



The Potomac Appalachian

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

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Cabins Availability Chart Now on the Web!

Want that dream date in one of PATC's 33 cabins, but are too frustrated hearing a busy signal? Relief is on its way!

PATC's rejuvenated IT Committee attacked this long-festering problem and last Feb. 1 presented renters with a new option. The PATC Web site (www.patc.net) has a new link to a "Rental Cabins Availability" page. The page is automatically updated each day after business hours to provide a "snapshot" of cabin availability. Presented in a weekly format, the Internet user can scroll into the future and see whether a particular cabin is taken or not. We hope this reduces cabin reservation phone calls since people can now see if the desired cabin is available before calling.

Potential renters can also browse other patc.net pages to find summary information about each PATC cabin or, better yet, purchase through the Web site the PATC cabins

booklet (\$5.20 for members) that provides further details.

The Rental Cabins Availability Web page is the brainchild and work of PATC volunteer Matt Novinger with sage advice from fellow PATC'er Matt Van Mater. These two are giving their time to help improve PATC Web service, and an improved cabins availability page was the lowest hanging fruit.

Matt Novinger, who loves to hike, "wants to give something back." A good way to start was by helping other members understand our cabins' status. He hopes future improvements are done to the cabins page, but the next major job is to clean up and update various PATC databases constructed in the early 1990s to be more friendly for Web usage in the 21st century. His real dream is making PATC managers responsible for their own PATC Web area, so changes are more timely and better meet their needs. Today, only a small number of people can

make Web changes, and – being volunteer based – demand for change far outstrips available volunteer resources.

Since PATC is a service club, the IT Committee hopes others can "help the cause" by using their own expertise to improve the Web site. In the past, PATC paid outside professionals to construct a rough foundation for its Web site. The results cost money and became quickly outdated. Now, in a world of "open source coding," it's easier for more volunteers to become involved to help improve the site.

So check out the new cabins availability site by using the home page link. If you have comments or suggestions, send them to IT Committee Chair Steve Sharp at SteveITPlanning@comcast.net. Better yet, tell Steve about your own IT experience and help the committee attack its many other Web site needs. □

—Bruce Glendenning

7th Annual Blue & White Crew Trail Maintainers Workshop

*June 3-4, 2006,
Pinnacle Research Station*

The workshop, sponsored by the Blue & White Crew, in cooperation with SNP, is scheduled for June 3-4 (National Trails Day) and will be held at the Pinnacle Research Station, in the Central District of SNP. The workshop is designed to teach new and prospective trail maintainers the basic skills, as well as provide training in advanced areas of trail design, construction, and maintenance.

Details are available on the Blue & White Crew Web site at www.blueandwhitecrew.org/Calendar/June06.php or by calling: Kerry Snow 301/345-9408. □

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Council Fire

President Tom Johnson chaired PATC's regularly scheduled Council meeting on Feb. 14, 2006, at Club Headquarters. Jim Denham stated that the fire hazard issue at Johnson Cabin had been resolved. PATC's map production committee, chaired by Dave Pierce, has to develop a new production capability because the material needed by the old process is no longer available. An ad hoc Graphical Information System (GIS) Committee has been established, headed by Alan Day, to research alternatives and make recommendations to ExCom and Council. This committee, a sub-committee of IT, is gathering mapping requirements and capabilities and will involve many aspects of PATC activity. Donations chair Susan Nelson is working on grant applications to support mapping software acquisition. The GIS Committee wants to develop the relationship with James Madison University. Tom announced that a Constitution/Bylaws review committee had met prior to the Council meeting and would address a number of PATC governance issues. The goal is to present proposed changes for a membership vote at the November annual meeting. Robin Donnelly is the new SMRG chair. She succeeds Alex McLellan, who is continuing as publications chair.

Treasurer Ric Francke provided the 2005 year-end budget report and emphasized that PATC needs a sales chair to promote PATC sales items as a revenue source (see marketing article on page 7 of this issue). PATC has

received \$5K from ATC and an additional \$5K from Blue Ridge Center for the Bears Den working capital fund. The PATC year-end fund drive has resulted in \$15,055 from 120 donors. PATC has received \$135K from the sale of tax credits on Meadows Tract that will be credited to the Liquidity Fund of the endowment; it is anticipated that these funds will be used for Tuscarora Trail land acquisition.

Trails and Lands

Vice President for Operations Bruce Glendening referred members to the new Web page on the PATC Web site that shows cabin availability as of the opening of business each day. Wes Allen from Charlottesville has volunteered to be the PATC Web designer; Wes' Charlottesville location is not a factor because the work can be done over the Internet. Supervisor of Trails Liles Creighton announced that volunteers had come forward to clean up the Weverton parking lot and are preparing a management plan for the area. ATC and ATPO view Weverton as an access trail to the AT and have been concerned about making a good impression. Walt Smith reported there has been an appraisal of the Nicholson Tract land. Informal negotiations has begun to buy this property for a work crew base on the Tuscarora Trail. Council approved a residential utility right-of-way on the Farmer-Lockhart Tract with a stipulation that this easement have a restriction to limit the number of residences (about four residences were planned). The landowners that will be

served have been very supportive of PATC trail issues in the area. The Bears Den ad hoc committee has been upgraded to a standing committee of Council. A new cooperative agreement supporting PATC's running the cabins located in the SNP has been approved. The Sales Committee has been renamed the Marketing Committee in an effort to jump-start this moribund committee. The committee has the potential of significantly increasing PATC revenue by active promotion of PATC-logoed items. Vice President for Volunteerism Lee Shaffer has drafted an article to recruit a Chair and promote increased sales (see marketing article on page 7).

Supervisor of Membership Georgeann Smale reported that membership remains at 6,500 members. She also provided an analysis of the cost of providing member services as the basis of a dues increase. There is some ambiguity as to the definition of a member service. The dues increase proposal may be deferred pending the Constitution/Bylaws review announced at the beginning of the meeting. Supervisor of Information, Education and Activities Jane Thompson made a presentation at the Feb. 4 Penn Laurel Girl Scout leadership conference. Many of the audience were interested in the Tuscarora Trail and expressed interest in participating in its construction. Trail Patrol Chair Katrina Hedlesky has prepared a one-page calendar of 2006 events and classes planned to promote participation. □

—Alan Day, Secretary

HOW TO CONTACT US: HEADQUARTERS, SALES, CABIN RESERVATIONS, AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Address: 118 Park Street, S.E., Vienna, VA 22180

Phone #: 703/242-0315

24-hr. Activities Tape #: 703/242-0965

To receive an information packet: Extension 10

Club President (leave a message), Tom Johnson: Extension 40

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

and Thursday and Friday 12 noon to 2 p.m.

Facsimile #: 703/242-0968

Club e-mail: info@patc.net

World Wide Web URL: www.patc.net

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Potomac Appalachian

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Club Officers and chairs contact info:

www.patc.net/about/contact.html

or call the main club phone number.

Contact list published twice annually in the PA.

Tom's Trail Talk - ATPO

If you've ever been to Harpers Ferry and had occasion to visit Jefferson Rock you might remember the walk back toward town. Those concave rock steps, worn down by thousands of tourists, keep your eyes trained downward, and you probably didn't look off to your left at some old, red brick, 19th century government buildings. One of them has a small wooden sign that you undoubtedly missed. It is the headquarters of the Appalachian Trail Park Office.

Since the passage of the National Trails Act of 1968, the National Park Service (NPS) has been the steward of the AT. Created by volunteers, the AT had become too important an enterprise to be subjected to the vagaries of development pressures and private land owners. And so, in 1968, the federal government created the longest, skinniest national park in the country. It took many years for the Feds to protect the entire trail, and in fact the job is not yet quite finished. (Of the 2,175 miles, about seven miles are still not protected.)

In the beginning, the park office that was responsible for securing the trail was called the Appalachian Trail Project Office, because it was a project. It is now a park (a "unit" of the Park Service) rather than a project, with a regular staff that manages the trail. It makes its headquarters only a mile or so from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), and the two organizations enjoy a very close relationship. ATC is the private partner, and ATPO is the public entity.

The park manager is Pam Underhill. Pam joined the Department of the Interior in 1977, after running a pottery shop in Harpers Ferry. She worked in the Department of the Interior legal counsel office, and two years later she joined the AT Project Office. After stints as a realty specialist, planner, and environmental protection specialist for the AT Project, she became park manager in 1995.

Despite being responsible for a park almost 2,175 miles long, she has only nine staff members who are expected to handle all trail affairs for the federal government. There is Ranger Bob Gray, formerly known as the Lone Ranger because he was the only law enforcement ranger for the entire park. (He has recently been joined by a second ranger, Todd Remaley, who hangs his Park Service hat in Boiling Springs, co-located with the Mid-Atlantic office of ATC.) There is Pete Irvine, who is a Forest Service ranger on liaison duty with ATPO.



Folks, meet Pam Underhill and her staff. Left to right: Rita Hennessy, Dave Reus, Pete Irvine, Angela Walters, Kent Schwarzkopf, Bob Gray, Pam Underhill, Todd Remaley, Casey Reese, and Don Owen.

Don Owen is one of the staffers with whom we deal frequently. Don is responsible for environmental compliance, cultural resource programs, and the federal land acquisition/corridor design for the ATPO. After previous stints with the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management in Colorado, he began work as a realty specialist on the AT in 1985. He and other ATPO staffers are also proud members of PATC.

Rita Hennessy, outdoor recreation specialist, has been with ATPO for nine years. Rita started with the NPS in 1989 in Zion National Park, and has also worked at Bryce Canyon National Park, the National Mall, and the Department of the Interior.

Dave Reus has helped us on trail condition assessments, while Casey Reese is their graphical information system specialist, and someone who can give us advice as we get into the GIS world. Kent Schwarzkopf is the natural resources specialist, and works closely with Bob Pickett, the club naturalist, in order to identify and protect rare and endangered species along the trail. Angela Walters is their administrative specialist, personally responsible for keeping Pam organized.

The Delegation Agreement signed between ATC and NPS in 1984 (just renewed for another 10 years in 2004) gives trail maintenance responsibility to ATC, and ATC, in turn, delegates most of that action to clubs like PATC. But the federal government

reserved five functions: land acquisition, law enforcement, surveys, compliance with federal statutes and administrative regulations, and issuance of special use permits. That, and maintaining a vibrant relationship with thousands of volunteers up and down the trail, keep Pam and her staff busy more than full-time. □

—Tom Johnson

Chainsaw Course April 22 -23, 2006 Shenandoah National Park Headquarters

The chainsaw course previously scheduled for Greenbrier State Park will be held at the Headquarters of SNP. Bunks and camping will be available at Tulip Tree Cabin Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. First Aid and CPR classes will be taught each day at 3:00 p.m. The First Aid and CPR classes will cost \$68.00, and students need to register with that instructor by April 14. For more information, contact Heidi Forrest (HForrest@patc.net). □

What Have You Done for PATC Lately?

Did you know that PATC has almost 7,000 members, yet only about 1,500 members actually volunteer? Since PATC is founded on the principle of volunteerism, that's not too great a track record.

Did you also know that PATC has just five paid employees? All the rest of the jobs that are needed to keep the club up and running are done by unpaid volunteers. These are people like yourself – they have jobs, families, and responsibilities other than PATC, yet they give their time and talents to the club on a regular basis. As a result, PATC is one of the largest trail clubs in the East.

In 2004, PATCers logged 84,000 hours of volunteer time. This work was performed on trails, cabins, shelters, at PATC HQ, and at numerous public events in the area. The club maintains over 1,000 miles of trail in Virginia, Maryland, D.C., and Pennsylvania. If you don't want to drive to the mountains, you can volunteer in your own backyard!

If you haven't been out on a work trip lately, haven't volunteered at the cabins desk, haven't led a hike, haven't represented PATC at a community event, then YOU ARE REALLY MISSING OUT ON SOME FUN! Yes, fun! If you read any portion of the newsletter each month, you realize how much fun PATCers have on those trail work trips. Sure, they work hard at clearing the trail, especially when there are blowdowns involved, but the camaraderie is evident as they work together for a common cause. There's a reason why the trails under PATC's management are the best maintained – it's because we have the best trail workers!

You don't have to look hard in this month's PA to find a few things you can do to help further the PATC cause. If you want a break from the trail, you can represent PATC at a fair, festival, or other celebration in the area. ☐

—Linda Rudy

Family Weekend at Bears Den

There are still a few spaces left, sign up now!

Date

May 6-7, 2006. Activities will be scheduled noon Saturday to noon Sunday. Allow an hour or two on either end if you would like to hike in to the Center from Rt. 7. Shuttles will be available for gear.

Location

Bear's Den Trail Center, Bluemont, VA. About an hour's drive from DC.

Activities

The fun will include kid-friendly hikes, nature crafts and games. Special guests will give presentations on raptors (with live birds) and bats, using bat detectors.

Lodging

Three options based on your preferences, available on a first-come first-serve basis.

- Bunks in communal rooms inside lodge, with electricity and flush toilets.
- Bunks and beds in cottage, with electricity and privy access.
- Camping, (bring your own gear) with privy access.

Cost

Fee includes meals (lunch, dinner, and snacks Saturday, breakfast Sunday), lodging and activities, except for T-shirts which are \$5 additional. Lead an activity and knock off \$10.

	Lodge	Cottage	Camping	Sat. only
Adults, 18+	\$30	\$25	\$20	\$10
Kids, 4-17	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$5
Kids under 4	Free	Free	Free	Free

Volunteers Needed

We are still looking for volunteers to lead games, crafts and hikes or to manage the kitchen. Everyone is encouraged to pitch in with meal preparation and general cleanup.

Questions

Contact Anne Regan at anne.c.regan@verizon.net or 703/689-3883

Registration

To register please fill out the form below and send to: Anne Regan at 1016 Charlton Place, Herndon, VA 20170. Enclose check made out to Anne Regan. (If your lodging choices are no longer available I will contact you and adjust your rate, or you may cancel your reservation for a refund if the available options are not suitable.) ☐

Bears Den Family Weekend 2006 Registration Form

Name _____ Phone _____

Home address _____

E-mail address _____

Lodging Preference (Cabin, Cottage, Camping, or Saturday only) _____

Weekend Fee: (See chart above for fees based on lodging options)

_____ Adults @ \$ _____ each Adult total \$ _____

_____ Kids 4-17 @ \$ _____ each Kid total \$ _____

_____ Kids under 4 (free, but let us know they are coming)

T-shirt # _____ @ \$5 each T-shirt total \$ _____

Family grand total \$ _____

T-shirt sizes (please indicate sizes needed below: Adult S, M, L, XL; Youth S (6-8), M (10-12), L (14-16); Toddler 2T, 3T, 4T) _____

Mail completed form along with check for grand total to: Anne Regan at 1016 Charlton Place, Herndon, VA 20170.

