator and freezer, double sinks, and two dishwashers. The kitchen is also well-stocked with pots, pans, and dishes. There is limited parking at the door; however, parking is also available along the mile-long road leading to the cabin. The Main House and Carriage House have electricity; there is also excellent well water and wood-burning stoves to take off the chill. From the screened porch and lawn you can take in excellent views east across the valley. On an especially clear day you can even see the spires of the National Cathedral. In the other direction, a short hike up from the cabin leads you to the AT.

For more information on this unique facility, contact Chris Brunton at 703/560-8070 or trailbossbtc@msn.com. Note that Blackburn is a members-only rental cabin. □

—Chris Brunton

FORECAST

Chapters

Charlottesville Chapter

The Charlottesville Chapter hikes every Saturday; summer, winter, and in between. Hikes are usually 8 to 10 miles. We usually maintain trails on the last Saturday of the month. Meet at Sprint parking lot, 2307 Hydraulic Road, at 9 a.m., with food and water for the day. The majority of hikes are in the southern and central districts of Shenandoah National Park, with some in the north district and in George Washington National Forest. Our Chapter hikes are posted at www.patc.net/chapters/char/hikes.html. INFO: Jere Bidwell 434/295-2143 or John Shannon 434/293-2953.

North Chapter

The North Chapter of PATC conducts monthly trail work trips on the Maryland and Pennsylvania sections of the AT and on the Pennsylvania sections of the Tuscarora Trail. We also lead hikes on these and other trails. Maryland AT work trips are generally held on the first and third Saturdays – contact Mark Mitchell (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/461-7048 for information. Pennsylvania work trips are generally held on the AT on the first Saturday and on the Tuscarora on the third Saturday – contact Charlie Irvin 301/447-2848 or Pete Brown (peter.brown4@worldnet.att.net) 410/343-1140. Pennsylvania AT work trips also include an optional Saturday night stay at the Gypsy Spring cabin. Dinner, breakfast, and camaraderie available. For information on upcoming hikes, contact Chris Firme (bnc-firme@innet.net) 717/765-4833. For general chapter information, contact chapter president Pete Brown or visit the North Chapter home page: www.patc.net/chapters/north/.

Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter

The Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter sponsors hikes in national and state parks and forests in the Shenandoah Valley vicinity, open to the public, on a monthly basis except during the winter. Hikes are posted in the Forecast. Other activities are in the NSV Chapter Newsletter. For further information contact Gerry Boyd (gerryb@compuserve.com) 703/281-7216.

Southern Shenandoah Valley Chapter

See Forecast (or our link from PATC website) for work trips and hiking events sponsored by the Southern Shenandoah Valley Chapter. Hikers from the DC area should allow about 3 hours to get to our region. INFO: in Harrisonburg, call Alvin 540/434-6244 or Lynn 540/234-6273; in Waynesboro, call Michael 540/943-8695; in Staunton, call Doris 540/885-4526.

West Virginia Chapter

Chapter meetings at Highacre are on the second Wednesday of Feb., Apr., Jun., Aug., Oct., and Dec. See Forecast for upcoming activities. For information about the chapter or to receive the newsletter, contact Judy Smoot 540/667-2036 or e-mail wvpatc@hotmail.com.

Ski Touring Section

The Ski Touring Section has served since 1974 to introduce Washington area residents to cross-country skiing and to provide cross-country skiing opportunities to experienced skiers. The Section sponsors winter weekend ski trips for all levels of skiers to nearby mountains in Maryland, West Virginia and Pennsylvania, as well as periodic social events year round. INFO: Steve Brickel 301/946-2520 or sbrickel@erols.com.

Mountaineering Section

We're a diverse group of local Washington, DC area climbers. Young and old, male and female, crag rat, sport climber, and alpinist, active and armchair types – we all enjoy climbing in its many varieties. We also share common interests in promoting safe climbing, conserving the outdoors, developing new climbers' skills, representing the Washington area climbing community, and having fun! We provide instruction for those wanting to learn the basics – we're not a school, but we can get you started. We go climbing, either locally or further afield, nearly every weekend. In the winter we organize trips to the Ice Festivals in the Adirondacks and the White Mountains for beginning and advanced ice climbers. For further information contact Mack Muir 703/960-1697 (MackMuir@edisaurus.com).

PATC Midweek Hikes

PATC's Vigorous Group hikes 8-10 miles at a fast pace; and the Easy Hikers hike 5-8 miles on trails with little elevation change. See below for scheduled trips; check the weekly tape (703/242-0965) on Thursday or Friday for any changes or additions.

Other Clubs' Hikes

Capital and Wanderbirds hike on Sundays, traveling by bus and leaving from downtown, with suburban stops as well. Center Club, Northern Virginia Hiking Club and Sierra Club hike on both Saturdays and Sundays using carpools, which often leave from a suburban Metro stop. Schedules are available at PATC Headquarters and are published in area newspapers on Fridays. The schedule of West Virginia Highland Conservancy outings in the Monongahela National Forest and surrounding areas is on their web site at www.wvhighlands.org.

KEY to Forecast Activities

All events are marked for easy identification. Late changes or cancellations are listed on the weekly information tape (703/242-0965), which is updated on Sunday evening for the following seven days. The Forecast can also be found on PATC's Web site at www.patc.net.

-  Hiking Trips
-  Backpacking Trips
-  Trail Work Trips
-  Cabin/Shelter Work Trips
-  Special Events
-  Meetings
-  Skiing
-  Classes

Note to all hike leaders: Please ask non-members on your hike if they would like to join PATC, then get names and addresses so a Club volunteer can send them information packets. Thanks!

Meetings

Meetings

Meetings are held at PATC HQ, 118 Park Street, S.E., Vienna, VA unless otherwise noted.

New Members (PATC) – First Wednesday

7:30 p.m. Curious about the Club? Want to learn more? The best way is to attend a New Members meeting (but you don't have to be new to qualify). Attend the meeting and find the mysteries of PATC revealed in full. Refreshments will be served. Directions to PATC: Take Rt. 23 into Vienna, Va. and turn east on Park St. (Rt.675) to 118 Park St. on your left. INFO: Jane Thompson 301/565-6704 x208.

Mountaineering Section – Second Wednesday

8:00 p.m. – We meet every month unless noted in the Forecast. INFO: Mack Muir at 703/960-1697 or (MackMuir@edisaurus.com) or PATC's Web site: www.patc.net/chapters/mtn_sect.

Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group

Business meeting – Last Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. INFO: Zeb Whitaker (zw@tdcarchitects.com) 703/255-5034, then press #5.

PATC Council – Second Tuesday

7:00 p.m. sharp. The PATC Council meets every month to conduct business of the Club and once a year for a Dinner meeting. All members are welcome. Come see how we make decisions about your Club. INFO: Wilson Riley (wirley@patc.net) 703/242-0693 x11.

Trail Patrol – First Tuesday

7:30 p.m. Trail Patrol volunteers are PATC's goodwill trail ambassadors to the hiking public. They provide a visible, reassuring presence on the trails, educating the public on good hiking practices, minimum impact hiking and camping ethics. Patrol members are trained in land navigation, emergency procedures, radio communications and personal equipment. All patrol volunteers are also expected to become certified in a recognized basic first aid course. Some equipment and uniform items are provided upon completion of training. INFO: Kumait Jawdat 202/328-8137 or see PATC's Web site: www.patc.net/volunteer/trailpatrol.

MARCH

1 (Saturday)

DEADLINE - April Potomac Appalachian Headquarters, Vienna, VA

By 5:00 p.m. all items for the next issue of the newsletter due to editors. Send all Forecast events to PA-Forecast@patc.net and all other articles to PA@patc.net.