Memories of a Past PATC

As we grow older, memories tend to become less clear. Until three years ago I checked my writings and notes and other records when I needed to determine facts. Now blind, I am unable to do that. In this article the names and places I cite are ones I am sure of; the dates, less certain, are indicated by the wording of the text.

In 1954 Lawrence Gage, president of PATC, sponsored the membership applications of half a dozen Wanderbird Hikers for entry into PATC. I was one of them. The PATC we joined was neither the original club nor the one of today.

Not one of the men who founded PATC in 1927 was now active. Even Myron Avery, president for almost a quarter of a century, was serving as chairman of ATC. I think he then resigned that in 1954. Fred Blackburn, the president previous to Larry Gage, had taken the job of ATC secretary and spent a day or two each week in PATC's basement where ATC had its rent-free offices. Here also the half dozen PATC volunteers worked each weekday evening doing conference office work. The woman who handled finances had worked there from the early 1960s to the 1970s. Rorence Nichol was the long time editor of the Appalachian Trailway News.

The AT was completed in 1933, and the first man to walk the entire length was, of course, Myron Avery. The first thru-hiker to hike the length of the trail in one year did it in 1946 after release from the Army. At that time perhaps a hundred ambitious hikers each year began the hike but not more than three or four completed it.

Early Hiking Adventures

One of my first hikes with PATC was a work hike to open a trail in SNP that paralleled the AT on the eastern slope to connect two trails going downhill to the valley from the AT. It was the last trail in the park to be reopened.

The first PATC-AT long-distance hike was held one Sunday a month to cover the AT section from Rockfish Gap to Pine Grove Furnace. The second long-distance hike began at the Susquehanna River and went south to Rockfish Gap. A third series in the late 1960s, early '70s, began at Delaware Water Gap and ended well south of Rockfish Gap. I've forgotten just where.

In Celebration of PATC's History

We also hiked off the AT. I led a hike over an abandoned trail built on a ridge east of the Blue Ridge that the Civilian Conservation Corps had built. Others led hikes west of the Blue Ridge Mountains. In the 1970s the George Washington National Forest asked us to explore the Massanutten for trail possibilities.

We traveled to our hikes in Red Beauty, a truck that four PATC members made available. It had three benches the length of the bed and would hold about 30 people. Its driver was usually Benny Gayheart but others did drive. On overnight trips when gear had to be stowed, the truck passenger limit was about 10-12.

There were usually more than two overnight trips a season. Almost every year the club spent a week hiking elsewhere on the AT. In my time it was in New England. One year we spent a week hiking from a camp in the White Mountains, and the next week four of us



Paula (left), pictured informally with other hikers; a setting typical for her outdoor habits.

backpacked the Mahoosic Gorge. PATC had all the cooking gear needed for two dozen campers, but it had not been used for years.

Red Beauty did not go on the more distant hikes we took. Once we spent a week hiking in Colorado's Long Peak at 11,000 feet. These off-site PATC hikes occurred in the 1960s, '70s and a few in the '80s.

Hiking Overseas

I led the first overseas hike in 1960, taking 15 hikers for PATC and the Wanderbirds to the Jotunheim in Norway. Our Norwegian arrangements were made by Liv Helset who had hiked with me in Washington when she was with the Norwegian Embassy. Our next foreign hike was in the Canadian Rockies near Mt. Assiniboine. Some walked, some rode in by horseback. In the late 1970s, early 80s, I led hikes in Europe to the Austrian Alps, the mountains of Greece and Crete, and to the vineyards of Portugal. Elsie Scott Kinsey took hikers each summer to Britain to hike with the Ramblers.

When I joined PATC it had no more than 700-800 members. The club kept growing despite the need for sponsorship. When PATC was founded, its constitution required new members to be sponsored by existing members. The club dropped the sponsorship requirement sometime in the 1960s.

Although I still went on the nine-day hikes on my vacations, I became inactive in PATC in 1961. As the result of sexual discrimination at my workplace (they hired a young man, had me train him, and then made him head of my unit), I was gone within a month to a job with IBM in upstate New York. That meant I missed out on PATC's efforts to get a National Scenic Trail Bill passed to protect the AT.

In January 1961 I was living in a room in Endicott, N.Y., while my mother was in Falls Church selling our house and preparing to move north to live with me. I began hiking with the Triple Cities Hiking Club (TCHC – the Triple stands for the cities of Binghamton, Endicott, and Vestal), whose members would meet at 1:30 Sunday afternoon and still hike 10-12 miles, we were so close to hiking territory. I'll tell only of one series of hikes they did.

See History, page 6



Hiker's Notebook

Common Name: Eastern Tent Caterpillar, Armyworm

Scientific Name: Malacosoma Americanum (Genus from the Greek *malaco*, a prefix for soft and *soma* meaning body for its lack of chitinous structure).

The Eastern Tent Caterpillar is at the very apex of the Lepidoptera for its almost apian social practices, centered on the construction, maintenance, and utilization of the silken mass called a tent. Its life cycle follows the four-stage metamorphosis that is characteristic of butterflies and moths: egg, larva, pupa and adult. The eggs are laid by female adult moths in the late summer in the crotch of a tree.

In the larval stage, the Eastern Tent Caterpillar has evolved a relatively complex social behavior. The cohort of a single egg cache stays together at the crotch where it started and proceeds to erect the tent, starting with a foundation of a few silken threads. They egress from the tent en masse three times during each 24-hour period in search of food. These expeditions occur just before dawn, at mid-afternoon, and at dusk. Each foray consists of a set pattern of adding a layer of silk to the tent, traveling to a feeding site, one behind the other along a set route, and returning to the tent for protection until the next iteration. They are called armyworms in some areas due to this mass movement.

The primary function of the tent is thermo-regulation, the maintenance of the temperature needed for the quantized process of growth by molting. Once the tent is erected, it operates in a greenhouse-like manner, trapping the heat of the morning sun.

The only birds that regularly feed on the Eastern Tent Caterpillar are the Cuckoo and the Blue Jay. The others are deterred by the caterpillar's cyanide-laden juices derived from eating the leaves of the cherry tree. The adult moths emerge about two weeks after pupation. Mating, oviposition and death generally occur that same day. □

—William Needham

Visit the Hiker's Notebook Web site at: www.mwrop.org/W_Needham/h_notebook.html

History, from page 5

Did you know that Pennsylvania's northern borders are marked with boundary stones? Yes, just like the markers of the Mason Dixon line, which PATC on rare occasions has hiked along. The northern boundary is also marked every mile with a marble stone with NY on its north side, PA on the south – and smaller stones at each road crossing the border. TCHC planned to hike from the Delaware River east to Lake Erie in the western end. It was almost all open country walking through farmland and forests. There were few towns or villages until the Susquehanna turns south. We never got that far because a bigger project took over – the Finger Lakes Trail.

New Trails Built

The idea of long-distance trails was popular in the 1950s. The Buckeye Trail circling Ohio was built. Volunteers in South Carolina or Georgia were talking of a trail east from the AT to the sea. In 1956 PATC presented to the AT Conference the need for an alternate AT to take off from the AT and Shenandoah Park going west and then north on the Appalachian ridge beyond Virginia and Pennsylvania's Great Valley to return to the AT north of Harrisburg.

The growth of vacation homes in the mountains, the new landowners' dislike of hikers near their properties, and the expansion of Washington, Maryland, and Pennsylvania cities all suggested that parts of the AT would be lost. In Virginia, between where the AT left the Blue Ridge and Harpers Ferry met the Potomac, miles of the trail were already being moved to country roads. The idea of an alternate AT was accepted, and PATC was told to do the part south of the Mason-Dixon line while the Keystone Trails Conference would do the Pennsylvania portion. Some of the hikes that I had done in West Virginia really showed that a trail redo was in order. Fred Blackburn and others began to build a trail out of Overall Run west over the valley.

Early in the 1960s, TCHC received a letter from Wallace Wood of the Rochester Hikers Club in which he asked if TCHC members would be interested in building a long-distance foot trail in upstate New York. I responded directly to him that I was interested and that I had some knowledge and experience in how the AT operated. A few months later some 15 club members met at Wally's home outside Rochester – people from TCHC, from the Onondaga (Syracuse) Club of ADK (Adirondack Mountain Club), from the Buffalo-Niagara Falls Hikers, as well as

the Rochester Club. A day's talk convinced us all the plan was practical.

In spring 1964 a large meeting of club members from all five clubs (the Cayuga Trail Club of Ithaca had been formed by a former TCHC member) and there was discussion and planning. This day ended with a name agreed on - Finger Lakes Trail. It was also agreed the trail would begin at the Conservation Trail the Buffalo group was building between Buffalo and the Allegheny State Forest on the Pennsylvania-New York line and go east, then south of the major Finger Lakes and end in the Catskills, connecting with the network of trails that eventually connect with the AT in the southeast. Club assignments were agreed on, and officers were elected. Wallace Wood was naturally president of the new Finger Lakes Trail Conference. I was appointed to head the committee writing the constitution - and of course I followed the AT constitution, as it was one that I knew worked. Later I published the first issues of the Finger Lakes Trail News, which is still being published today.

In 1966 Wally refused a second term, and I became Finger Lakes Trail Conference president. But I am writing about PATC, so no more about Finger Lakes history.

Besides the times I vacationed with PATC while I was still in New York, I did only two things for the club in my absence. I expanded and completed the index to the Bulletin of PATC that had been abandoned, so that when the new monthly, The Potomac Appalachian, began, the indexing of the Bulletin could be completed and continue as the new one began. I also hosted a three-day trip to hike the Finger Lakes. My neighbors in Owego were much astounded at the tents in our yard over a Memorial Day weekend. (To be continued). □

—Paula M. Strain



Marketing PATC Maps, Publications

It's a fair question to ask, what does PATC do? If you ask several different people that question you would probably get several different answers, and they would all be right. We build and maintain a 1,000-mile trail system, we build and maintain shelters for overnight hikers, we build and maintain cabins for the public and our membership, we help rescue lost hikers and other people lost in the woods, and we educate ourselves and the general public about all these activities. It is this final aspect of our mission that I would like to talk about here, because it is, perhaps, the least understood.

How, why, and about what do we educate our members and the general public? For one, our Trail Patrol provides a physical presence on the trail to inform people of trail rules and etiquette. Trail Patrol is responsible for the hiring and training of our Ridge runners who provide assistance and ensure safety on the AT. Trail Patrol also teaches a wide variety of courses that instruct our members and the public on issues such as backpacking, hike leading, and wilderness first aid. PATC often partners with the Forest Service and National Park Service to instruct our members and the public how to properly build and maintain trails and how to safely use potentially dangerous tools such as chainsaws.

There is another way in which PATC educates our members and the public about what we do and on how we do it. PATC publishes a large number of maps, guide books, and various publications about the trails we maintain and the history around them. It is through these maps and books that PATC reaches the greatest number of people, and it is through these maps and books that we are most able to fulfill our mission of educating people about the various trails, shelters, and cabins that we work so hard to build and maintain. It is also through these same maps and books that we minimize the use of our rescue unit and the use of other local search and rescue units. A person with an accurate PATC map is less likely to get lost and more likely to find a quick exit route if trouble does arise. Our guide books give such important information on terrain and water sources, and so can aid in planning a day hike or a major backpacking trip.

Benefits to Club

These books, maps, and other items we provide to the public also have an added advantage of providing much-needed income to PATC so that we can perform all our other functions at no cost to the public. Clearly one-third of our income comes from the sale of our books, maps, and a few other items that we make available. In the past it was sufficient to simply make these items available to our most natural customers and let them take care of the rest. Today, while we still depend heavily on our customer base, there are many other avenues that we need to explore to increase awareness of PATC. In the face of diversity of today's business community PATC is often overlooked. Some businesses who would love to sell our products do not know we exist. There are major outdoor retailers that do not sell PATC books and maps, there are smaller businesses that sell the things that hikers buy but do not sell the hiking maps and guides that people buy the items for. There are local-interest stores and visitors' shops and centers that promote local hiking trails but have no idea that high-quality maps and guide books exist for the areas they promote. The Internet has become the first choice of many people for both shopping and information. We need to do a better job of making people aware that not only do we build and maintain trails, but we map and describe those trails as well.

PATC has always had a Sales Committee that coordinated and inventoried sales, but in today's fast-paced world we need more than just a sales committee – we need to market PATC to a wider audience. It is for this reason that in February the PATC Council authorized the change from a sales committee to a marketing committee and, in essence, the way we do business with the public. Unfortunately in the past the sales committee has been a committee in name only; for the past several years no committee has existed. PATC does have one paid staff member whose job it is to see that all sales are accounted for and properly shipped. Her job is to make sure that what we sell goes to the right place; our job (the marketing committee) is to make sure we have an increasing number of customers to ship our items to.

This change, of course, requires a strong and active committee with three strong and active parts. First the chairman must establish procedures to work closely with our publications, maps, and IT committees to maximize product availability, and make it easy for our customers to find and obtain PATC products. Second, committee members should be from all regions where we are active and be our eyes and ears in the local community where our products should be made available. It is for this reason that I believe that each of our chapters and sections should provide a member to the committee, and that other committee members should come from areas that represent our service area. Finally, since the Internet is becoming such an important factor in sales and information distribution for PATC, the committee should have knowledge of and work closely with our Web page designers so that Internet sales are easy, fast, and efficient.

It is really very simple; an active income source needs an active entity to sustain and grow that income source. This is something that PATC has lacked in the past but can no longer ignore. The income from sales is now plowed back into such areas as trails, shelter and cabin construction, and the other important educational services we provide for our members and the public. Greater sales will mean more trails, more shelters, more cabins, more educational opportunities, and more land, that will help protect all the former items. If you are interested in helping PATC market itself better, become a member of the marketing committee, or if you have ideas about how we can better market ourselves, contact Lee Sheaffer, vice president of volunteerism, at: thumpers@visuallink.com □

—Lee Sheaffer
540/955-0736

Emergency Response Training & Trail Patrol Present CPR / AED / Basic Wilderness First Aid

April 22 and 23, 2006, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

This two-day class provides American Heart Association certification in Adult CPR, AED, and Basic First Aid. The second day the student will learn American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI) Basic Wilderness First Aid. All certifications are valid for two years.

Cost of the class is \$120 for Trail Patrol Members and \$130 for Non-Trail Patrol members. Pre-Registration is required before April 14, 2006. For more information or to download the registration form, go to www.patc.net/volunteer/trailpatrol.com or contact Saleena DeVore at tp1staid@patc.net or 540/972-8394.

Trail Talkers 'On the Road Again'

It's a new festival season, and PATC's Trail Talkers are back by popular demand. Local event organizers are asking PATC to once again set up a display about club activities, and we've gotten invitations from some new venues. This is your chance to share your joy of hiking and spread the word about PATC, all the while enjoying a fun event. So if you want a break from hiking, let us know which event you'd like to attend.

On Saturday, April 22, Earth Day will be celebrated at the War Memorial Building at Jim Barnett Park in Winchester, Va. The theme is "How we care for the land affects the health of our streams." PATC will have a display at this event from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. From 8:00 a.m. to noon "Spruce Up in the Park" will be held. Participants will pick up trash, remove dead limbs, paint, trim shrubs, and do some spring plantings.

Saturday, April 22, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Hudson Trail Outfitters (HTO), is hosting an Earth Day Birthday Bash at their Rockville, Md., store. HTO has invited PATC and other local conservation groups to set up a display at the store, meet customers, and encourage new memberships. The birthday bash will be complete with balloons and birthday cake! HTO is also offering its customers and PATC members special discounts toward purchases during this event. HTO will also be donating a portion of its Rockville location sales for the day to PATC as a thank you for participating.

May 12-14 marks the celebration of Ravishing Raptors and Other Fine Feathered Friends at the Panorama Overlook in Berkeley Springs, WVa. This overlook has the seventh most beautiful view in the United States where you can see West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania all at once. We also need someone to lead a hike in the area. This event is sponsored by the Ecology Coalition of Morgan County. See its Web page, www.natureniche.biz, for more information.

During Memorial Day Weekend, May 28-29, Viva! Vienna! will once again fill Center Street in Vienna with hundreds of vendors. There will also be live music and dance, amusement rides, and plenty of good food. PATC will have a display at this event and could use some help. Even if you have only an hour or two, we could use you to set up and take down the display. However, you may want to stay the day and meet the nice folks who come out to this event every year. It's easy to talk about what PATC does, and you can share your favorite hiking or work trip story if you like. Contact Pat Fankhauser (pfankhauser@patc.net) to volunteer for this fun event. This is literally right in PATC's backyard! Help is needed from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday and from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Monday. Go to the Web site at www.viennarotary.org for more information.

On June 3, National Trails Day will be celebrated jointly by PATC and ATC. Mark your calendar and watch for further details.

On June 24 and 25, the Oldtown Summer Fest will take place near Cumberland, Md. This celebration features the Michael Cresap House, a beautifully restored stone house, where Michael Cresap was born in 1742. This historic house will be open for tours during the event. There will also be various types of music throughout the day, great food and tours of the C&O Canal lockhouse led by NPS rangers.

July 22 brings us the annual Barge Bash in Hancock, Md. There'll be fireworks, swimming, music, and food! Help PATC create a barge display – perhaps an outhouse? Check their Web site for information and photos of last year's entries: www.hancockmd.com.

As a Trail Talker, you will share PATC's mission with visitors at these events. Let people know about the important work PATC performs in preserving hiking trails and trail lands. This includes: trail maintenance, guided hikes, making maps and guidebooks, and rental cabins. You will be provided with handouts and information to share with festival participants. This is a good opportunity to bring awareness to the club's mission and possibly recruit some new members and trail overseers. Take a break from hiking or trail work and sign up for a Trail Talker event today! Contact Jane Thompson (jaytee-hike@yahoo.com) or 301/349-2496 for more information about an event near you. Jane looks forward to hearing from you! □

—Linda Rudy

Springtime on Old Rag Mountain?

May 12, 2006: Today we finished the last day of our Shenandoah Spring Crew week, fixing years of tough love and the footfalls of a thousand boots on Saddle Trail. Although I had hiked Old Rag Mountain many times, I had never considered helping with the trail maintenance, but this year was different. I saw the crew notice in the April PA, had a few days to spare, and really wanted to return some effort for all the times I'd hiked up and over the Rag. Our crew consisted of people just like me – hikers who wanted to help maintain a cherished local resource in a setting supervised by Park rangers and PATC trail managers. Weekdays during the perfect month of May were a big bonus, as the trail was not crowded and the weather ideal. We also learned the true definition of trail work during our week on Old Rag: "Trail work is nothing more than hiking with a purpose."

For those of you reading this article today, note that there is still time to join our Spring Crew and contribute some effort to the health and well-being of Old Rag Mountain. To reserve a place on the crew and a bunk in the cabin, contact Heidi Forrest (hforrest@patc.net) or Dan Dueweke (danjan3@cox.net). □

PATC Presents:

A Traditional Tools Workshop

April 22-23, Pinnacles Research Station, SNP. The traditional tools workshop is intended to familiarize overseers with proper crosscut saw and axe techniques. Instruction will be provided on how to size up and safely clear a blowdown with hand tools and when and how to use a wedge, swing an axe, and perform a single underbuck. The workshop leader will discuss situations you'll likely encounter on the trail and conduct field exercises demonstrating the various tools used to tackle these challenges. Note that this is a workshop only and will not result in a certification. Cost is \$20.00 to cover course materials, Saturday dinner, and Sunday breakfast. Further INFO: Dan Dueweke 703/266-3248 or danjan3@cox.net. □

Backpacking Along the Teton Crest Trail – Teton Village to Jenny Lake

According to several sources, if you are a backpacker you must chalk up a trip along the Teton Crest Trail in Grand Teton National Park. Two fellow travelers who were able to take the 36-mile plunge with me were Catherine Pipan and Mark Press, fellow PATCers.

After ascending Rendezvous Mountain via the tram, we followed the trail and started down the mountain toward a whole new vista. We encountered a four-person group coming up that steep trail who were ending the circuit we were doing for the third time in their lives in the more strenuous reverse direction for “variety’s sake.” Good luck guys, you’re halfway to the top. We didn’t encounter much uphill climbing on the way to Marion Lake (our first night’s campsite) 6.7 miles from the tram, but when we did go uphill we all gulped as much air as we could under our heavy packs. Sucking down about 3 liters of water helped lighten the load as well.

As we approached Marion Lake, Catherine was leading the way. She popped up over a rise, then turned back toward us rather swiftly uttering one dreaded four letter word ‘Bear!’ One’s mind is to turn and flee when danger is present, and this she did. But we must press on and so we turned into the Grand Teton Marching Band, blowing whistles and beating pots as we came up over the crest of the hill. We were gratified to see him walking away, but he wasn’t moving swiftly enough by our standards, which means he’s used to humans.

We circled around to Marion Lake (quite beautiful with a rock wall backdrop) and headed toward the campsites. There was the bear again, about 50 feet away, working on a log in some trees. Great. We passed below him in band formation, calling him by name and telling him to stay put. While we set up camp, we kept our eyes on his locale as we didn’t want him moving in on us.

We made supper well away from camp, very conscientious about keeping a scent-free campsite. After chatting with some fellow campers for the evening, Catherine and I bade farewell and headed back to our camp. As we crested the hill between our campsites to put some stuff into the bear box, we glanced over to our tents – there was the bear, headed right for Mark’s tent – with Mark in it! It wasn’t more than five feet away from Mark’s tent knocking over water bottles, when we started yelling and blowing whistles. Our fellow campers ran up and offered to use pepper spray on the beast but he was already turning his back and waddling back up to his dead tree. That freaked Catherine and me out so we decided right then and there to place our tent in between our fellow campers’ tents. Mark was very brave and remained where he was.

The next day was a fine one, with no bear in sight. Because of low trail mileage we afforded ourselves time to lollygag in camp until 10:00 a.m. Today’s walk would take us up an 1,100 foot climb, but over 5.6 miles that nearly equals flat, right? We exited the Grand Teton NP and entered the Targhee National Forest at Fox Creek Pass.

We made camp around 2:00 p.m. under the Death Canyon Shelf cliffs. Spent the afternoon sitting on a lower ledge overlooking Death Canyon, catching up on small camp duties and trying to pin down the surrounding peaks with our two-dimensional topo map.

A smoke phenomenon from an Idaho forest fire had taken place yet again this afternoon but cleared out in time for supper. A forest fire had



Death Canyon Shelf - near the end of this Teton adventure.

started due to lightning in Idaho a day or so before our backpack. Around 2:30 or so each day, the smoke descends into the canyons and blows out over the range. But around 5 or 6:00, the wind shifts and pushes the smoke back into Idaho.

Supper was made on the ledge, and near dusk, we spotted three tiny moose eating in the willows along the stream way below us. Dinner conversation included trail mileage and elevation conversations. Mark made a slip of the tongue and said that one of our future trail days would include a 2,500-mile day. Yowzer! Then Catherine outdid that with another tongue blunder involving a 35,000-foot elevation gain! After such a strenuous conversation we were ready for bed.

The next day we ate breakfast on the Death Canyon Shelf terrace and contemplated the day around us. Mileage for today was 10 miles of fabulous scenery we could easily have spent two days viewing. We followed the Death Canyon Shelf Cliffs to Fox Creek Pass, pausing to enjoy the scenery. We descended through the Sheep’s Gates into Alaska Basin. Above it all clear blue skies were laced with cirrus clouds and the occasional cumulus.

We descended to Sunset Lake for lunch, keeping our eyes on a red spot beside the lake. The red spot turned out to be a lady from Holland. Those Europeans sure get around. After lunch we slogged off up the 900-foot climb to 10,000-foot Hurricane Pass. We had been warned about hurricane force winds at the pass (which were only on the breeze setting when we arrived) but that the scenery was spectacular. We stopped now and then for breathers, to assess our progress, and to enjoy the enlarging views of Battleship Mountain on our left and Alaska Basin at our feet. Eventually we did reach the crest of the mountain, and lo and behold, the Middle and Grand Tetons showed themselves in all of their alpine glory. Wow! What a sight! The effort was well worth it.

Some rain spittle caused havoc with my barely protected camera, causing it to freeze up for a few moments. But the cloud did have a silver lining. As it passed overhead, a rainbow started floating over the valley

See Teton, page 16

Chapters

Charlottesville Chapter

The Charlottesville Chapter hikes every Saturday, summer, winter, and in between. Hikes are usually 8 to 10 miles with some shorter hikes. We usually maintain trails on the last Saturday of the month. Meet at Albermarle High School in Charlottesville at 9:00 a.m. with food and water for the day. The majority of hikes are in the south and central districts of SNP, with some in the north district and in George Washington National Forest. Our Chapter hikes are posted at www.avenue.org/patc/future_hikes.htm. 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 Nancy Hammond (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/739-0442 for information. Pennsylvania work trips are generally held on the AT on the first Saturday and on the Tuscarora on the third Saturday – contact Pete Brown (peter.brown4@worldnet.att.net) 410/343-1140. Pennsylvania AT work trips also include an optional Saturday evening dinner at the Gypsy Spring Cabin. For information on upcoming hikes, contact Chris Firme (bncfirme@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 Betsy Fowler (efowler@shentel.com).

Southern Shenandoah Valley Chapter

See www.ssvc.org or the one linked to the PATC Web site for descriptions of hikes and work trips. We usually hike in the southern and central districts of the SNP and in the GWNF. Contact the listed hike leader for information about a specific event, or contact Mark Gatewood 540/248-0442.

West Chapter

The West Chapter meets twice a year in March and September. The Chapter maintains a section of the Black Locust circuit trail in Gambrill State Park near Frederick, Md. Work trips and hikes are usually scheduled monthly from March through December. We also lead overnight weekend trips for day hikes or backpacking. All activities are listed in the PA Forecast. For further information contact Dave Jordahl (westpatc@hotmail.com) 304/876-7062 (evenings) or 240/777-7741 (days).

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: Bert Finkelstein (bertf@erols.com) 703/715-8534.

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 Dave Raboy (draboy@pattonboggs.com), or Vincent Penoso (vdotmatrix@gmail.com).

PATC Hikes

PATC offers organized hikes appealing to the diverse interests of our members. There are K-9 Hikes, which invite you to bring your favorite dog; Family Hikes tailored to kids; Natural History Hikes stalking the fascinating but often elusive flora and fauna of the region; hikes featuring varying levels of difficulty with the Easy Hikers, In-Between Hikers, and Vigorous Hikers; Birding Hikes with experts to help sight and identify our avian neighbors; Historical Hikes tracking little-known structures in Shenandoah National Park; Series Hikes tracing the entire length of the Tuscarora Trail or the trails of Pennsylvania, section by section; Backpacking Hikes traversing the tracts of West Virginia and Southern Virginia; hikes scheduled for weekends; ones scheduled for weekdays; Geology Hikes led by experts from the Smithsonian focused on the unique stratigraphy of our area; Mushroom Hikes with mycologists; Waterfall Hikes to beat the summer heat; and Outreach Hikes to get together with the members of area groups like the Sierra Club or the Congressional Hikers. That is just to name a few. Check out the Forecast calendar and hear updates on the weekly tape (703/242-0965).

Other Clubs' Hikes

Capital (www.capitalhikingclub.org) and Wanderbirds (www.wanderbirds.org) hike on Saturdays and 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/activities/forecast.html.

-  Hiking Trips
-  Backpacking Trips
-  Trail Work Trips
-  Cabin/Shelter Work Trips
-  Ski Trips
-  Special Events
-  Meetings
-  Classes
-  K9 Trail Blazers (dogs permitted)

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. Want to learn more about the club? The best way is to attend a New Members meeting (but you don't have to be new). Refreshments served. Directions: Take Rt. 123 into Vienna, Va., and turn east on Park St. (Rt.675) to 118 Park St. on your left. INFO: Georgeann Smale (membership@patc.net) 301/581-9584 or Pat Fankhauser (pfankhauser@patc.net).