1 - 2 (Saturday - Sunday)

CLASS - Hike Leadership Training Course Prince William Forest Park, VA

The Trail Patrol is hosting a Hike Leadership Training Course at Prince William Forest Park. The two-day course uses classroom and hands-on instruction to teach participants the essential skills for leading safe, enjoyable hikes with minimal environmental impact. The topics to be covered include: medical emergencies, planning, personal equipment, Leave No Trace, leadership skills, standard procedures, emergency procedures, and navigation and map reading. Details at trailpatrol.patc.net. INFO: Ben Fernandez (bmfernandez99@earthlink.net).

1 - 2 (Saturday - Sunday)

CLASS - Wilderness First Aid Alexandria, VA

A program of the Wilderness Safety Council, this 18-hour class includes classroom study, hands-on practice, and results in a two-year certification. The cost is \$140. Registration is limited to 25 people. More information and registration at: www.wfa.net. INFO: Christopher Tate 703/836-8905.

1 - 2 (Saturday - Sunday)

SHELTER WORK TRIP - New Construction Bowie, MD

The logs have arrived at the worksite near Bowie, Md., where we will construct a new shelter. When completed it will be disassembled and moved to Shockey's Knob on the Tuscarora Trail west of Winchester, Va. PATC provides tools. Bring your lunch, water, and personal first aid kit. INFO: Frank Turk (FrankTurk@aol.com) 301/249-8243.

3 (Monday)

HIKE - Family Hike Springfield, VA

Hidden Pond Nature Center. Out and back jogging-stroller passable hike along Pohick Stream. We will hike about 3 miles in all. Meet on the playground right next to the parking lot. INFO: Lauren Lang (LEvansAT94@aol.com) 703/631-9278.

4 (Tuesday)

MEETING - Trail Patrol, 7:30 p.m.

4 (Tuesday)

HIKE - Vigorous Hikers

Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA
Climb Cedar Run to Hawksbill then go south along Franklin Cliffs, returning on Skyland Trail, Crescent Rock Trail to descend Whiteoak. 17 miles and 4200 ft climb. INFO: Chris Nolen 301/469-8931.

5 (Wednesday)

CLASS - Everest 50th Anniversary (REI) Bailey's Crossroads, VA

7:30 p.m. In the spring of 1953, Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay fought their way to the top of the world. Fifty years later, expeditions and climbing teams throng the mountain, often crowding camps, and forming bottlenecks at critical spots. Chris Warner, owner of Earth Treks Climbing Center, the first Marylander to summit Everest, and the first

American to solo an 8,000 meter peak, presents a retrospective of his personal experiences on Everest and climbing in the Himalayas in celebration of the first summiting of Everest. Admission \$5.00 at the door. INFO: Mark Nelson (mnelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

5 (Wednesday)

HIKE - Easy Hikers Vienna, VA

WO&D Trail (paved and gravelled). Five miles of flat walking with a stop at end for lunch and tour of PATC office on Park Street. Meet at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Chery Street. Directions: from Beltway (I-495), west on I-66. Exit 62, Nutley Street (VA 243) north toward Vienna. Continue to 4th traffic light intersection. Right on Maple Avenue (RT 123). Right on Park Street then about 2 blocks to Community Center on right. No pets. Rain or shine. Bring lunch and water. Starts at 10:15 a.m. INFO: Henri Comeau (henricomeau@aol.com) 703/451-7965.

5 (Wednesday)

MEETING - New Members (PATC), 7:30 p.m.

8 (Saturday)

HIKE - Natural History Cultural Hike Shenandoah National Park, VA

Come, join Len Wheat and Bob Pickett as we explore some off-trail locations within the Park in search of homesites, cemeteries, animal tracks and other neat stuff. Our actual route will be determined by weather, but will include about six miles with, maybe, up to half done off-trail. With bushwhacking and weather conditions unknown, this must be considered a moderately difficult hike. Nonetheless, always fun, always different! Reservations required. INFO: Bob Pickett 301/681-1511.

8 (Saturday)

HIKE - North Chapter Boiling Springs, PA

Appalachian Trail Hike II, Center Knob section. ATC Mid-Atlantic Office to PA RT 94. Moderate to difficult 8.8 mile hike, elevation gain 700 feet. This section takes in the Center Knob, which at one time was the midpoint of the AT. The Alec Kennedy shelter is found on this section of the AT. Meet at 10:00 a.m. in Boiling Springs, PA, at the ATC Mid-Atlantic Office. INFO: Christopher Firme (bncfirme@inner-net.net) 771/765-4833, after 6:00 p.m.

8 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP - Massanutten Crew Massanutten Mountain, VA

Mid-winter work on a mountain is invigorating. Meet at 9:00 a.m. on the Massanutten. INFO: Wil Kohlbrenner (wmaxk@shentel.net) 540/477-2971.

8 - 9 (Saturday - Sunday)

CABIN WORK TRIP - John's Rest Cabin Stanardsville, VA

Join us for some landscaping and finishing work on the cabin and outhouse. We will be happy to teach you construction skills, if needed. Good hiking opportunities as well. Group meals (we love good food). INFO: Joel Anderson (jtanderson54@yahoo.com) 301/898-0047.

8 - 9 (Saturday - Sunday)

CABIN WORK TRIP - Tulip Tree Cabin Shaver Hollow, VA

With all the doors and windows now installed, we can get on to things like the finished floor and baseboards. We will be working mostly on the little finishing details in the cabin. There is still much landscaping work to do and maybe some paint-

ing or varnishing. Whatever we are doing you can come out and enjoy a weekend in the woods, make some new friends and enjoy yourself. INFO: Charlie Graf (cagraf@aol.com) 410/757-6053.

8 - 9 (Saturday - Sunday)

CLASS - Land Navigation Class (REI) Bailey's Crossroads, VA

Saturday 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sunday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This comprehensive two-day course teaches all skills necessary to use map and compass in an integrated land navigation system. The first day is spent in intensive classroom exercises concentrating on map reading and interpretation, position plotting, compass fundamentals, declination, and azimuth. The second day is spent in Prince William Forest Park, primarily off-trail, engaging in practical navigation exercises of increasing complexity. The course fee is \$85 and includes workbook text, course materials, compass, map, grid reader, and lunch on Saturday. Registration required. INFO: Mark Nelson (mnelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

8 - 9 (Saturday - Sunday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP - Cadillac Crew Washington, DC

Potomac Heritage Trail (PHT). Join the Cadillac Crew for some inside-the-beltway trail work. The Crew plans to repair sections of the PHT including steps and erosion control devices. Bring water and a lunch for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Overnight with local crew members. INFO: Fran Keenan (outdoorsnow@cox.net) 703/938-3973 or Jon Rindt (jkrindt@erols.com) 540/635-6351.

10 (Monday)

HIKE - Family Hike Centreville, VA

Manassas Battlefield - Stone Bridge. Come join us for a kid-friendly 2-mile loop. The path is jogging-stroller passable with a few, short, steep, up and downs, and some roots and log stairs. The trail has a neat long boardwalk section, then goes up into an open meadow, then back into the woods and along the stream. INFO: Lauren Lang (LEvansAT94@aol.com) 703/631-9278.

11 (Tuesday)

HIKE - Vigorous Hikers Fairfax County, VA

Fairfax Cross County Trail (CCT). 36.7 mile vigorous hike traversing numerous parks and stream beds of the County from a start near Lorton to the parking area at Georgetown Pike and Difficult Run. Plan on an early start and a fast pace. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181 or cliff.noyes@juno.com

11 (Tuesday)

MEETING - PATC Council, 7:00 p.m.