Mountaineering Section –

Second Wednesday

8:00 p.m. – We meet every month on the second Wednesday except for August, unless noted in the Forecast. INFO: Dave Raboy (draboy@pattonboggs.com), or Vincent Penoso (vdotmatrix@gmail.com) or our Web site: www.potomacmountainclub.org

Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group

Business meeting - Last Tuesday of each month, 7:30 p.m. INFO: Doug Sigman (join@smrg.org), 703/255-5034, or www.smrg.org.

PATC Council – Second Tuesday

The council meets at 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 always 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., except January. Trail Patrol volunteers are PATC's goodwill trail ambassadors to the hiking public. They provide a visible, reassuring presence on the trails, and strive to educate 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. Some equipment and uniform items are provided upon completion of training. INFO: Katrina Hedlesky (trailpatrol@patc.net) 703/533-3652, or see our section in PATC's Web site: www.patc.net/volunteer/trailpatrol.

April

1 (Saturday)

DEADLINE – May Potomac Appalachian Material due to editors 5:00 p.m.

All items for the next issue of the newsletter due. Send Forecast events to PA-Forecast@patc.net and all other articles to the editor at PA@patc.net. NOTE: Do not send photos or articles to headquarters. E-mail for address.

1 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP – Roaring Tuskers Gore, VA

The Roaring Tuskers, Tuscarora Trail Central District Trail Crew, working on the Tuscarora Trail in vicinity of the spectacular Pinnacle. Please bring water, lunch, gloves and boots. INFO: Steve Sharp (stevenssharp@comcast.net) 240/338-3655.

1 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP – South Mountaineers Appalachian Trail, MD

INFO: Nancy Hammond (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/739-0442.

1 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP – Yankee Clippers Appalachian Trail, MD

INFO: Pete Brown (peter.brown4@worldnet.att.net) 410/343-1140.

1 – 2 (Saturday – Sunday)

CLASS – Wilderness First Aid (WSC) Alexandria, VA

This eighteen-hour class includes classroom study, hands-on practice, and results in a two-year certification. The cost is \$160. More information and registration at: <http://wfa.net>. INFO: Christopher Tate (chris@wfa.net) 703/836-8905.

1 – 2 (Saturday – Sunday)

SHELTER WORK TRIP – West Shelter Crew Hancock, MD

Join the West Shelter Crew at the beautiful Ruth Morris/Vos Tract located right off of I-70 in West Virginia as we continue building the shelter out-house. After work we'll enjoy home-cooked meals and overnight at Little Orleans Cabin. INFO: Karen Brown (kkbrown46@yahoo.com) 703/521-9050.

3 (Monday)

HIKE – Family Hike Round Hill, VA

Join us for a 2.5-mile, kid-friendly circuit hike on the AT. We'll hike up to Bear Rocks, where the young and young at heart can climb up, over, and all around the rocks. Then we will hike over to Bear's Den Hostel and around the historical trail. INFO: Lauren Lang (at94L@netzero.com) 571/242-3950.

4 (Tuesday)

CLASS – Map and Compass 101 (REI) Fairfax, VA

7:30 p.m. This clinic will cover the basics such as understanding map symbols, orienting the map and compass, triangulation, declination adjustment, and reading terrain features. Participants are encouraged to bring their own compasses. INFO: Mark Nelson (MNelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

4 (Tuesday)

HIKE – Vigorous Hikers Edinburg, VA

County Line Trail south of Rt. 55 (along the VA/WV border). Hike south along Tuscarora Trail from Rt. 55 to Waites Run and return via Wilson and Vance Cove trails. 20 miles and 1600 ft. elevation gain. INFO: Cliff Noyes (hclmnoyes@yahoo.com) 540/373-8267.

4 (Tuesday)

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

5 (Wednesday)

CLASS – GPS 101 (REI) Bailey's Crossroads, VA

7:30 p.m. Learn how GPS receivers work and what affects accuracy, as well as features, benefits and how to choose a model. We'll also include a brief overview of online resources and batteries, water and shock resistance and accessories. INFO: Mark Nelson (MNelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

5 (Wednesday)

CLASS – Map and Compass 101 (REI) College Park, MD

7:00 p.m. It is time to review your basic map and compass skills before you head outdoors this year! This clinic will cover the basics such as understanding map symbols, orienting the map and compass triangulation, declination adjustment, and reading terrain features. Feel free to bring your own compass. INFO: Mark Nelson (MNelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

5 (Wednesday)

CLASS – Ultra-light Backpacking (REI) Rockville, MD

7:30 p.m. Lighter is faster! Join REI's ultra-light guru for some great insight into lightening your load. From head to toe, we've got some great tips to make your outdoor adventure more enjoyable and easier. Survey the newest gear on the market. INFO: Mark Nelson (MNelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

5 (Wednesday)

HIKE - Easy Hikers Swain's Lock, MD

6-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 on Capital Beltway to River Road. Go 2 miles past Potomac, Md. Then left 0.3 miles on Swains Lock Road. No pets. INFO: Mary-Margaret McGrail 703/751-8126.

5 (Wednesday)

HIKE - Midweek Hikers Location to be determined

The PATC Midweek Hikers carpool each Wednesday from the Washington, DC area to various trailheads. Hikes are at a moderate pace and about 8 to 12 miles in length with varied elevations. Current information, including meeting place, time, leader's name and phone number, and a detailed description of the hike are available on the PATC Activities Recording: 703/242-0965.

5 (Wednesday)

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

7 – 9 (Friday – Sunday)

HIKE – Cape Henlopen Lewes, DE

Camp/Hike/Bike at Cape Henlopen in Delaware. Camp Friday and Saturday nights in the state park and hike Saturday along the beach and in the woods. Hike Sunday somewhere on the Eastern Shore or take the ferry to Cape May, NJ for a bike ride. Hike is generally easy but includes soft sand which is a little strenuous. This is a joint hike with the Center Hiking Club (no pets please). INFO: Edward Evangelidi (edevange@localnet.com) or Gail Nathenson 301/572-6951.

8 (Saturday)

HIKE – Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter Manassas, VA

Join the NSVC for 5 1/2 easy miles in Manassas Battlefield National Park as we see where the First Battle of Manassas was fought. INFO: Gerry Boyd and Mary Powell (hikers@picturesandpages.com) 703/281-7216.

8 - 9 (Saturday - Sunday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP - Vining Tract Crew Lydia, VA

Come join PATC Vining Track Crew on our second monthly work trip of the year. The crew has many opportunities for volunteers with cabin construction, cabin maintenance, and trail activities on our monthly agendas. High on our priority list for April is the construction of Butternut Cabin and maintenance of over five miles of trails in the area. Overnight at Conley Cabin. INFO: Hugh Robinson (mes.htr@verizon.net) 703/525-8726.

9 (Sunday)

HIKE – In Between Hikers Springfield, VA

Fairfax County Cross County Trail (CCT) Hike #2. One-way 8.8-mi. hike in Springfield/Fairfax area, along Lake Accotink shoreline, along Accotink Creek, and through Wakefield Park to Thaiss Park at Pickett Rd. Car shuttle required. Bring water and lunch but no pets. Joint event with Sierra Club MWROP. INFO: Ray Evert (hikerdude22@msn.com) 703/893-3792 or Henri Coumeau (HenriComeau@aol.com) 703/451-7965.

9 (Sunday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP – West Chapter Frederick, MD

Continuation of the spring, 2006 West Chapter trail work sessions at Gambrill State Park. Complete cribbing project on Blue trail (a.k.a. Catocin trail) and clear water bars on Black Trail. Meet 10:00 a.m. at the Nature Center. INFO: Dave Jordahl (westpatc@hotmail.com) 240/777-7741 or 304/876-7062.

10 (Monday)

HIKE – Family Hike Centreville, VA

It's Bluebell Time! Come enjoy the spring weather and thousands of bluebells at the East Coast's largest stand of wild Virginia bluebells. We will do a 2-mile kid-paced loop in Bull Run Park. It is jogging-stroller passable. There will most likely be some muddy areas so wear appropriate shoes. INFO: Anne Regan (anne.c.regan@verizon.net) 703/689-3883.

11 (Tuesday)

HIKE – Vigorous Hikers Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Franklin Cliffs. A 15-mile circuit with 3700 feet ascent begins at Hawksbill parking, goes south on the Skyland-Big Meadows Trail to the Rose River Loop Trail up the Dark Hollow Falls Trail to Big Meadows returning on the AT ending with climb of Hawksbill. INFO: Chris Nolen (chrishiker@erols.com) 301/469-8931.



FORECAST

11 (Tuesday)

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

12 (Wednesday)

CLASS – Map and Compass Basics (REI)
Bailey's Crossroads, VA

7:30 p.m. Get the skills to stay found! This introduction to map and compass will cover interpretation of map data and symbols, compass function, orienting map and compass, declination adjustment, and reading terrain features. Participants are encouraged to bring their own compasses. INFO: Mark Nelson (MNelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

12 (Wednesday)

HIKE – Easy Hikers
Washington, DC

The Easy Hikers will hike about 4 easy miles through the Arboretum. Meet at 10:15 a.m. at the main parking lot immediately inside the R Street entrance. Bring lunch and water. No pets, please. Directions: Take the Baltimore-Washington Parkway south from the Beltway. At the split with I-295, bear right on New York Avenue toward Washington. Continue two miles to Bladensburg Road, a major intersection. Turn left and go 0.4 miles on Bladensburg Road to R Street, NE. Turn left and go 0.3 miles to the Arboretum entrance gate. INFO: Nancie Coan (nanco4000@yahoo.com) 202/338-4580.

12 (Wednesday)

HIKE – Midweek Hikers
Location to be determined

See April 5 event for more information.

12 (Wednesday)

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

15 (Saturday)

HIKE – Natural History Wildflower Hike
McLean, VA

Bob Pickett, PATC Naturalist, leads this traditional PATC wildflower hike in Turkey Run Park, along the GW Memorial Parkway, for his 17th year! This is perhaps the premier early season wildflower site within the metropolitan area. More than 30 species of flowering plants will be seen along this five-mile hike. Please note, the first section of the hike may take us through some muddy areas and numerous, easy stream crossings. INFO: Bob Pickett 301/681-1511.

15 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP – North District Hoodlums
North District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Join with the Hoodlums in their annual Southwestern work trip. The Hoodlums trail crew works on the Appalachian Trail and the blue-blazed trails in the north section of Shenandoah National Park. After a day of hard work we will enjoy the camaraderie of fellow trail workers with a Southwestern theme meal at Indian Run maintenance hut. Come for the day, stay for dinner, and camp overnight if you wish. Or just come out and work with us during the day. Newcomers are always welcome! We'll meet at Piney River Ranger Station, MP 22 on Skyline Drive, at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. INFO: Dick Dugan (rdugan@frontiernet.net) 304/856-3511.

15 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP – Rock Creek Park
Washington, DC

8:15 a.m. – noon. Join us for our first work trip of the year. Please come and help make this trip a success. Meet at the Rock Creek Nature Center located south of the Military Road NW park entrance. INFO: Alex Sanders (wdctrails@yahoo.com) 703/465-8140 or Ranger Ken Ferebee at 202/895-6221.

15 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP – Shenandoah Bartenders
Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

The Bartenders will be tending bars—water bars, that is. But, hey, that's fun, too. Really. Come out and see for yourself. Old Rag's Ridge Trail is loaded with bars, probably at least 72, or something like that. We need help before the crowds arrive. No experience necessary. Call for more details. INFO: Cathie Cummins (Cathie@wfa.net) 703/631 7421, 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on weeknights.

15 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP – Stonewall Brigade
Woodstock, VA

Join the Stonewall Brigade to keep trails clear in one of PATC's least crowded and scenic districts - experience unnecessary, all tools and training provided. Help us put together a new group of interested volunteers who like to be outdoors making trails more enjoyable for others. Our schedule will be the third Saturday of every month; you are welcome to join us every month, a few times a year, or as many times as you can. Work will usually be in the area covered by PATC Map F -Great North Mountain on the VA/WV border. Meet at the Wolf Gap Recreation Area campground parking lot (PATC Map F coordinates E-19) at 9:00 a.m. This trip is subject to prevailing or forecast weather. If doubtful, please check before going to the meeting site. See also: <http://www.patc.net/volunteer/trails/stonewall/stonewall.html>. INFO: Hop Long (theFSLongs@comcast.net) 301/942-6177 or Jim Tomlin (jtomlin@helix.nih.gov).

15 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP – Yankee Clippers
Tuscarora Trail, PA

INFO: Pete Brown (peter.brown4@worldnet.att.net) 410/343-1140.

15 – 16 (Saturday – Sunday)

HIKE – North Chapter
Little Orleans, MD

A hike in Green Ridge State Forest, from the PA/MD line to the C&O Canal. Northern Spur 6.3 miles. Southern Spur 11.0 miles. Overnight in the area. INFO: Chris Firme (bncfirme@innernet.net) 717/794-2855 after 6:00 p.m.



17 (Monday)

HIKE – Family Hike
Great Falls, VA

Come out for an Easter egg hunt along the trail in Riverbend Park. This 2-mile circuit hike will take us up past the nature center, along the Paw-Paw passage trail down to a pond, and along the Potomac Heritage Trail along the Potomac River. We will check out the animals and activities in the visitor center after the hike, and enjoy a picnic just outside. INFO: Lauren Lang (at94L@netzero.com) 571/242-3950.

18 (Tuesday)

CLASS – GPS 101 (REI)
Fairfax, VA

7:30 p.m. Learn how GPS receivers work and what affects accuracy, as well as features, benefits and how to choose a model. We'll also include a brief overview of online resources and batteries, water and shock resistance and accessories. INFO: Mark Nelson (MNelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

18 (Tuesday)

CLASS – Nature Photo Workshop (REI)
College Park, MD

7:00 p.m. You don't have to travel to exotic lands to shoot one-of-a-kind, compelling images of nature. In this practical 2-part workshop, nature photographer Christine Kent Bowles will show you how to take great nature photos without venturing beyond the local metro area. In the first session, you'll learn more than two dozen guidelines for seeing and composing beautiful images of nature. In the second session, on Sunday, April 23rd, you'll head into the natural world at Patapsco Valley State Park, in Elkridge, MD, to practice putting what you've learned into action! Be prepared to hike 2 to 3 miles on well-used but rugged trails (expect to climb a few hills and walk on rocks in a few spots) with your camera gear. The trails may be muddy, so you should plan and dress accordingly. Hiking boots are recommended. Class size is limited. Class Fee: \$75 members, \$90 non-members. Please see the description on www.REI.com or the in-store flyer for more details. INFO: Mark Nelson (MNelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

18 (Tuesday)

HIKE – Long Distance Hike
Front Royal, VA

A 30-mile + loop around the Massanutten Mountains. This self-supported hike will loop starting at Elizabeth Furnace west on the Tuscarora Trail, south on the Massanutten West Trail, north on the Massanutten East Trail and the Tuscarora Trail back to Elizabeth Furnace. INFO: Chris Nolen (chrishiker@erols.com) 301/469-8931 or Cliff Noyes (hclmnoyes@yahoo.com) 540/373-8267.

19 (Wednesday)

HIKE – Easy Hikers
Burke, VA

Five level miles around Burke Lake. Meet at 10:15 a.m. From the Beltway, exit west onto Braddock Rd. At your leisure, move into the left-hand lane (excluding left turn lanes) and stay in this lane. In 1.9 mi. from the Beltway, the lane you are in becomes one of a pair of left-turn lanes onto Burke Lake Rd (Rt. 645). Stay with it and make the turn. (Don't worry about the misleading sign before the preceding left.) Go 4.7 mi., then turn left onto Ox Rd. (Rt. 123). In 0.5 mi. (after passing the Golf Center), turn left into Burke Lake Park. Follow signs to the marina. Bring lunch and water. INFO: Sue King 703/356-6659.

19 (Wednesday)

HIKE – Midweek Hikers
Location to be determined

See April 5 event for more information.

22 (Saturday)

🚶 **HIKE – Waterfall and Wildflower Series**
Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA
 A 9-mile circuit hike with 2200 feet of elevation gain to two falls on Big Creek on the Powell Mountain, Meadow School and Appalachian Trails and about 2 miles of bushwhacking. There is an additional 7-mile option to Camp Hoover. PATC Map 10. INFO: Jack Thorsen (thorsen4@Juno.com) 703/339-6716 or William Needham (Needham82@AOL.COM) 410/884-9127.

22 (Saturday)

🚶 **HIKE – Tuscarora Trail Series**
Hedgesville, WV
 River Rd. to Spruce Pine Park (WV 9). 5.4 miles - easy hike. Elevation change of 300 feet. We will be going through gently rolling land that includes various PATC properties and other private lands. It will end with a short road section before reaching Spruce Pine Roadside Park. INFO: Jason Rainville (superjasonr@hotmail.com) 304/262-0994.

22 (Saturday)

🌿 **SPECIAL EVENT – Earth Day**
Winchester, VA
 Earth Day will be celebrated at the War Memorial Building at Jim Barnett Park in Winchester. The theme is "How we care for the land affects the health of our streams." PATC needs trail talkers for a display at this event from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. From 8:00 a.m. to noon "Spruce Up in the Park" will be held. INFO: Jane Thompson (jayteehike@yahoo.com) 301/349-2496.

22 (Saturday)

🚶 **TRAIL WORK TRIP – South Mountaineers**
Appalachian Trail, MD
 INFO: Nancy Hammond (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/739-0442.

22 – 23 (Saturday – Sunday)

🚶 **CLASS – Chainsaw Certification**
SNP Headquarters, Luray, VA
 See Chainsaw Certification ad on page 3.

22 – 23 (Saturday – Sunday)

🚶 **CLASS - CPR/AED/Basic Wilderness First Aid**
Vienna, VA
 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. This two-day class provides American Heart Association certification in Adult CPR, AED, and Basic First Aid. The second day the student will learn American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI) Basic Wilderness First Aid. All certifications are valid for two years. Cost of the class is \$120 for Trail Patrol Members and \$130 for Non-Trail Patrol Members. Pre-Registration is required by April 14. Go to www.patc.net/volunteer/trailpatrol.com for more information and the registration form. INFO: Saleena DeVore (tp1staid@patc.net) 540/972-8394.

22 – 23 (Saturday – Sunday)

🚶 **CLASS - Traditional Tools Workshop**
Pinnacles Research Station, SNP, VA
 See Traditional Tools Workshop ad on page 8.

22 – 23 (Saturday – Sunday)

🚶 **TRAIL WORK TRIP – Cadillac Crew**
Martinsburg, WV
 The Crew continues work on an emergency Tuscarora Trail relocation at the north end of Sleepy Creek WMA. This is a challenging project to build the trail through a steep rock field. Bring water and a lunch for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Overnight location to be determined. INFO: Jon or Katherine Rindt (jkrindt@adelphia.net) 540/635-6351.



23 (Sunday)

🚶 **HIKE – In Between Hikers**
Oakton, VA
 Fairfax County Cross County Trail (CCT) Hike #3. One-way 6-mi. hike in Oakton/Reston area, partly hilly and partly along scenic Difficult Run, starting at Oak Marr Park and ending at Lawyers Rd. Car shuttle required. Bring water and lunch but no pets. Joint event with Sierra Club MWROP. INFO: Glenn Gillis 703/430-0568 or Henri Comeau (HenriComeau@aol.com) 703/451-7965.

23 (Sunday)

🚶 **HIKE – Sunday Hikers**
Great Falls, VA
 Come out for a gentle, but very long hike on the C&O Canal Towpath. Starting at the Great Falls Tavern, we'll hike upriver as far as Riley's Lock (Lock # 24), then turn around for the return trip. The total distance will be 17 miles. We'll see what remains of the Seneca Creek Aqueduct at Riley's Lock. This will be a great training hike for those planning to do the Sierra Club/MWROP 100/80/50K one-day hike the following weekend. No pets. INFO: Vince Ferrari (vincentferrari@gmail.com) 301/249-2210.

23 (Sunday)

🌿 **WATER QUALITY MONITORING – Tuscarora**
McConnellsburg, PA
 Continuation of the spring, 2006 PATC water quality monitoring season by the West Chapter. Monitor water quality by collecting and identifying benthic macroinvertebrates residing in streams that run through PATC lands adjacent to the Tuscarora Trail. Note that we may end up doing an alternate site depending upon water levels. INFO: Dave Jordahl (westpatc@hotmail.com), 240/777-7741 or 304/876-7062.

25 (Tuesday)

🚶 **HIKE – Vigorous Hikers**
Linden, VA
 An annual excursion into the fabulous trillium and other wildflowers of the Thompson Wildlife Management Area, about 15 miles and 3300 feet of elevation gain. 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 – Local Hikes (REI)**
College Park, MD
 7:00 p.m. Are you new to the area or just looking for new ideas on good places to hike within a 2 hour radius of Washington, DC? Join us for a discussion on different places to hike: day hikes and back-packing. INFO: Mark Nelson (MNelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

26 (Wednesday)

🚶 **HIKE – Easy Hikers**
Brandywine, MD
 A four-mile easy circuit hike with optional two-mile extension in Cedarville State Forest. From beltway exit 7, south on MD route 5 (Branch Ave), merging with US 301 after 10 miles. Then stay in left lane for 1.8 miles to traffic light at Cedarville Road. Turn left and continue 2.4 miles to state forest sign at intersection with Bee Oak Road. Turn right, proceed 1 mile to meeting place outside forest office at 10:15 a.m. Entrance fee \$4 per car, possible discount for MD residents. Bring lunch and water. INFO: Paul Van Order 703/536-4378.

26 (Wednesday)

🚶 **HIKE – Midweek Hikers**
Location to be determined
 See April 5 event for more information.

27 (Thursday)

🚶 **CLASS – GPS 101 (REI)**
College Park, MD
 7:00 p.m. Learn how GPS receivers work and what affects their accuracy as well as features, benefits and how to choose a model. We'll also include a brief overview of accessories, online resources, batteries, water and shock resistance. INFO: Mark Nelson (MNelson@rei.com) 703/379-9400.

27 (Thursday)

🚶 **HIKE – Family Hike**
Round Hill, VA
 Come join us for a fun after-school hike along the AT. This kid-friendly hike will be an out and back hike, about 2-3 miles long. If you wish, bring along a picnic dinner to enjoy along the way. INFO: Lauren Lang (at94L@netzero.com) 571/242-3950.

28 – 30 (Friday – Sunday)

🚶 **CABIN WORK TRIP – Argow Cabin**
South District, Shenandoah National Park, VA
 Come help restore an old mid 1800's log cabin built by Confederate Soldier James Samuel Eaton. We will be replacing the old floor joists of the cabin and begin construction of the new privy. Overnight accommodations will be at Schairer Trail Center, a short 1/2 mile hike in from Eaton Hollow Overlook on Skyline Drive (MM70). Communal meals for Sat. dinner, Sun. Breakfast and Sun. lunch for a minimal fee. INFO: Jeff Testerman (jtest@ntelos.net) 434/589-2081.

29 (Saturday)

🚶 **CLASS – Billy Goat Trail Stewards**
Great Falls, MD
 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Join the Billy Goat Trail Steward Program, a Volunteers-in-Parks program at the C&O Canal. Billy Goat Trail Stewards hike the trail, assisting park rangers by providing visitors with information on the park, Leave-No-Trace principles, and basic first aid. The program is managed cooperatively by PATC, the National Park Service, and the Nature Conservancy. Additional training classes will follow, for park orientation and radio use, and first aid and CPR. To learn more, visit www.nps.gov/choh. INFO: Ranger Rod Sauter (Rod_Sauter@nps.gov) 301/767-3702 or Georgeann Smale (gsmale99@yahoo.com).

29 (Saturday)

🚶 **HIKE – West Chapter**
Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA
 Fishers Gap to Bearfence Mountain (Central District). About 15km (9.3 miles). After the hike visit the Byrd Visitor Center and take a short hike to Dark Hollow Falls. INFO: Dave Jordahl (westpatc@hotmail.com) 240/777-7741 or 304/876-7062.

FORECAST

29 - 30 (Saturday - Sunday)

**CABIN WORK TRIP - Olive Green
Thurmont, MD**

Join us as we take care of this little ol' cabin. The cabin and grounds could use a good spring cleaning as well as re-chinking the log walls and mending and painting the fence. Contact Ben Mayock (bmayock@yahoo.com) 410/461-1327.

29 - 30 (Saturday - Sunday)

**SHELTER WORK TRIP - West Shelter Crew
Hancock, MD**

Come on out to the beautiful Ruth Morris/Vos Tract located right off of I-70 in West Virginia and join us as we haul the shelter materials up the mountain and commence to buildin'. Home-cooked meals and a peaceful sleep at Little Orleans Cabin. INFO: Karen Brown (kkbrown46@yahoo.com) 703/521-9050.

30 Sunday

**WATER QUALITY MONITORING - Tuscarora
Tuscarora Trail, PA**

Final/Rain date (i.e., if necessary) of the Spring 2006 PATC water quality monitoring season. Monitor water quality by collecting and identifying benthic macroinvertebrates residing in streams that run through PATC lands adjacent to the Tuscarora trail. Specific stream site to be determined. INFO: Dave Jordahl (westpatc@hotmail.com) 240/777-7741 or 304/876-7062.

May

1 (Monday)

DEADLINE - June Potomac Appalachian

Material due to editors 5:00 p.m.

All items for the next issue of the newsletter due. Send Forecast events to PA-Forecast@patc.net and all other articles to the editor at PA@patc.net. NOTE: Do not send photos or articles to headquarters. E-mail for address.

1 (Monday)

**HIKE - Family Hike
Sterling, VA**

Come enjoy a kid-friendly circuit hike in beautiful Claude Moore Park. We will hike about 2 ? miles. We will picnic along the way, next to a pond. After the hike, we will enjoy the activities and turtles in their visitor center. INFO: Lauren Lang (at94L@netzero.com) 571/242-3950.)

2 (Tuesday)

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

3 (Wednesday)

**HIKE - Easy Hikers
Upper Marlboro, MD**

We'll hike at Jug Bay, in Patuxent River Park. Meet at 10:15 a.m. in the parking lot near the park office. A 4-mile hike will be preceded by a 1 and ? hour cruise on the "Otter", with a park naturalist. Boat capacity is 20 passengers; reservation required. Directions: From Beltway, take Exit 11A, Pennsylvania Ave. (Rt. 4) south/east. Go 8 miles, and take Rt. 301 south for 1.7 miles. Turn left on Croom Station Rd., go 1.6 miles. Turn left on Croom Rd. (Rt. 382), go 1.5 miles. Turn left on Croom Airport Rd., go 2 miles. Turn left into park driveway to visitor parking, 1.6 miles. Bring lunch and water. INFO: John or Suzanne Kominski 703/751-3026.

3 (Wednesday)

**HIKE - Midweek Hikers
Location to be determined**

See April 5 event for more information.

3 (Wednesday)

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

6 (Saturday)

**HIKE - Natural History Trillium Hike
Linden, VA**

Bob Pickett, PATC Naturalist, leads this moderately difficult 7-mile hike through literally millions of blooming white-flowering trillium in this botanical-rich area. In addition to the famous trillium fields, we will see yellow lady slippers, showy orchids, and the regionally-rare nodding trillium. Migrating warblers are also a highlight of this hike, with this area being one of the few hot spots in our region for seeing and hearing the cerulean warbler. INFO: Bob Pickett 301/681-1511.

6 (Saturday)

**HIKE - Vigorous Hikers
Fairfax County, VA**

The Fairfax Cross County Trail (CCT). To help celebrate the opening of the CCT, the "Tuesday Vigorous Hikers" plan to hike the full 38 miles of the trail. Join us on all, or part, of this hike. INFO: Cliff Noyes (hclmnoyes@yahoo.com) or Chris Nolen (chrishiker@erols.com).

6 (Saturday)

**MEETING - North Chapter
Arendtsville, PA**

3:00 p.m. We'll hold our spring meeting and picnic at Gypsy Spring Cabin. INFO: Pete Brown (peter.brown4@worldnet.att.net) 410/343-1140.

6 (Saturday)

**TRAIL WORK TRIP - Rock Creek Park
Washington, DC**

8:15 a.m. - noon. Meet at the Rock Creek Nature Center located south of the Military Road NW park entrance. INFO: Alex Sanders (wdctrails@yahoo.com) 703/465-8140 or Ranger Ken Ferebee at 202/895-6221.