12 (Wednesday)

CLASS - Cross Training for Mind, Body, Soul (REI) Bailey's Crossroads, VA

Make outdoor fitness fun as well as a part of your lifestyle. Take fitness outside and get great benefits for your mind as well as your body. REI's seasoned outdoor adventurers will cover the fundamentals of building and maintaining endurance, strength, and flexibility. They'll also cover hydration and nutrition, and the gear and clothing to make it fun and keep you comfortable. Come in and discover why cross training is essential for maximizing and enjoying physical health. INFO: Mark Nelson (mnelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

FORECAST

12 (Wednesday)

👤 HIKE - Easy Hikers
Turkey Run Park, VA

The Easy Hikers will hike 4-5 miles. Some hilly stretches and a minor stream crossing. Meet at 10:15 a.m. at parking lot C-1, immediately to the left upon entering the park. Bring lunch and water. Directions: From the beltway take exit 14, the George Washington Parkway about two miles to the exit for Turkey Run Park. Also accessible from GW Parkway northbound. INFO: Gary Abrecht (Gabrecht@AOL.com) 202/546-6089.

12 (Wednesday)

🏠 MEETING - Mountaineering Section, 8:00 p.m.

13 (Thursday)

👤 HIKE - In-Between Hikers - Key Chain Circuit
Washington, DC

The In-Between Hikers will hike up the Potomac Heritage Trail to Chain Bridge, across the bridge, down the C&O canal towpath, and across Key Bridge to the departure point. About 9 miles. Some rocky sections and a few minor stream crossings. Stretches will be muddy if weather has been wet. At the end Jim Flanigan will lead an optional foray into Georgetown to assess certain establishments' preparation for the upcoming St. Patrick's Day celebrations. Meet at 10:00 a.m. on the Theodore Roosevelt Island parking lot, immediately off the northbound George Washington Parkway just north of the Theodore Roosevelt bridge (there is no access from the parkway southbound). Bring lunch and water. INFO: Gary Abrecht (Gabrecht@AOL.com) 202/546-6089.

15 (Saturday)

👤 HIKE - Massanutten Series
Massanutten Mountain, VA

The last hike of the Massanutten Series will be a 17-mile circuit hike on the Sherman Gap, Bear Wallow, Massanutten, Shawl Gap, and Tuscarora Trails. Total elevation gain will be 4600 feet. PATC Map G. Meet at the Oakton Shopping Center parking lot at 7:30 a.m. Contact leaders for requirements and details. INFO: Jack Thorsen (thorsen4@Juno.com) 703/339-6716 or William Needham (Needham82@AOL.com) 410/884-9127.

15 (Saturday)

👤 TRAIL WORK TRIP - South Mountaineers
Appalachian Trail, MD

Join the South Mountaineers as they kickoff their tenth year of trail stewardship. This is the first of 21 events in 2003. This crew has been performing erosion control and blowdown removal, weeding, building new trails and relocating old trails since 1993. We meet near Frederick, Md. at 9:00 a.m. INFO: Mark Mitchell (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/461-7048.

15 (Saturday)

👤 TRAIL WORK TRIP - Stonewall Brigade
Shenandoah County, VA

Great North Mountain on the VA/WV state line. Join the Stonewall Brigade at Wolf Gap Recreation Area at 9:00 a.m. to get tools then work on Little Stoney Creek Trail in the nearby area. RSVP by Wednesday evening if you plan to attend. Bring lunch, work gloves, water, seasonal clothing, and hiking shoes. INFO: Hop Long (theFSLongs@erols.com) 301/942-6177.

15 - 16 (Saturday - Sunday)

👤 Cabin Work Trip - Blackburn Trail Center
Round Hill, VA

Need your help for new project! Starting this weekend we are going to insulate and build-out the inside of the carriage house. The long-range plan

is to turn this space into a caretaker's apartment. Need help with drywall, finishing, electrical, plumbing and painting. Also need lots of unskilled labor with strong backs. We'll finish up Saturday evening and share in a group meal. Sunday breakfast will be provided for those spending the night. INFO: Chris Brunton 703/560-8070.

15 - 16 (Saturday - Sunday)

👤 CABIN WORK TRIP - Vining Tract
Lydia, VA

The Vining Tract crew meets once a month to work on various cabin and land management projects on the beautiful Vining property. We are making progress on the new cabin (it has a roof), but there's a lot left to do (it still needs walls). We also do projects to keep Conley and Wineberry cabins and the surrounding property in tiptop condition. Come, join us and raise a hammer, a paintbrush, or a log, as well as a beer or two, in the cause. Overnight at Conley and Wineberry. INFO: Larry Lang 703/631-9278 or Hugh Robinson 703/525-8726.

15 - 16 (Saturday - Sunday)

👤 SHELTER WORK TRIP - New Construction
Bowie, MD

The logs have arrived at the worksite near Bowie, MD where we will construct a new shelter. When completed it will be disassembled and moved to Shockey's Knob on the Tuscarora Trail west of Winchester, Va. PATC provides tools. Bring your lunch, water, and personal first aid kit. INFO: Frank Turk (FrankTurk@aol.com) 301/249-8243.

15 - 16 (Saturday - Sunday)

👤 TRAIL WORK TRIP - North District Hoodlums
North District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

FAILTE! All are invited to join the Hoodlums on their traditional Irish worktrip in March. Corned beef and cabbage, Guinness, celtic reels and good craic around the campfire await all hearty souls who are willing to shed a wee bit o' sweat on the trails this fine St. Paddy's day weekend. The Hoodlums Trail Crew works on the AT in the North District of SNP, engaging in down-and-dirty treadwork chores by day. But after a good day's work, the crew settles down to enjoy the fruits of their labor afterwards in grand fashion via the theme meal and festivities at a facility within the park. No trail work experience is necessary and newcomers are always welcome. Check out our Web site at www.patc.net/volunteer/trails/hoodlums/hoodlums.html. Come for the day, stay for the evening meal, camp out overnight in SNP - lots of options! What a way to spend a weekend! We meet at Piney River Ranger Station, MP 22 on Skyline Drive, at 10 a.m. on Saturday morning. Reserve by mid-week prior. INFO/RSVP: George Walters (gjwalters@starpower.net) 410/426-2724.

17 (Monday)

👤 HIKE - St. Patrick's Day Family Hike
Lake Accotink, VA

Put on your green and join us for a 4-mile circuit hike around Lake Accotink. We will stop halfway at the marina to have a green picnic lunch and enjoy the playground. The trail is mostly jogging-stroller friendly, with small gravel tread and a few stairs. INFO: Lauren Lang (LEvansAT94@aol.com) 703/631-9278.

18 (Tuesday)

👤 HIKE - Vigorous Hikers
Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Old Rag and Robertson Mountains - Two tough climbs with great views make this classic an ideal spring conditioning hike. Total is 16 miles and 4000 feet. INFO: Chris Nolen 301/469-8931

19 (Wednesday)

👤 CLASS - Backcountry with Your Dog (REI)
Bailey's Crossroads, VA

7:30 p.m. Before you take off for the woods with your dog, you need to understand your dog's needs and be able to lead and communicate effectively. Brian Roome, of Barkbusters will present an introduction to safe and successful back-packing with your dog. Topics will include: Travel to your destination, dog pack training, necessary equipment, back country etiquette; and basic canine first aid. Brian will detail strategies for effective training and communication with man's best friend that will lead you and your dog to a happier outdoor relationship and many dream weekends. INFO: Mark Nelson (mnelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

19 (Wednesday)

👤 HIKE - Easy Hikers
Seneca Creek Greenway, MD

10:15 a.m. Seneca Creek Greenway at RT 28. We will go to Fuddrucker's for a warm, dry lunch after the hike. Enjoy tall pines and visit the site of Black Rock Mill. Directions: From I-270 access lanes, exit west on RT 28 towards Darnestown. You will come to this exit just after the exit on 28 east to Rockville. Turn as necessary to stay on 28 past Black Rock Road. The trailhead parking lot is on the right hand side of 28, just before the bridge over Seneca Creek. INFO: Margaret Chapman 301/977-8988 or 301/869-9291 Ext. 3, Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday.

20 (Thursday)

👤 HIKE - In-Between Hike
Springfield, VA

Pohick & S. Run Valley Stream Parks. Joint hike with Sierra Club, MWROPA moderate to fast 10 miles from I-95 to Burke Lake. From Fairfax County Parkway (Rte. 7100) take Pohick Road (VA 641) south 3 miles to Rolling Road light. Go right 0.17 miles to Wadebrook Terr. No pets. Bring lunch. Car shuttle. Starts at 10 a.m., rain or shine. INFO: Henri (henricomeau@aol.com) 703/451-7965.

20 (Thursday)

🏠 MEETING - Trails District Managers
PATC Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:00 p.m. Semi-Annual District Managers meeting.

22 (Saturday)

👤 HIKE - Natural History Cultural Hike
Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Len Wheat leads Bob Pickett and friends one more time through the Park in search of artifacts of the former Park inhabitants. We will plan on hiking up Lewis Mountain from the east border of the Park and will do considerable up and down bush-whacking totalling about six miles. We'll see several former homesites and a cemetery. This must be considered a moderately difficult hike. INFO/RSVP: Bob Pickett 301/681-1511.

22 - 23 (Saturday - Sunday)

👤 CABIN WORK TRIP - Tulip Tree Cabin
Shaver Hollow, VA

We will continue with last-minute finishing details and landscaping duties. We are trying to put the finishing touches on the cabin before the end of the summer. There is always more to do than you imagine and it always takes longer than you plan so don't despair! There will be plenty of work to do. INFO: Charlie Graf (cagraf@aol.com) 410/757-6053.

APRIL

22 - 23 (Saturday - Sunday)

🔗 TRAIL WORK TRIP - Cadillac Crew
Per Lee Tract, Madison, VA

Interested in how new trails happen? The crew will continue the trail building project on the Entry Run Trail on the Per Lee Tract with the ultimate goal to connect with the SNP trail system. Bring water and a lunch for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Overnight at PATC's Rosser Lamb Cabin. INFO: Fran Keenan (outdoorsnow@cox.net) 703/938-3973 or Jon Rindt (jkrindt@erols.com) 540/635-6351.

23 (Sunday)

🔗 Trail Work Trip - C&O Canal
Potomac, MD

Join us for a half-day work trip on the Ford Mine Trail at the C&O Canal. This will be an easy introduction to trail maintenance that will leave you time for an afternoon of hiking or biking on the towpath. Meet at the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center at 9:00 a.m. Bring water and work gloves. INFO: Georgeann Smale (gsmale99@yahoo.com) 301/581-9584.

24 (Monday)

🔗 HIKE - Family Hike
Lake Royal, VA

Enjoy the Spring weather on this scenic lake circuit hike. We will hike 2 miles, stopping halfway to enjoy the playground, and have lunch. The trail is jogging stroller friendly except for a few log steps. INFO: Lauren Lang (LEvansAT94@aol.com) 703/631-9278.

25 (Tuesday)

🔗 HIKE - Vigorous Hikers

Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA
Climb new trail over Doubletop for view, then down to Rapidan and lunch at historic Hoover Camp, returning via Stony Mountain Tr. and Upper Dark Hollow Falls Tr. 16 miles 4000 ft climb. INFO: Chris Nolen (chrishiker@erols.com) 301/469-8931.

25 (Tuesday)

🔗 MEETING - Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group (Business meeting), 7:30 p.m.

26 (Wednesday)

🔗 CLASS - Spring Hiking (REI)

Bailey's Crossroads, VA

7:30 p.m. Paul Elliott, a professional writer and amateur hiker, claims that, "as a springtime hiking venue, there's no place like the Washington, D.C. metro area. It offers a remarkably rich and colorful mix of urban and rural landscapes, emergent wildflowers and wildlife, and often-glorious weather—and, for the adventurous hiker, assorted curiosities and other surprises." Paul should know. He's been leading metro-area hikes for the Sierra Club and Appalachian Mountain Club for about six years, and recently spent two of those years researching and writing "60 Hikes within 60 Miles: Washington, DC." Paul will talk about familiar places, but will also reveal some lesser known gems, like Thompson Wildlife Management Area, Fraser Preserve, Little Bennett Regional Park and Leesylvania State Park. After spilling the hiking beans, Paul will be pleased to field your questions and comments, and sign copies of his book. INFO: Mark Nelson (mnelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

26 (Wednesday)

🔗 HIKE - Easy Hikers
Swain's Lock, MD

Six-mile hike on C&O canal to Pennyfield Lock and back. Bring lunch and water. Meet at 10:15 a.m. at Swain's lock. Take exit 39 west from Capital Beltway to River Rd. Go 2 miles past Potomac Md., then left 0.3 miles on Swains Lock Rd. INFO: Mary-Margaret McGrail 703/ 751-8126.

28 - 30 (Friday - Sunday)

🔗 HIKE - Waterfall Photography Blitz

Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Spend a little time getting up close and personal with the waterfalls of Shenandoah. The falls planned for both days are Cedar Run, White Oak Canyon, Lewis Mountain and a couple of others in the National Park system. So bring your camera and plenty of film as we take time to study water. Moderate hike. Optional overnight lodging in a cabin in or near SNP. INFO: Susan Bly (sbly@shepherd.edu) 304/258-3319, between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

29 (Saturday)

🔗 HIKE - Family Hike - Seneca Creek State Park
Gaithersburg, MD

Come explore the beautiful 6,600 acre Seneca Creek State Park. We will hike around Clopper Lake along the Lakeshore Trail. The hike will be a 3.7 mile loop. We will picnic along the way. INFO: Lauren Lang (LEvansAT94@aol.com) 703/631-9278.

29 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP - South Mountaineers
Appalachian Trail, MD

The South Mountaineers are busy with finishing a special project involving a lot of big rocks! The weather is letting up, so come out and join the fun. Bring water, gloves, and lunch. We meet at 9 am in Frederick County. INFO: Mark Mitchell (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/461-7048.

29 - 30 (Saturday - Sunday)

🔗 SHELTER WORK TRIP - New Construction
Bowie, MD

The logs have arrived at the worksite near Bowie, Md. where we will construct a new shelter. When completed it will be disassembled and moved to Shockey's Knob on the Tuscarora Trail west of Winchester, Va. PATC provides tools. Bring your lunch, water, and personal first aid kit. INFO: Frank Turk (FrankTurk@aol.com) 301/249-8243.

29-30 (Saturday-Sunday)

🔗 TRAIL WORK TRIP - Shenandoah Bartenders
Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Clearing the path on Old Rag's Ridge trail. Join this new crew, on either day. Come for the whole weekend, if you are prepared to backpack. INFO: Cathie Cummins 703/631-7421 evenings only.

30 (Sunday)

🔗 TRAIL WORK TRIP - Gambrill State Park
Frederick, MD

This is a continuation of on-going trail maintenance and relocation projects on the Black Locust circuit trail. Also, correction labels need to be placed onto hiking trail maps. Free trail maps to those who participate in putting labels on the maps. Meet at the Nature Center. INFO: Dave Jordahl (dave.jordahl@askdep.com) 301/834-7729.

31 (Monday)

🔗 HIKE - Family Hike - Meadowlark Gardens Park
McLean, VA

Come to check out this beautiful park, which has three ponds, a fountain, and several gazebos. This will be 2-3 mile circuit hike along paved paths. We will have lunch under the trellis-covered picnic tables after the hike. INFO: Lauren Lang (LEvansAT94@aol.com) 703/631-9278.