6 (Saturday)

**TRAIL WORK TRIP - South Mountaineers
Appalachian Trail, MD**

INFO: Nancy Hammond (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/739-0442.

6 (Saturday)

**TRAIL WORK TRIP - Yankee Clippers
Appalachian Trail, PA**

INFO: Pete Brown (peter.brown4@worldnet.att.net) 410/343-1140.

6 - 7 (Saturday - Sunday)

**CLASS - Wilderness First Aid (WSC)
Alexandria, VA**

A program of the Wilderness Safety Council, this eighteen-hour class includes classroom study, hands-on practice, and results in a two-year certification. The cost is \$160. More information and registration at: <http://wfa.net>. INFO: Christopher Tate (chris@wfa.net) 703/836-8905.

9 (Tuesday)

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

10 (Wednesday)

**HIKE - Midweek Hikers
Location to be determined**

See April 5 event for more information.

10 (Wednesday)

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

13 (Saturday)

**HIKE - Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter
Woodstock, VA**

Enjoy spring and great views on this scenic, seven-mile hike from 1600 ft. at the Trout Run Trailhead to the 2800 ft. summit on Halfmoon Mountain, location of a former fire lookout station. Hike in diverse envi-

ronments from open deciduous woods, going up the hollow created by Halfmoon Run, to the pine and boulder-covered top. Vistas include surrounding mountains in WV and Trout Run Valley. We will also hike to the view of Halfmoon Mountain itself, seen from the rock outcrop in vicinity of the Halfmoon Run and Tuscarora trails intersection. One mile of the return will be via an old road, off the trail, downhill to Halfmoon Run. For those not wishing to hike off the trail, they may return from Halfmoon Mountain directly for a total distance of six miles. INFO: Walt Smith (wsmith@visualink.com) 540/678/1043.

13 - 14 (Saturday - Sunday)

**TRAIL WORK TRIP - Cadillac Crew
Martinsburg, WV**

The Crew continues work on an emergency Tuscarora Trail relocation at the north end of Sleepy Creek WMA. It will be a challenge to build the trail through a steep rock field. Hopefully we will finish the project this work trip. Bring water and a lunch for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Overnight location to be determined. INFO: Jon or Katherine Rindt (jkrindt@adelphia.net) 540/635-6351.

14 (Sunday)

**SPECIAL EVENT - Ravishing Raptors
Berkeley Springs, WV**

We'll celebrate "Ravishing Raptors and Other Fine Feathered Friends" at the Panorama Overlook in Berkeley Springs. This overlook has the 7th most beautiful view in the U.S. where you can see WV, MD and PA all at once. We need trail talkers, as well as someone to lead a hike in the area. This event is sponsored by the Ecology Coalition of Morgan County (www.natureniche.biz). INFO: Jane Thompson (jaytee hike@yahoo.com) 301/349-2496.

17 (Wednesday)

**HIKE - Midweek Hikers
Location to be determined**

See April 5 event for more information.

20 (Saturday)

**HIKE - Waterfall and Wildflower Series
South District, Shenandoah National Park, VA**

This will be a 10-mile circuit to Riprap Falls on the Riprap, Appalachian and Wildcat Ridge Trails. There will be no bushwhacking. There is a possibility we might see the Large Whorled Pogonia, an uncommon native orchid. PATC Map 11. INFO: Jack Thorsen (thorsen4@juno.com) 703/339-6716 or William Needham (Needham82@AOL.COM) 410/884-9127.

20 (Saturday)

**TRAIL WORK TRIP - Northern Virginia
McLean, VA**

Join a training workshop on trail maintenance supported by the ACME Treadway Trail Crew. We will redo some sections of the Potomac Heritage Trail along the scenic Potomac River. Trainers will help all abilities learn the fundamentals and "Zen" of trail work. 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday only, with optional potluck meal afterwards. Limited to 15 slots - Must RSVP, if interested. INFO: Bruce Glendening (bglendening@yahoo.com) 703/532-9093

20 (Saturday)

**TRAIL WORK TRIP - Roaring Tuskers
Gore, VA**

The Roaring Tuskers, Tuscarora Trail Central District Trail Crew, will be working on relocating the Tuscarora Trail in vicinity of Gore. Please bring water, lunch, gloves and boots. INFO: Steve Sharp (stevenssharp@comcast.net) 240/338-3655.

20 (Saturday)

✕ **TRAIL WORK TRIP – South Mountaineers Appalachian Trail, MD**
 INFO: Nancy Hammond (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/739-0442.

20 (Saturday)

✕ **TRAIL WORK TRIP – Yankee Clippers Appalachian Trail, PA**
 INFO: Pete Brown (peter.brown4@worldnet.att.net) 410/343-1140.

20 – 21 (Saturday – Sunday)

✕ **TRAIL WORK TRIP – North District Hoodlums North District, Shenandoah National Park, VA**
 Come on down to the bayou and join with the Hoodlums in their annual Cajun work trip. The Hoodlums trail crew works on the Appalachian Trail and the blue-blazed trails in the north section of Shenandoah National Park. After a day of hard work we will enjoy the camaraderie of fellow trail workers with a Cajun theme meal at Indian Run maintenance hut. Come for the day, stay for dinner, and camp overnight if you wish. Or just come out and work with us during the day. Some folks who stay over may even want to work on Sunday. Newcomers are always welcome! We'll meet at Piney River Ranger Station, MP 22 on Skyline Drive, at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. INFO: Dick Dugan (rdugan@frontiernet.net) 304/856-3511.

20 – 21 (Saturday – Sunday)

✕ **TRAIL WORK TRIP – Shenandoah Bartenders Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA**
 Lovely little Buck Hollow will be the object of the Bartenders' attention on this trip. North end of this trail needs some treadway repairs and upgrades on the stream crossings. Come out and learn some trail maintenance basics. We love new faces, and don't worry - we offer on-the-job training. For free. Also accommodations at a PATC cabin on Friday and Saturday nights. INFO: Cathie Cummins (Cathie@wfa.net) 703/631-7421, 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on weeknights.

21 (Sunday)

✕ **HIKE – Sunday Hikers Comus, MD**

May means wildflowers and hikes in the wood. We'll be visiting an old favorite, Sugarloaf Mountain, for this springtime hike. Hopefully we'll be in time to see the mountain laurel blooming this year. This is an 8.5-mile moderate hike, with an elevation change of 1,700 ft. On this route we'll catch all the great overlooks as well. INFO: Vince Ferrari (vincentferrari@gmail.com) 301/249-2210.

24 (Wednesday)

✕ **HIKE – Midweek Hikers**
Location to be determined

See April 5 event for more information.

26 – 28 (Friday – Sunday)

🏠 **CABIN WORK TRIP – Argow Cabin South District, Shenandoah National Park, VA**
 Come help restore an old mid 1800's log cabin built by Confederate Soldier James Samuel Eaton. We will be replacing the old floor joists of the cabin and begin construction of the new privy. Overnight accommodations will be at Schairer Trail Center, a short 1/2 mile hike in from Eaton Hollow Overlook on Skyline Drive (MM70). Communal meals for Sat. dinner, Sun. Breakfast and Sun. lunch for a minimal fee. INFO: Jeff Testerman (jtest@ntelos.net) 434/589-2081.

27 (Saturday)

✕ **HIKE – Tuscarora Trail Series Berkeley Springs, WV**

Hike in Sleepy Creek WMA, in West Virginia. Elevation change of 1200 feet. Using a new reloca-

tion, we will hike up Sleepy Creek Mountain as we enter the Wildlife Management Area. From there, it is level hiking until we drop down to the North end of Sleepy Creek Lake. INFO: Jason Rainville (superjasonr@hotmail.com) 304/262-0994.

28 – 29 (Sunday – Monday)

🎪 **SPECIAL EVENT – Viva! Vienna! Vienna, VA**

"Viva! Vienna!" will once again fill Center Street with hundreds of vendors. There will be live music and dance, amusement rides and plenty of good food. PATC will have a display at this event and could use some help. Even if you only have an hour or two, we could use you to set up and take down the display. Help is needed from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday and from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Monday. INFO: Pat Fankhauser (pfankhauser@patc.net).

27 – 28 (Saturday – Sunday)

✕ **TRAIL WORK TRIP – Cadillac Crew Round Hill, VA**

Join the Crew for Memorial Day weekend as we work on erosion problems on the AT north of Blackburn. As usual, there are a variety projects to choose from when the Crew visits Blackburn. Community dinner on Saturday night. Overnight at Blackburn Trail Center. INFO: Jon or Katherine Rindt (jkrindt@adelphia.net) 540/635-6351.

30 (Tuesday)

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

31 (Wednesday)

✕ **HIKE – Midweek Hikers**

Location to be determined

See April 5 event for more information. ☐

Seasonal Trail Crews –

A Challenge, An Opportunity

PATC fills six trail crews who work with rangers to put in five days of work on major projects.

The work is challenging but fun, trail-building skills learned are valuable, the fellowship is priceless. Are you up to and would you like to be on a seasonal crew? If so send a note to Trail Coordinator Heidi Forrest (hforrest@patc.net).

The dates are: SNP Southern District: Aug. 14-19; Central District: May 8-12 and Aug. 21-25; North District: May 16-19 and Aug. 28-Sept. 1; Massarock Crew: Jun. 4-9; Jun. 11-15; Sept. 10-15; and Sept. 17-22. ☐



Are You Creative? Like to See Results?

The Acme Treadway Company is for You!



Check The Forecast in the *Potomac Appalachian* or on www.acmetreadway.net for work trips each month through October!



Teton, from page 9

below us, just below eye level. How wonderful to be in the sky with the leprechauns.

At times it feels like I'm walking in a postcard. I still can't believe I'm really here in a real live setting. It's simply so different from anything I've hiked in before. Needless to say, we were quite tired when we reached camp. We elevated our feet and waited until the tired sensation went away before eating supper on large flat rocks near Cascade Creek.

The next day we woke to clear skies and beautiful reflections in the creek of sunlit mountains. Today's mileage would be a most doable four miles between campsites. We took our time, gazing at the views as we exchanged Canyon addresses, leaving South Fork for North Fork. Reaching our agreed upon camp site in the camping zone, we set up camp around 2:00.

Since Lake Solitude was calling, we brought some supper supplies and miscellaneous day hike things and traveled the one mile to the lake. We spent 4.5 hours there just relaxing on the rocks, taking naps in the warm sunshine. Now and then I would wake up to gaze out at the Grand Teton towering over the North Fork. Mark said this is the most time he's spent simply being "lazy." Everyone deserves a sunny afternoon, lounging beside an alpine lake in the land of dreams. Don't wake me up please as I'm already in paradise.

All of the day hikers were gone by 3:30 or so, and we had the entire place to ourselves, except for the occasional backpacker either headed up Paintbrush Divide or down into the North Fork. We ate supper, cleaned dishes, filtered water, and headed back down to camp, taking in all the scenery around us. We sat outside of our tents, taking in the last hurrah of color in the sky and accompanying alpine glow on the surrounding mountains, accompanied by robin song and his choral brethren.

Since Lake Solitude had done such magic to our souls the previous day, we packed up early and hoofed it up to said lake for breakfast. After breakfast at the lakeside café, we faced the trudge up Paintbrush Divide. The wind was no joke here on the divide, with gusts up to 40 mph. One fellow who passed us said that it was 70 mph but I think that was an exaggeration.

Some dark clouds rolled in over our heads (with blue sky all around), and we heard what sounded at first like a jet flying low to our left. Turns out it was thunder. It was quite interesting to hear thunder beside you



Dawn is imprinted on the rocks in the background as the sun rises on Death Canyon Campsite.



Ascending the North Fork of Cascade Canyon. Signs warn with words and pictures!

and not overhead. Thunder has a most interesting bass sound when it reverberates around the granite walls of canyons and mountain sides.

After our 5.5-mile hike, we entered the Holly Lake camping area and set up our last camp. I took advantage of the sunshine and stretched out for another sunny siesta. After a nap, I went for a stroll around the lake, admiring the well-built rock path and sporadic rock cairns artistically placed here and there. While sitting on a small semi-island eating a York peppermint patty, I watched the afternoon smoke from the Idaho fires roll in and listened to the picas eep-eeping at each other as they gathered grasses for the long winter months ahead – before heading back for the evening meal.

Just as we finished all our evening camp chores, the first fat droplets of true rain started coming down. We were in for a real show, a true mountain thunderstorm. I watched the tent walls glow green when the lightning flashed, thankful for a safe haven in the mountains. I enjoyed the booming sounds the thunder made as it reverberated down Paintbrush Canyon.

Halfway through breakfast, it decided to spit slanting rays of hard balls of snow at us in sporadic volleys. We packed some things up wet because tonight's abode would be five-star accommodations at the Best Western in Jackson Hole – with Jacuzzi! We could dry out then.

The ice balls kept up a steady fire from our camp at 7,000+ feet down to around 6,500. At that point, it changed over to drizzle. We passed two day-hikers who were headed up Paintbrush Canyon to the divide. One of the hikers had shorts on, and I wondered at either his imbecility or tough Western façade. Either one seems like a recipe for hypothermia. While we waited for our taxi to take us to our degreasing station, we watched the fog separate and reunite on the slopes of the mountains before us, revealing a veil of white on the trees. One day I would like to return to this piece of paradise on earth – God's creative palette if ever a landscape could be called that. □

—Susan Bly

Bob Pickett's Appalachian Nature: Cowbirds

As we are all aware, the populations of migratory songbirds have significantly declined in the past 40 years. A study published in the "Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences" (PNAS) in December projects that by 2100 up to 14 percent of all bird species may be extinct and that as many as one out of four may be functionally extinct – that is, critically endangered or extinct in the wild. These findings come on the heels of the November 2004 "Global Species Assessment by the World Conservation Union," which found that 12 percent of all bird species are already threatened with extinction.

The PNAS study cited several reasons for the current and expected decline in bird populations, including habitat loss, disease, climate change, competition from introduced species, and exploitation for food or the pet trade.

One of the most precipitous declines has been documented in the Cerulean warbler population. According to the Breeding Bird Survey, there has been a decline of 4.5 percent per year from 1966 to 2001. Other statistics record a 79.6 percent loss from 1966 to 2003!