1 (Tuesday)

DEADLINE - May Potomac Appalachian
Headquarters, Vienna, VA

By 5:00 p.m. all items for the next issue of the newsletter due to editors. Send all Forecast events to PA-Forecast@patc.net and all other articles to PA@patc.net.

1 (Tuesday)

🔗 HIKE - Vigorous Hikers

Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Another long hilly hike. Climb Sam's Ridge to AT on Hazel Mountain and Meadow Springs Trails, then south to Corbin Cabin to descend Nicholson Hollow, ascend Hot Short and return down the Hazel River Trail. About 18 miles and 4000 foot climb. INFO: Chris Nolen (chrishiker@erols.com) 301/469-8931.

1 (Tuesday)

🔗 MEETING - Trail Patrol, 7:30 p.m.

2 (Wednesday)

🔗 MEETING - New Members (PATC), 7:30 p.m.

5 - 6 (Saturday - Sunday)

🔗 CABIN WORK TRIP - Tulip Tree Cabin
Shaver Hollow, VA

Yes we are still at it! Probably still working on the floor and baseboards and that ever present landscaping. Join us while you still can. Our work trips can't last much longer. We have milked this job about as long as we can. There will not be many more chances to get in on this outstanding work of love. INFO: Charlie Graf (cagraf@aol.com) 410/757-6053.

5 - 6 (Saturday - Sunday)

🔗 SHELTER WORK TRIP - New Construction
Bowie, MD

The logs have arrived at the worksite near Bowie, MD where we will construct a new shelter. When completed it will be disassembled and moved to Shockey's Knob on the Tuscarora Trail west of Winchester, Va. PATC provides tools. Bring your lunch, water, and personal first aid kit. INFO: Frank Turk (FrankTurk@aol.com) 301/249-8243.

7 (Monday)

🔗 CLASS - Backpacking 101 - Introductory Night
PATC HQ, Vienna, VA

7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. The BP101 class provides those persons, 18 years and older, who have moderate or no backpacking experience with the opportunity to expand their enjoyment of the outdoors through the practice of backpacking. The class provides basic instruction in equipment selection and use; information and techniques to enhance safety and comfort; and Leave No Trace methods to protect our fragile backcountry environment. It also provides more experienced backpackers an opportunity to hone or renew their skills, and adapt their backpacking techniques to the Leave No Trace wilderness ethic. After classroom instruction the class will take their new skills out in the field. Instructional Weekend: April 12 - 13. Backpacking trip: May 3 - 4 accompanied by experienced backpacking instructors. Fee: \$60.00 for PATC Members; \$75.00 for non-members. INFO: John Browne (jbrowne11@cox.net) 703/425-5645 or see ad on page 15.

FORECAST

8 (Tuesday)

👤 **HIKE - Vigorous Hikers**
Catoctin Trail, MD

20+ miles down the Catoctin Trail in MD from the Park Visitor Center to Gambrill State Park. Enjoy beautiful Cunningham Falls, invigorating climb of Bob's Hill, fording Hunting Creek, and on and on with fun stuff 'round every bend in the trail. INFO: Cliff Noyes (cliff.noyes@juno.com) 703/451-5181.

8 (Tuesday)

📅 **MEETING - PATC Council, 7:00 p.m.**

12 (Saturday)

📖 **CLASS - Arbor Day Reforestation Project (REI)**
Falls Church, VA

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Plant trees to celebrate Virginia's Arbor Day! Join the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust and REI for a reforestation project on an NVCT protected property in Falls Church. Learn about conservation easements and how you can help preserve and protect Northern Virginia's natural resources, and have a great time with fellow conservationists! The event will take place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 7545 Idylwood Road, Falls Church, 22043. A light lunch and refreshments will be provided. Please bring a shovel if you have one. Wear tennis shoes or boots, pants and a comfortable shirt. Park on Dunford Road and enter the property through the gate at the end of the road. INFO: www.nvct.org. Please RSVP to Jeannie McPherson (jmcpherson@nvct.org) 703/354-5093.

9 (Wednesday)

📅 **MEETING - Mountaineering Section, 8:00 p.m.**

9 (Wednesday)

📅 **MEETING - West Virginia Chapter**
Highacre House, Harpers Ferry, WV

12 - 13 (Saturday - Sunday)

👤 **CABIN WORK TRIP - Blackburn Trail Center**
Round Hill, VA

Continuing to build-out the inside of the carriage house. The long-range plan is to turn this space into a caretaker's apartment. Need help with dry-wall, finishing, electrical, plumbing and painting. Also need lots of unskilled labor with strong backs. We'll finish up Saturday evening and share in a group meal. Sunday breakfast will be provided for those spending the night. INFO: Chris Brunton 703/560-8070.

12 - 13 (Saturday - Sunday)

📖 **CLASS - Backpacking 101**
Prince William Forest Park, Triangle, VA

This instructional weekend follows the introductory night (see April 7 event listing). The BP101 Introductory BACKPACKING Course provides those persons, 18 years and older, who have moderate or no backpacking experience with the opportunity to expand their enjoyment of the outdoors through the practice of backpacking. The students will then use their new skills on an overnight backpacking trip May 3 - 4 accompanied by experienced backpacking instructors. INFO: John Browne (jbrowne11@cox.net) 703/425-5645 or see ad on page 15.

12 - 13 (Saturday - Sunday)

👤 **TRAIL WORK TRIP - Cadillac Crew**
Appalachian Trail, VA

The Crew plans to work on the AT north of Blackburn Trail center. Erosion control and tread work are needed. Bring water and a lunch for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Overnight at Blackburn Trail Center. INFO: Fran Keenan (outdoorsnow@cox.net) 703/938-3973 or Jon Rindt (jkrindt@erols.com) 540/635-6351.



15 (Tuesday)

👤 **HIKE - Vigorous Hikers**
Massanutten Mountain, VA

Camp Roosevelt Loop - Enjoy Kennedy Peak, loop back on Stephen's Trail to Duncan Knob rock scramble; 15 miles and 3300 ft climb. INFO: Chris Nolen (chrishiker@erols.com) 301/469-8931.

17 (Thursday)

👤 **HIKE - In-Between Hike**
Fraser Preserve, Great Falls, VA

Joint hike with Sierra Club MWROP. A moderate to fast 10 miles over variable terrain. From I-495, exit 44 west on Va. 193 (Georgetown Pike) for 7.5 mi. to Springvale Rd. Go right for 2.5 mi. to arrow, turn left then immediate right. At Allenwood Lane turn left and park. Bring water/lunch. Starts at 10 a.m. No pets. Rain/shine. INFO: Henri Comeau (henri-comeau@aol.com) 703/451-7965.

19 (Saturday)

📖 **CLASS - Mapping Software (REI)**
Bailey's Crossroads, VA

10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. This six-hour lecture, demonstration and exercise class will introduce participants to the features, benefits and operation of various mapping software systems. Instructor, Dimitri Tundra, will discuss the comparative advantages of the various systems for particular applications and teach participants to use the Topo! Mid-Atlantic software created by National Geographic. The second half of the class will include a field exercise to illustrate the practical use of the software and its features and applications. The class fee of \$75 includes all course materials and TOPO Interactive Mapping CD: Washington, DC/SNP Registration is limited. To register: REI 703/379-9400.

19 (Saturday)

👤 **TRAIL WORK TRIP**
Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Come join the Backpacker Magazine Get Out More Road Team at work with Central District trail overseers. The Road Team, Amy and Brent Anslinger, are Appalachian and Pacific Crest Trail veterans, now eager to learn about trail maintenance. Location to be announced. INFO: Cathie Cummins (cummins@cox.net) 703/631-7421.

19 - 20 (Saturday - Sunday)

👤 **CABIN WORK TRIP - Tulip Tree Cabin**
Shaver Hollow, VA

Even though we are nearing the end of this project I promise that there will be plenty of interesting and rewarding work to do. You will be proud to have contributed to this beautiful, outstanding example of Primitive American architecture. INFO: Charlie Graf (cagraf@aol.com) 410/757-6053.

19 - 20 (Saturday - Sunday)

👤 **SHELTER WORK TRIP - New Construction**
Bowie, MD

The logs have arrived at the worksite near Bowie, Md. where we will construct a new shelter. When completed it will be disassembled and moved to Shockey's Knob on the Tuscarora Trail west of Winchester, Va. PATC provides tools. Bring your lunch, water, and personal first aid kit. INFO: Frank Turk (FrankTurk@aol.com) 301/249-8243.

22 (Tuesday)

👤 **HIKE - Vigorous Hikers**
Old Dogwood Route, Appalachian Trail, VA

A really tough 35.7 miles down the AT from Snickers Gap (Rt 7) to the 4-H Center just north of SNP. This will be a dawn to dusk hike and requires an "oh-dark-hundred" meeting time to set up car shuttles and a couple of enroute water caches. When "The Dogwood" was inaugurated in 1986 fewer than half the starters finished, the median enroute time was over 12 hours, and most of us were younger then. We will pick up any tired, cold, discouraged dropouts at designated road crossing, but it may be late. INFO: Chris Nolen (chrishiker@erols.com) 301/469-8931 or Cliff Noyes (cliff.noyes@juno.com) 703/451-5181.

29 (Tuesday)

📅 **MEETING - Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group (Business meeting), 7:30 p.m.**

26 - 27 (Saturday - Sunday)

📖 **CLASS - Crosscut Saw Workshop**
Blackburn Trail Center, Round Hill, VA

Join SOT Liles Creighton and PATC district manager Dan Dueweke for a weekend of hands-on instruction in the proper use and care of one- and two-man crosscut saws and single-bit axes. You will have ample opportunity to practice your skills on an AT section. INFO: Dan Dueweke (danjan@fcc.net) 703/266-3248.

26 - 27 (Saturday - Sunday)

👤 **TRAIL Work Trip - Cadillac Crew**
Shaver Hollow, VA

Tulip Tree Cabin is scheduled to enter the cabin rental system this year. In preparation, the Crew is building a trail that connects to the SNP Crusher Ridge trailhead. Bring water and a lunch for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Overnight at Tulip Tree Cabin. INFO: Fran Keenan (outdoorsnow@cox.net) 703/938-3973 or Jon Rindt (jkrindt@erols.com) 540/635-6351.

29 (Tuesday)

👤 **HIKE - Vigorous Hikers**
Appalachian Trail, WV

Out and back from Keyes Gap (Rt 9) to PATC's Blackburn Trail Center. Let's take it easier this week - 12 miles and 2000' elevation gain - resting from the "Old Dogwood" last week and the upcoming Hike Across Maryland. INFO: Cliff Noyes (cliff.noyes@juno.com) 703/451-5181. ☐

NOTICES

NEW NOTICES

CALLING ALL LAWYERS, ACCOUNTANTS AND TAX ATTORNEYS. Want to give something of value to the Club, but don't want to swing a Pulaski? Virginia has enacted a new law that permits donors of conservation easements to sell the tax credit and reap a substantial cash infusion. PATC owns property in Virginia that would be eligible for such a cash rebate. The Club needs you to help write the proposals that would bring the Club tens of thousands of dollars that could be plowed back into our land acquisition fund for trail protection, cabin construction, or general expenses. Contact: Phil Paschall (bettycox@erols.com), or phone 540/882-3027. But hurry – before the State changes its mind.

FOUND CAMERA – Oct. 17, 2002, at Myron Glaser cabin, disposable camera with family pictures (including dog). Contact Stephanie at 301/270-5713 or georgeandsteph@erols.com.

HIKE IN SWITZERLAND'S BERNISSE REGION. Five hiking days in Murren, four hiking days in Grindelwald and two days in Zurich are included in this ten day trip which begins on Sep. 4, 2003. Approximate cost is \$2,000 and includes air, most of the ground transportation, lodging in 3 star hotels, half board for most days, breakfast every day, and travel insurance. For additional information call Donna Brother, 703/435-8315.

FOR SALE: Peter Limmer Backpacking Boots, size 9.5, excellent condition, best offer. Also, REI Goretex Rain pants, size M, Brand new condition, best offer. Call Howard Cohn at (w) 202/307-4363 or (h) 410/381-2436.

LOST AND FOUND

FOUND – MOTOROLA TALKABOUT T6220 on Pond Run Section, Tuscarora Trail. To claim, contact Glenn at 703/448-0140 or gpalatini@erols.com and provide unique identifying feature.

DONATIONS WANTED

LAPTOP AND COMPUTER PROJECTOR NEEDED: The PATC Officers, Staff and Committee Chairpersons need a laptop computer and computer projector which can be used to make presentations at conferences, meetings, and community presentations. Projection at 1024 X 768 desired. If you work for a corporation which might make such a donation, con-

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

PA HELP WANTED: A volunteer is needed to attend monthly Council meetings and report via e-mail on the meeting. Please contact Linda at PA@patc.net.

EVENING DESK VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to work the Sales or Information desks once or twice a month 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. We will train you. Call Sales and Info Coordinator Annetta DePompa at 410/535-5171.

DAYTIME SALES DESK VOLUNTEERS BADLY NEEDED every Thursday and/or Friday at the PATC Headquarters between Noon and 2 p.m. We will train you. Once or twice per month. If interested call Pat Fankhauser at 703/242-0693, Ext. 17, or e-mail at pfankhauser@patc.net or Maureen Estes at Ext. 19, or at mestes@patc.net.



ALSO NEEDED:

COOKS/WORK CREWS, WEAVER CABIN - Contact Thomas Jorgensen at Hairtheart@aol.com or 540/248-7009 (w) 540/456-4760 (h) .

PROJECT LEADERS / CONSTRUCTION Foremen, for info call Charlie Graf at: 410/757-6053 or e-mail cagraf@aol.com.

MEDICAL CHAIR VACANCY: If interested please contact Mickey McDermott at patcvolunteer@patc.net.

NOT INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS?

It takes a lot more than trail workers to keep the Club going! INFO: Wilson Riley, Wriley@patc.net or 703/242-0693, ext.11.

THE SALES OFFICE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS please contact the Sales Coordinator, Maureen Estes, by either calling headquarters at 703/242-0693, ext. 19, or by e-mail at mestes@patc.net.

NEEDED: PEOPLE to help plan and conduct our Club events. If you are willing, please contact Susan Nelson, Supervisor of Membership 703/243-7867, warnelson@erols.com or Pat Fankhauser at Club headquarters - 703/242-0693, Ext. 17, pfankhauser@patc.net.

tact Mike Sutherland at msutherland@cox.rr.com or 703/591-8330.

CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

Do You Want to Be a Landowner along the AT? And have a home in the woods! Are you in a position to become a Conservation Buyer through the Appalachian Trail Conference Land Trust? Our program matches conservation buyers – people like you – with people who are selling land along the AT. You locate your home or cabin out of sight from the Trail. All we ask is that you donate a conservation easement on the rest of the property. A conservation easement “runs with the land;” that is, no present or future owner can develop it! AND, because an easement is an irrevocable gift of a property right, you get a nice income tax deduction equal to the value of the easement. Contact Bob Williams, Director of Land Trust Programs, at bwilliams@appalachiantrail.org, or at 304/535-6331, or write to P.O. Box 807, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425.