Of the many migrant birds that will be arriving in our region, one of the earlier migrants is the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*). Male resident cowbirds arrive the last week of March, while resident females arrive first week of April. These birds arrive from their winter range in the southeastern United States, where up to 50 million have roosted, along with red-winged blackbirds, grackles, and starlings before fanning out over North America.

A Sneaky Strategy

Brown-headed Cowbirds have a unique breeding strategy. Instead of building their own nests, incubating their own eggs, and raising their own nestlings, cowbird females use other bird species as hosts – laying their eggs in the nests of other bird species and relying on these hosts to incubate and raise their chicks. In the long list of birds thus imposed upon, the vireos, the wood warblers, and the small sparrows figure most prominently. Scientists have now recorded that Brown-headed Cowbirds have parasitized over 220 host species. While not all hosts make good foster parents (timing of egg-laying, location of nests, size of eggs, etc.), cowbird chicks have been successfully

reared by over 150 host species, with songbirds comprising the majority of hosts.

In recent decades, many land managers, conservationists, and citizens have argued that parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds is a major threat to North American songbird populations and that cowbird parasitism is responsible for the range-wide population declines currently shown in a number of songbird species, particularly neotropical migrants. In response, various federal and local government non-game agencies have initiated programs to control cowbird numbers over the past 25 years.

So, what is the story with this "obligate brood parasite?" How did it evolve such a strategy? What is the impact of this bird on our resident bird population and, most significantly, what should we be doing about it?

Historically, during the last Pleistocene Ice Age, cowbirds probably followed herds of now-extinct species of North American elephants, horses, camels, and pigs. In more recent history, they lived entirely in the Great Plains and followed migratory bison herds across the landscape, feeding on insects stirred up by the feet of the big ungulates. This transient lifestyle made it difficult to take up house-keeping in any one locale. Consequently, cowbirds developed a breeding strategy known as "brood parasitism," in which they would lay their eggs in the nest of another species, allowing this "host" species to raise the cowbird offspring. This strategy has worked well for thousands of years.

When bison were nearly extirpated from the North American landscape and replaced by cattle, sheep, and goats, cowbirds adapted and began to associate with livestock. In the last century, Brown-headed Cowbirds have experienced massive range expansions and population explosions as forests have been opened to make way for agricultural and suburban landscapes.

The fecundity of the female cowbird is astounding. A single female is capable of laying nearly one egg per day at the peak of the breeding season and produces a total of 30-40 eggs over the two- to three-month breeding period. Because female cowbirds usually lay only one egg in a host nest, this translates into 30-40 nests parasitized per female in one season.

In approximately 60-70 percent of nests parasitized, the cowbird removes one of the host eggs before laying her own egg. Normally, one egg per nest is the rule, but two eggs are not uncommon (usually the result of two different females), and three or more have been recorded in areas of high cowbird density.

The cowbird has another advantage that helps ensure the success of her progeny. Whereas most host species require an incubation period of 12 to 14 days, the cowbird egg requires only 11 to 12 days, thus enabling a head start on the host eggs.

Host Reactions

Not surprisingly, the host birds react to the alien eggs in a number of ways. Nine species have the ability to reject/eject these foreign eggs from their nests, including Baltimore orioles, gray catbirds, and American robins. Some occasionally cover over the parasite eggs by building a new floor over them if they have no eggs of their own at the time. This is true of such birds as the Red-eyed, Warbling, Blue-headed and Yellow-throated Vireos, the Prothonotary, Yellow and Chestnut-sided Warblers, and the Redstart. However, the Yellow Warbler is the star performer. Two-story nests of this warbler are fairly common where cowbirds are numerous, three-storied nests are not very rare, and as many as four or even five stories have been built. But in the majority of cases, the host birds accept the eggs and raise them along with their own.

Why don't more species reject the cowbird eggs? Perhaps some accepter species, particularly those inhabiting (formerly unbroken) forests, only encountered cowbird parasitism in the last 100 years and so have not evolved to recognize and reject the parasitism. Or, it could be removing the cowbird egg could result in breakage and loss of their own eggs, or raising the cowbird is a better option than the risk of not nesting at all. Or, it could be the impact on the host species isn't significant enough to warrant evolving more aggressive defensive tactics.

A major study was published by Russell T. Norris. His results included the following:

In the 237 observed nests, the hosts laid 668 eggs, of which 383 (57.3 percent) hatched; the Cowbirds laid 108 eggs, of which 46 (42.6 percent) hatched; 37.7 percent of the host eggs, 26.8

See Cowbird, page 18

Cowbird, from page 17

percent of the Cowbird eggs produced fledglings. Of the host eggs that hatched, 64 percent produced fledglings; of the Cowbird eggs that hatched 63 percent produced fledglings.

With four exceptions all parasitized nests that produced young produced at least one host young.

The 35 non-parasitized (successful) nests produced 2.94 fledglings per nest; 19 parasitized (successful) nests fledged 2.05 host young per nest, indicating that each parasite was raised at the expense of about one host young.

The most comprehensive findings have come from a national conference, Research and Management of the Brown-headed Cowbird in Western and Eastern Landscapes, organized by Partners in Flight on 23-25 October 1997, Sacramento, Calif. (Details can be found at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/research/>.) The following is the summary highlights taken from the published "white paper":

Impact of Cowbird Parasitism

Cowbird populations are declining across the continent (about 1 percent per year between 1966-1996).

Rates of nest parasitism vary locally; when rates are high, parasitism may harm local populations of some species.

Host species often re-nest and are able to make up reproductive success lost to parasitism.

Hosts with short breeding periods and those that begin the season raising cowbirds may not have enough time to re-nest.

Cowbird parasitism probably is not responsible for the continent-wide declines of many North American songbird species.

Rates of parasitism depend on the proximity of cowbird feeding sites to host breeding sites.

Rates of parasitism sometimes correlate poorly with numbers of cowbirds counted in an area.

Issues of Cowbird Management

Cowbirds are managed through lethal control.

Cowbird control is controversial.

Cowbird control is expensive.

Cowbird control programs have proceeded without a general framework, with little coordination between programs, or between the land management and scientific communities.

Cowbird control can reduce rates of parasitism.

No research has tested the effectiveness of large-scale control on the wintering grounds, where cowbirds congregate in large roosts.

Cowbird control programs on Endangered Species have had some success in meeting their ultimate goal: increasing local host populations.

Scientists suggest that cowbird control is a short-term solution that ignores the real problem of habitat degradation as a result of agriculture, grazing, and development.

Scientists advocate protection and restoration of host breeding habitat and improvements in grazing and agricultural practices.

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club Trail Patrol presents

Leave No Trace Trainers Course April 2006

This combination indoor classroom and outdoor field course is designed to enhance your understanding of Leave No Trace practices and ethics and to develop your confidence in teaching others about Leave No Trace. Through activities, field/classroom experience, and both formal and informal discussions, you will be challenged to develop your LNT skills and ethics. This is a fun class where all have a part in demonstrating the choices that can be made to minimize our impact on the land and our resources. It is hoped that graduates of this class will be willing to make LNT presentations to community groups when and if their schedules permit.

Classroom: Mon., April 17 - 7:30 p.m., PATC Headquarters, Vienna, Va.

Weekend Field Program: Sat. - Sun., April 22 & 23, SNP

Cost: \$35.00 for PATC Members, \$50.00 for Non-Members (Join PATC and get the member price!)

Registration: Registration forms are available on-line through the Trail Patrol/LNT page of the PATC Web site at www.patc.net or contact Mark Holland (TPLNT@patc.net) or 540/636-3639 (mornings only). Send payment with registration form to: PATC, LNT Trainers Course, 118 Park Street, SE, Vienna, VA 22180-4609. Please include your e-mail address on the check. □

Cowbird Habitat Preferences

Cowbirds occur most often in agricultural/residential landscapes near open woodlands. Cowbirds frequent woodland edges created when deforestation leads to a mosaic of trees and open brush/grassland. They rarely occur near continuous forests, deciduous or coniferous.

Large, contiguous forests sustain lower rates of parasitism than fragmented forests. This is because cowbirds 1.) scan for hosts at forest edges, rarely in forests interiors; and 2.) fragmented forests have proportionally more edge than contiguous forests, creating small woodlots that are easy for cowbirds to penetrate.

The most effective way to control cowbird numbers and the impact of cowbirds on Neotropical migrants is to control the features of the environment on which they thrive. Landscape-level measures that maintain large forest tracts with minimal edge to interior ratios (i.e., compact versus long, linear shapes) would be most effective. In addition, openings in forests such as for roads, timbering, gas wells, picnic areas, etc. should be minimized and concentrated into a few areas rather than dotted throughout the forest. Such long-term and large-scale habitat planning is ultimately necessary for conservation of Neotropical migratory bird species, not only to control cowbird populations but also to control populations of nest predators (raccoons, blue jays, crows, squirrels) that also increase in fragmented forests. Only through sound habitat preservation, planning, and management can we stem the expansion of cowbird populations and conserve our migratory birds. □



Vince Ferrari (left) hike leader and Forecast editor, spent a very cold Saturday in February on the Potomac Heritage Trail, in Virginia, along with Dick Ikle (center), and Matt Carroll. Here the group has just crossed Pimmet Run. Photo by David Ebert.

Product Spotlight - World's Smallest Flashlight

I thought I had seen everything in light-weight gear until I recently ran across what might be the world's smallest, lightest flashlight. If you absolutely positively must go as light and as small as possible, here's the flashlight for you. It's actually more of an attachment to a battery – but whatever works. And it's apparently weatherproof as well. Buy it for \$10 at Cyberguys.com. Just go to their site and search for PakLite.

And for those of you that really want to cut your home lighting costs down to “nil,” these lightbulbs are worth considering. With an output of a 25 watt incandescent bulb that in reality only draws 2.2 measly watts of electricity, this bulb could burn 12 hours a day for a year, and still only cost you around a dollar in electricity costs. Of course, 25 watt bulbs have their place, and these seem like they'd be better suited to spotlight lighting. See Cyberguys.com for more details. There is a 36-LED version (equivalent to 25 watts) found by searching for item number 250 0181, or a 18-LED version found by searching for item number 250 0176 at www.cyberguys.com. □

—Andy Hiltz

FROM THE PATC STORE

Circuit Hikes in Shenandoah National Park Edition 15, 2005

(Broadwell; 15th edition, 2005, 102 pp.) This guide describes 42 routes in 30 different areas of the park, as well as options to extend or shorten several circuits. Distances range from 1.7 to 14.4 miles. Maps, photos, directions to trailheads, elevation change data, difficulty assessments and estimated hiking times accompany landmark-by-landmark directions along the trails. General information on the terrain, flora, fauna and safety in the park are provided. Excellent for day hikers, alone or with PATC maps 9-11.

Retail Price: \$9.00 non-member or \$7.20 member, plus \$2.00 shipping and 5 percent Virginia tax. You can call to place your order (703/242-0693) or go to www.patc.net. Item PC100 □



TRAILHEAD

The winter that avoided us in January arrived in February with cool spells punctuated with milder periods. But hopefully, March will provide some beautiful, cool days with opportunities to get out and shake off the winter doldrums. Most trail overseers and crews begin the season in March with priority given to clearing winter litter and blowdowns. However, as you will read below, some couldn't wait for March.

Unphased by Weather Extremes

Although the first official Blue & White crew weekend doesn't normally occur until March, many crew members couldn't wait this year, tempted perhaps by the promise of wind, rain, and bitter cold. Dan Erwin, Patrick Wilson, and Melanie and Kelly Falk weathered the windiest winter day they could find. Fifty mph winds in Broad Hollow blew wet snow horizontally, swayed the trees like a hurricane, and seemed to create new blowdowns as fast as the shivering crew could buck them. Kelly, at 17 enjoying her first work trip, was told that these conditions were typical.

The Blue & White Crew then launched its 2006 season early in February with a visit to the Sam's Ridge and Buck Ridge trails. Hikers had reported numerous large blowdowns on both trails. Since both routes are in designated wilderness, the crew broke out their armamentarium of Dueweke-tuned crosscut saws, axes, and pruning saws. On arrival at the Sperryville rendezvous, 13 hearty souls found delightfully balmy weather, with temps in the low 40's and steady rain. Perfectly curled shavings are all that's left after sawyers and swampers broke into two groups to tackle the blowdowns, removing 73 medium-to-large trees that had fallen in recent months. The two crews re-convened in Sperryville and were able to fend off certain hypothermia with administration of large burgers and cold beverages. Only one person was forced to stay home – to bake cookies for the crew! Photos of the adventure are posted at: <http://blueandwhitecrew.org/PhotoGallery/2006/february.php>

The next Friday, Dan Dueweke and Patrick Wilson took Peter Lecompte from the Hoodlums on a Blue & White-style work trip: hacking and sawing their way through 12 miles of Hazel country and not finishing until it was pitch dark.



Tate Heuer, Leslie Manning, Michael Seth monitor Bruce Schreiber as he adds a blaze on the Massanutten South Trail in January.

Photo by Lee Manning

Not to be outdone, Melanie and Aksel Falk joined Dan and Patrick on the coldest day of the year, waiting until temperatures on the AT ridge climbed into the positive numbers before clearing 10 miles of the trail with chainsaws. Patrick suspiciously "blew a bearing" on his Stihl 044 so he didn't have to carry it the whole way. The tally for these four winter excursions: more than 150 blowdowns cleared.

Rumor has it that a few of the B&W guys are going to Costa Rica in March to do some trail work. Should be interesting – maybe we will get a report in the next Trailhead.

Rocky Project

Shenandoah National Park is conducting a survey of rocky outcrops in the park to inventory natural resources at those locations and determine visitor impacts. The Park Service has scheduled two public meetings to discuss the Rocky Outcrop Management Project (ROMP). Details about the project and information about the meetings can be found at: <http://blueandwhitecrew.org/resources/snp.php>.

SNP Central District Trail Conditions

SNP Central District overseers are encouraged to check reported conditions on their trail sections, posted at: <http://blueandwhitecrew.org/trailmgmt/trailconditions.php>. Overseers can also use the Web resource to view recent work on their trail sections, and view their work history. The Blue & White Crew is working with the SNP trails staff to include updated trail inventory information and new maps of each trail section: <http://blueandwhitecrew.org/trailmgmt/trailinfo.php>.