TRAIL OVERSEER OPPORTUNITIES

PATC Overseers get discounts from the following merchants who support our volunteer programs: Blue Ridge Mountain Sports (Charlottesville, Tidewater) – 20%, Hudson Trail Outfitters (Metro DC) – 15%, The Trailhouse (Frederick, Md.) – 15%, Casual Adventures (Arlington, Va.) – 10%, Campmor (mail order via PATC HQ) – 10%, and Weasel Creek Outfitters in Front Royal – 10%. Check the back page of the PA for the latest trail, cabin, and shelter Overseer opportunities. All PATC members receive a 10% discount from Blue Ridge Mountain Sports. Be sure to have your membership ID or Overseer ID ready when you shop.

Notices are published free of charge for PATC members only. PATC cannot vouch for any of the advertised items. No commercial advertisement or personal notices unrelated to hiking will be accepted. Deadline for inclusion is the first day of the month preceding issuance of the newsletter. Notices will be run for 3 months, at the discretion of the editor, unless we are otherwise advised. □

Trailhead

Brrr! January was a cold month with some serious wind chill for those who were dedicated enough to get out. Not to worry, the stuff on the trails from winter winds, ice damage, and blowdowns will still be there when the Ides of March beckon you to come forth and do good things. Besides it may be warm enough to pack the tread back into place after the frost heave. Your early trips are also a good time to freshen up faded blazes on standing trees and replace those which were on trees that didn't make it through the winter.

District Managers and crew leaders are reminded that the semi-annual District Managers meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 20, at Vienna Headquarters. Time is 6:30 p.m. for grub and 7 p.m. for serious stuff. Ya'll be there.

Annual PATC/SNP Trails Meeting

On Jan. 25, SNP and PATC trails communities met to discuss the year that was and the year to be. Lacking a natural disaster (ice storm, flood, hurricane) to contend with, much progress was made during the past year by Overseers and trail crews. Besides regular trail maintenance, some areas neglected in the past such as Broad Hollow received attention. PATC contributed close to 10,000 hours in the 2002 season.

SNP Backcountry/Wilderness Manager Steve Bair advised the group that the SNP budget for trails is facing hard times in the years to come. SNP may have to limit its efforts to maintain high-use trails. This may result in PATC having to provide additional support in the future.

SNP has constructed tent pads near AT shelters in the Park during the past two years to limit disturbance to sensitive areas. Steve reported that feedback from backpackers has been very positive. Although some prefer to stay in the huts, many appreciate the privacy and freedom from mice. So far the project is considered a success.

Shawn Green announced that SNP has approved the extension of Entry Run Trail into the Park. The extension now avoids areas where there were historical or archeological concerns. When completed, Entry Run Trail will be a new public trailhead into the Park through the PATC Per Lee tract (home of John's Rest and Rosser Lamb cabins) connecting to the Pocosin Fire Road. The Blue and White and Cadillac Crews have been working on the trail for the past two years and hope to finish this year.

Dates for SNP summer crews and workshops were finalized, with a notable change. Instead of back-to-back weeks in each district, there will be a crew week in May followed by a crew week in August-September. This change allows crews to help prepare trails for the hiking season as well as tackle major trail projects. See the front page of January's *PA* for crew week dates. Sign up now!

Mal Fordham discussed his plans for the 2003 Ridge Runner/Trail Patrol program. An improved reporting system and better coordination between the patrols can be expected. The District Managers applauded the approach, which should allow maintainers to quickly respond to trail problems.

Karen Lutz from the ATC Mid-Atlantic office reported that a general chainsaw certification agreement between the Forest Service, Park Service, ATPO, and ATC continues to be discussed. New rules and requirements could impose a burden on volunteers. The con-



Photo by Ed McKnew

Mosby District Co-Manager, Lloyd Parriott assesses beaver damage to a tree about to breach U.S. government fence at Front Royal CRC. The tree was safely taken down with use of grip hoist.

sensus was that SNP and PATC will continue the current certification process, which has effectively met our local needs.

A number of trail projects and relocations were discussed. AT relocations having priority include bypass of the communications towers on Hogback Mountain and getting the trail off administrative roads near Range View Cabin, Pass Mountain, and South River. Other projects include an AT connector at Rock Spring parking and a better crossing of the Skyline Drive for the Crusher Ridge Trail.

From the Supervisor of Trails

March comes in like a cold shower and goes out with downed trees and wet soil that promises lots of weeds. Ah, spring, to all District Managers, crew leaders, and Overseers. Prepare thyself. Sharpen tools, oil handles, ready saws, and get off the couch. Reports to date indicate conditions aren't too stable on some trails; blowdowns and erosion being major worries. This report was written in the frigid wastes of January, and if it stays this cold through February, many will not have had a chance to visit their trails. Please get out ASAP and assess damage (or, if none, pat your trail section on the back). If you haven't considered signing up for a week-long trail crew, please do so. Work trips will be held in both spring and fall this year.

Doyles Crew

On a cold January weekend, Cathy Doyles, Overseer for half of the Sugarloaf Trail, noted that a lot of trees were down on the trail. She set up a work trip with the Single Volunteers of Washington, D.C., to cut the downed trees on Jan. 12. Eighteen answered the call. The group met at the base of Sugarloaf Mountain and then went to Mt. Ephraim Road where it divided into two parties. One party went right (with a chainsaw-certified PATC operator), the other went left (with handsaws, under the leadership of a PATC member). By a stroke of luck, all large trees were to the right. They found lots of ice damage and lots of trees and branches down. All were cleared by the group's stalwart effort. Liles Creighton, Maryland Metro DM, thanks Cathy for her initiative and quick response.

Walt's Plans (Not Notes)

Walt Smith, retired President and new DM for the Tuscarora Trail Central District, has some ambitious plans for this coming season.

See Trailhead, page 15

Trailhead, from page 14

He has already alerted the Cadillac Crew, but the fun is open to all. Projects include:

- Open up new High Rock Trail (2.3 miles);
- Relocate 0.25 miles Tuscarora north of Lucas Woods in Farmer-Lockhart tract;
- Relocate 0.25 miles Tuscarora on top Sleepy Creek Mountain, establishing ORV barriers and improving sideslope construction;
- Establish public trailhead and 0.3 miles access trail on recently donated Biby tract on Great North Mountain's Shawnee Land.

If you are interested in participating in a project, contact Walt (e-mail: wsmith@visuallink.com) or look for Cadillac Crew Tuscarora work trips in the Forecast section of the *PA*.

Harvesting Ailanthus

It actually got above freezing for a few hours mid-day on the Cadillac Crew's work trip to Cliff's House in late January. For several years the crew has been harvesting the Ailanthus trees (invasive forest weed) that have encroached on the native trees and blocked views. Sprouts from the stumps of previously cut trees can grow more than 10 feet in one year. It seems a never-ending task, but we almost have them under control. (Ailanthus makes a quick, hot fire, with little ash, and can be burned green.) The crew is also working on a trail (more like a steep path) from behind Cliff's House to the

Council Fire, from page 2

repair Rock Spring Cabin. Reed Engle, with SNP, will examine the cabin in the spring to determine necessary renovations.

Membership

As of the Jan. 7, 2003 membership report, the Club has 7,012 members. Supervisor of Membership Susan Nelson reported receiving an inquiry from a Club member about PATC license plates. She is investigating the possibility for the states of Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. From preliminary research, Susan said that the Club would receive more value from the publicity generated than from income.