Massanutten South

Things have been moving at a brisk pace in the Massanutten South District. Since last fall new District Manager Tate Heuer and some dedicated volunteers have been moving forward with a strong effort to get the trails in better shape. They have recently had work trips to improve the Fridley Gap Trail, Roaring Run Trail (with the help of the JMU Geography Club), and two sections of the Massanutten Mountain South Trail. Volunteers whose help has really been appreciated with the work trips in the District

See Trailhead, page 21

Trailhead, from page 20

include James Little, Lee and Leslie Manning, Bruce Schreiber, Michael Seth, Keith Tondrick, Dale Wilson, and others.

PATC members and other are welcome to participate in future trips, and their assistance would be rewarding and greatly appreciated. Just keep an eye on the forecast section for future opportunities. Tate is also looking to fill two trail overseer positions for sections on the Massanutten Mountain South Trail.

SNP North District

AT District Manager Dick Dugan reminds interested volunteers to sign up for the district Summer Crew weeks. Some of the challenging projects include a relocation of the AT on Hogback Mountain. Check for the application on the PATC Web site. Dick also reminds us the Hoodlums worktrip in April will be only one day, Saturday, April 15. Dinner in the evening for those who want to stay, but the crew will not be staying overnight because the following day is Easter.

Correct your calendars, the date for the North District Trails Workshop has been changed to Sept. 23-24 from the date previously announced in the PA.

SNP South Side Trails

District Manager Pete Gatje and fellow trail workers are coming out of hibernation but the cold blasts of Canadian air have limited the amount of trail work that can be done. There are plenty of blowdowns to remove so Rhett Orndorff (Trayfoot Trail overseer), John Ruppe (One Mile Run Trail overseer), and Pete have been out on most Saturdays removing as many of these bad boys as possible. They are even helping District Manager Don White by removing blowdowns on the AT so hikers can access the side trails. Their next work trip involves removing about 20 blowdowns on a two-mile section of trail between the Riprap and Wildcat Ridge trails.

Madison Brown and Pete were out in February to repair a washed out section of Madison's Rocky Mountain Run Trail caused by seven inches of rain in a 24-hour period in a localized area near Skyline Drive this past December. Apparently Madison's trail was the only one that was damaged.

Marilyn Duncan has replaced Tom Dewey as overseer for the Doyles River Trail and is extremely enthusiastic about her responsibilities. Her husband Scott is the overseer for the



Photo by Lee Manning

Volunteers, from left to right, Michael Seth, Tate Heuer, and Bruce Schreiber clearing blowdowns on Massanutten South Trail.

Jones Run Trail, and they make a great team helping each other out.

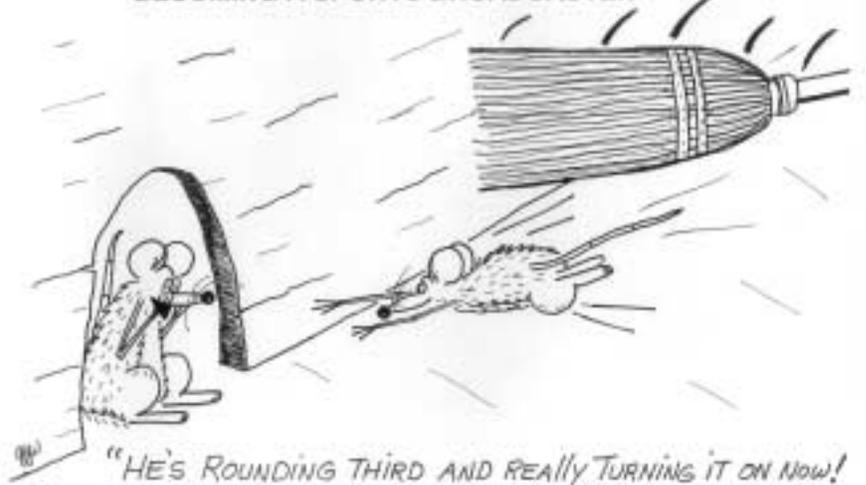
While on his way to remove a blowdown blocking the Big Run Loop North Trail in late January, Pete saw a big dark colored cougar cross Skyline Drive about 100 yards ahead of his car. It was about five feet long with a long

tail and bounded across the drive in one jump. And they say they don't exist!

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@adelphia.net. □

TAILS FROM THE WOODS by George Walters

AS A YOUNG MOUSE, LOUIE OFTEN DREAMED OF BECOMING A SPORTS BROADCASTER



"HE'S ROUNDING THIRD AND REALLY TURNING IT ON NOW! HOLY COW! THE BROOM IS BOBBLED OUT IN CENTER! NOW HE'S HEADING HOME! THE SQUEEZE IS ON! HERE COMES THE SLIDE!"

Web Resources for Trail Volunteers

The Web site for the Blue & White Crew has been upgraded to provide a multitude of resources for trail maintainers. Overseers and trail crews alike can benefit from the wealth of advice and links found on this Web site, found at <http://blueandwhitecrew.org>. Visit this online space for resources such as:

- Links to books, videos, tools, upcoming workshops, web resources, etc.
- 'Featured Resource,' updated monthly
- Overseer information on blazing, vegetation control, blowdowns, and erosion
- PATC policies and documents (overseer handbook, etc.)

Resources for SNP Central District Overseers

- Check the work history on your trail section
- Check Trail Inventory data (inventory of features, average grade, distance)
- Check reported trail conditions
- Check SHEN requirements and trail maintenance standards
- Detailed section maps available in multiple formats for most side trails

Resources for Blue & White Crew Volunteers

- Crew Photo Gallery (1997 to present)
- On-line Crew Cookbook
- Calendar of events
- Work trip history (1996 to present)
- Up to the minute updates on Moe, Bounce, and friends. ☐

—Kerry Snow

PATC Trail Patrol Presents Backpacking 101

An Introductory Backpacking Course

Expand your enjoyment of the outdoors through the practice of backpacking. 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. Includes an overnight backpacking trip accompanied by experienced backpacking instructors. Designed for persons 18 years and older who have no prior backpacking experience, as well as former backpackers seeking to update their skills.

Introduction Night

Mon., April 3, 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Headquarters, 118 Park Street, SE, Vienna, Va.

Instructional Weekend

April 8-9, 8 a.m. - 7 p.m. (Sat.), 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Sun.),

Prince William Forest Park, Triangle, Va.

(Sat. overnight camping encouraged but not required)

Overnight Backpacking Trip

April 29 & 30 (Sat.– Sun.), Trip destination and times TBD

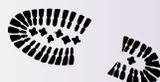
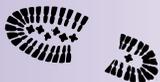
Fee: \$75.00 for PATC Members; \$95.00 for Non-Members

For more information, see www.patc.net/volunteer/trailpatrol/Outreach/BP101.htm or contact John Bridges (TPBackpack@patc.net) 703/726-0188. ☐

Volunteers Appointed in February

Trail Overseers

Rich McDonough	Massanutten Mtn. South Trail – Fridley Gap to Boone Run Trail
Diane Adams	Gerhard Shelter Trail
Dave Szymanski	Dumbarton Oaks
Phil and Karris Barry	AT – Saddleback Mtn. Trail to Swift Run Gap



POTOMAC APPALACHIAN

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\$6.00 annually; \$.70 single copies.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Be a giver, not a taker!

Volunteer programmers needed to design and build web applications. Willing to donate time writing PHP, Perl, SQL and Java code? Current projects are: (1) expanding web-based cabin reservations and (2) creating web interfaces for internal databases. Interested? E-mail Matt Novinger at mnovinger@patc.net

We're Looking for a Few Good Volunteers!

Would you be interested in helping to restore an important part of PATC's history? Well, if you are, we need you! Back in 1940 and 1941, the Civilian Conservation Corps and PATC built the Rocky Run Shelter along the AT near Lambs Knoll in central Maryland. This classic three-sided Adirondack-style shelter, which has served hikers for more than 60 years, has suffered from the ravages of time. Faced with a decision of whether or not to replace the shelter, PATC and its AT management partners decided to restore the old shelter, as well as construct a new shelter nearby to handle the increased volume of hikers. Restoration

work should commence in late summer or early fall. We have already recruited a small but enthusiastic crew to restore the old shelter. Would you like to join them? If so, please contact president Tom Johnson at president@patc.net.

Be THE Blackburn Plumber

The Blackburn Trail Center is looking for a volunteer with plumbing skills. We are planning two projects this season; winterizing the existing plumbing system, and installing a new kitchenette and half-bathroom in the Carriage House. For more information please contact Chris Brunton (trailbossbtc@msn.com) 703/924-0406.

Cabin Overseers Needed

The Cabins Committee is looking for able candidates to serve as volunteer overseers for some vacancies that have opened up recently for cabins in our rental system. If interested, or if you know of someone who might be interested, please contact Pat Fankhauser at pfankhauser@patc.net or call 703/242-0693, Ext. 17 to obtain a Potential Cabin Overseer Application to fill out and submit for consideration.

CAST IRON FRANKLIN STOVE; FREE TO GOOD HOME, works great; burns wood or coal. Easily heats 3,000 cubic ft. 8-inch flue, and top and back heat shields. Pick up in N. Arlington. Contact Wayne Limberg (wplimberg@aol.com) 703/533-8639.

FOR SALE: Cleaning out the gear closet! Lowe Alpine Cornice 40 pack (\$40 OBO), LL Bean pack large day pack (\$40 OBO), backpacking espresso maker (\$10 OBO), 2 MSR Dromedary bags (\$15 for both OBO). For more info contact Ben Fernandez (3_ferns@adelphia.net).

FOUND: MOTOROLA RADIO. I found a Motorola radio on the Hannah Run Trail on Jan. 7. Please contact Jack (thorsen4@juno.com) 703/330-6717.

PATC Swap Meet

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 three months, at the discretion of the editor, unless we are otherwise advised. □

Who's Minding the Store?

PATC is looking for a new chair of the Marketing Committee. Duties include: advise and supervise sales staff, help with publications inventory, policy and pricing. Please contact: Lee Sheaffer, Vice President-Volunteerism (thumpers@visuallink.com) 540/955-0736.

HIKING PARTNERSHIPS

WANTED: CAMPING EXPEDITION PARTNER

Six weeks in summer 2006 to western National Parks. Leisurely day hikes to alpine areas from pickup truck camper. Esthetics, not record-setting. Share expenses. (In 2005, six weeks, seven Natl. Parks, 9,000 miles, total cost for two people – not each, was \$2,100.) Contact: Grant Olson, Waynesboro, Pa. (owlie1@pa.net) 717/765-4228.

Trail, Shelter, and Corridor Overseers / Monitors Wanted

Corridor Monitor Openings

Tom Lupp, 301/271-7340

tlupp@erols.com

Wilson Gap -VA - PATC Map 7

Ashby Gap South -VA - PATC Map 8

Volunteers needed for the shelter crew
in Maryland

Dicks Dome Shelter – Northern VA –

Map 8

Henry Horn, 301/498-8254

ATHike@aol.com

Open Trails - Contact the District
Manager for the section that interests you.

Pennsylvania Maps 2-3, 4, J, & K
Opportunity to work long hours with no
pay or benefits. Generous allowance of
blisters, stinging/biting insects, and poi-
sonous plants. Special provision for rain
and mud. Little or no supervision. Work
hours optional. Location somewhere on
the Tuscarora Trail in Pennsylvania. No
certification from your doctor or hospital
required.

Pete Brown, 410/343-1140

peter.brown4@worldnet.att.net

PA Tuscarora Trail [J] – Co-overseer

Hemlock Road to Mountain Rd
(4.9 miles)

PA Tuscarora Trail [J] – Co-overseer

PA 233 to Bill Miller Trail (3.9 miles)

PA Tuscarora Trail [J] – Co-overseer

Bill Miller Trail to Cowpens Rd (4.7 miles)

PA Tuscarora Trail [J] – Co-overseer

Cowans Gap State Park to US 30

(6.7 miles)

PA Tuscarora Trail [J] – Co-overseer

US 30 to PA Rte. 16 (1.9 miles)

Harpers Ferry / Ashby Gap AT & Blue-
Blazed – Map 7, 8

Chris Brunton, 703/924-0406

trailbossbtc@msn.com

Appalachian Trail

Loudoun Heights Trail to Powerline

(2.3 miles)

Ashby/Possums AT/BB [Rte. 50 to SNP] -
Map 8, 9

Lloyd Parriott, 540/622-2743

laparriott@hotmail.com

Appalachian Trail

VA 55 to North Woods/orchard stile

(0.9 miles)

Appalachian Trail

North Woods/orchard stile to South

Meadow/woods stile (0.4 miles)

Appalachian Trail

South Meadow/woods stile to VA 638

(0.8 miles)

Barking Dog Trail

AT to Barking Dog Spring/Rte 604

(0.34 mile)

SNP Central Blue-Blazed [north end] –

Map 10

Dan Dueueke, 703/266-3248

danjan3@cox.net

New overseer opportunities coming avail-
able soon. Choice trails rich in
Shenandoah history.

Don't miss this rare opportunity to stake
your claim.

SNP South AT - Map 11

Don White, 804/795-2914

trblldr@comcast.net

Appalachian Trail – Co-overseer

Frazier Discovery Trail to Loft Mtn. Camp
Store (1.1 miles)

Tuscarora Central – Map L

Walt Smith, 540/678-1043

wsmith@visuallink.com

Tuscarora Trail

Southern Rockfield to Pinnacle Powerline

(2.3 miles)

Frye Path Trail

at The Pinnacle (0.4 miles)

Laurel Run Trail

at The Pinnacle (0.5 miles)

Rock Cave Trail & Overlook

at The Pinnacle (0.1 miles)

Massanutten South – Map H

Tate Heuer, 202/255-6055

tate@wth2.com

Massanutten Mtn. South Trail

Pitt Spring to Morgan Run Trail

(1.4 m FR 65) (3.3 miles)

Massanutten Mtn. South Trail

Morgan Run Trail (1.4 m FR 65) to Fridley

Gap (2.3 miles)



The Potomac Appalachian

118 Park Street
Vienna, VA 22180-4609

Telephone: 703/242-0315
Mon.-Thurs. 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Thurs. & Fri. 12:00 noon - 2:00 p.m.

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