Other Business

Dave Pierce, Chair of the Maps Committee, plans an extensive revision of Map #13. He is contacting Club members who live in the area, asking for volunteers to help hike all trails listed on the map.

ridgeline that provides a view of Naked Creek valley. By the way, Bill Ford evoked a seldom-used rule to win Saturday night's Hearts game. Wait till next time Bill – that black queen will visit you many times.

Earlier in January, the crew enjoyed a cold but clear weekend at Blackburn Trail Center. Chris Brunton needed help cleaning out the drainage ditches along the access road to Blackburn. The tool that worked the best – a pitchfork (manure fork). Those who stayed for Sunday lunch received a special treat: pizza made to order from scratch by Phil and Kimberly Abruzzese. The general comment – better than any pizza you can buy.

Peer Trail Closed

Peer Trail connected the Wilson Cove area to the Tuscarora Trail near the Sugar Knob cabin on Great North Mountain (Map F). Property owners near Wilson Cove have closed the portion of the trail on their property. Likewise, the Forest Service has discontinued its support for the portion of the trail on National Forest lands. Alternatives might be Pond Run Trail, Racer Camp Hollow Trail, Little Sluice Mountain Trail, Little Stoney Creek Trail, and Mill Mountain Trail. The most direct approach to Sugar Knob Cabin is Little Stoney Creek Trail – a distance of three miles.

Please send any interesting tale, technical advice, individual or group accomplishments, and trail maintenance questions to Trailhead, c/o Jon Rindt, 621 Skyline Forest Drive, Front Royal, VA 22630 or to jkrindt@erols.com. □

Peter Pennington, Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group Chair, informed Council that the state of Virginia is requiring criminal background checks for members of search and rescue teams. Whether a \$15 charge for each background check will have to be paid is still being determined.

Steve Brickel, Chair of the Ski Touring section, reported the section was having a difficult time posting trips on the Web site, making it hard to attract participants. Steve reported that he would retire at the end of this season, along with the Trip Coordinator and the Upslope Editor.

The December Council meeting was attended by nine Club officers, 10 committee Chairs, two chapter representatives, two section representatives, two other members, and one staff person. In addition, the Appalachian Trail Conference sent three representatives and one guest. □

—Georgeann Smale, Secretary

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club - Trail Patrol presents

BACKPACKING 101

An Introductory BACKPACKING Course

The BP101 class provides those persons, 18 years and older, who have moderate or no backpacking experience with the opportunity to expand their enjoyment of the outdoors through the practice of backpacking. The class provides basic instruction in equipment selection and use, information and techniques to enhance safety and comfort, and Leave No Trace methods to protect our fragile backcountry environment. It also provides more experienced backpackers an opportunity to hone or renew their skills and adapt their backpacking techniques to the Leave No Trace wilderness ethic. The students will then use their new skills on an overnight backpacking trip accompanied by experienced backpacking instructors.

INTRODUCTION NIGHT:

Monday, April 7, 2003,
7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

PATC Headquarters, Vienna, Va.

INSTRUCTIONAL WEEKEND:

April 12-13, 2003
Prince William Forest Park
Triangle, Va.

BACKPACKING TRIP:

May 3-4, 2003

Fee: \$60.00 for PATC Members;
75.00 for Non-Members

For more information, please contact:

John Browne, 703/425-5645,
e-mail: jbrown11@cox.net

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TRAIL, SHELTER and CORRIDOR OVERSEERS/MONITORS WANTED

SHELTER OVERSEERS

CONTACT FRANK TURK, 301/249-8243
 E-mail: frankturk@aol.com
 Devil's Racecourse Shelter – Northern VA
 Rod Hollow Shelter – Northern VA
 Dicks Dome Shelter – Northern VA
 Annapolis Rocks Campground Host – MD
 Pogo Campground Host – MD

Trail Overseer Openings. Contact the District Manager for the section that interests you.

Harpers Ferry / Ashby Gap AT & BB – Map 7 & 8

CALL CHRIS BRUNTON, 703/560-8070
 E-mail: trailbossbtc@msn.com
 Loudoun Heights Blue Trail [lower]
 Loudoun Hts. Orange Trail to Rte. 340 (2.6 miles)
 Rod Hollow Shelter Trails
 AT to Rod Hollow Shelter (0.2 mile)

Ashby Gap / Linden AT & BB – Map 8 (Rte. 50 to Rte. 638)

CALL ED MCKNEW, 540/622-6004
 E-mail: emcknew@aol.com
 Dicks Dome Shelter Trail
 AT to shelter (0.2 miles)

SNP North District Appalachian Trail – Map 9

CALL JOHN MCCREA, 610/352-9287
 E-mail: mcreajf@aol.com
 Co-overseers needed on AT sections

SNP North BB - Map 9

CALL DICK DUGAN, 703/836-0391
 E-mail: rdugan@bellatlantic.net
 Snead Farm Loop Trail
 Dickey Ridge Trail to Snead Farm Road (0.7 mile)
 Thompson Hollow Trail
 Dickey Ridge Trail to Snead Farm Road (0.7 mile)

SNP Central Blue-Blazed [north end] – Map 10

CALL DAN DUEWEKE AT 703/266-3248
 E-mail: danjan@fcc.net
 Wilderness overseers needed- adventure guaranteed.
 Catlett Mountain Trail
 Hannah Run Trail to Hazel Mountain Trail (1.2 miles)

SNP South Blue-Blazed – Map 11

CALL PETE GATJE, 434/361-1309
 E-mail: pjgatje@aol.com
 Rocky Mountain Run
 Big Run Portal Trail to Rocky Mt.-Brown Mt. Tr. (2.7 miles)
 Rockytop Trail – Co-Overseer [upper]
 Big Run Loop Trail to Lewis Peak Trail (2.2 miles)
 Doyles River & Cabin Trail – Co-Overseer
 Parking to trail junction and cabin (0.1 & 2.2 miles)

Tuscarora South – Map F, G, 9

CALL RICK RHOADES, 540/477-3247
 E-mail: Rrhoades@shentel.net
 Tuscarora Trail
 Rock marker to Massanutten Trail (1.5 miles)
 Tuscarora Trail
 Fetzter Gap to Maurertown (5.7 miles)

Massanutten North – Map G

CALL ED BRIMBERG, 703/430-6481
 E-mail: brimberg@cox.net
 Massanutten Trail
 Kennedy Peak Trial to Camp Roosevelt (3.3 miles)
 Massanutten Trail
 Bear Trap Trail to Peters Mill Run Trail (1.6 miles)
 Massanutten Connector Trail
 Massanutten Trail to US 211 (1.8 miles)

Massanutten South – Map H

CALL DON WHITE, 804/795-2914
 E-mail: whitedh@attbi.com
 Massanutten Mt. South Trail
 TV Tower to Pitt Spring (3.40 miles)
 Massanutten Mt. South Trail
 Pitt Spring to Morgan Run Trail (3.3 miles)

Great North Mountain – Map F

CALL HOP LONG, 301/942-6177
 E-mail: theFSLongs@erols.com
 Gerhard Shelter Trail
 Tuscarora Trail to Vances Cove (1.5 miles)

Bull Run Occoquan Trail

CALL DAVE FELLERS, 703/560-2171
 E-mail: Fellers_2000@excite.com
 Bull Run Occoquan Trail
 Route 28 to Little Rocky Run (1.5 miles)

Volunteers Appointed – January

Corridor Monitors

John & Pam Byrne
 Wade Walters

Sand Spring
 Sawmill Spring

Trail Overseers

Sherri Fickel & Kevin Kraditor
 Warren Tracy
 Dick Peacock

Tuscarora/Overall Run Trail - Thompson Hollow/Overall Run Jct. to Mathews Arm Trail
 Massanutten Trail - 7-Bar-None Trail to Bear Trap Trail
 Lewis Peak Trail



The Potomac Appalachian

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