



# The Potomac Appalachian

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

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## Thinking about Land Conservation on Earth Day

Nearly a generation has passed since Earth Day was first observed in April, 1970. Back then it was mostly conceived as an environmental teach-in or learning experience, and it succeeded in introducing countless schoolchildren and others to the conservation problems that we all face.

Interestingly, the proclamation of the first Earth Day was credited to Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, not long after he had sponsored the bills that led to the establishment of the National Trails System and the protection of the Appalachian Trail.

In fact, the 25th anniversary of this earlier legislation was commemorated by the first National Trails Day, which was held in 1993.

But public officials and others who came of age during the Vietnam era are just as likely to be out on the Trail for special events on Earth Day, as for the observance of National Trails Day in June.

One of the best examples of this phenomenon was the proposal for the International Appalachian Trail (IAT), which was set forth by Gov. Joe Brennan of Maine on Earth Day, 1994, during a re-election campaign. The IAT is still scheduled for completion by Earth Day, 2000.

Closer to home, PATC members are pondering environmental priorities as we prepare to move into the 21st century. With much of the PATC trail system already under some form of

protection, attention is shifting to the suburban sprawl that is rapidly marching out to South Mountain, the Blue Ridge, and into the valley beyond. Several PATC committees—Conservation, Lands, and Futures—are attempting to deal with these challenges.

The prosperous society that we live in impacts what is left of the wilderness experience in a number of ways: Primitive campsites might have the night sky lit up by the glow from subdivisions and superstores that are not too far off in the distance. The occasional sound of a car along a country road is likely to be replaced by the continuous, muffled roar of interstate traffic.

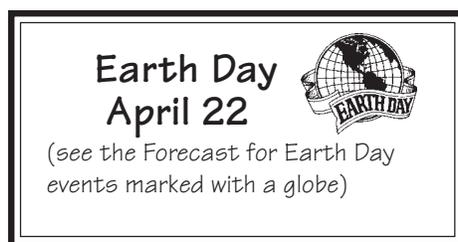
Real wilderness buffs could be tempted to travel or migrate to less populated areas, but that would not really solve the dilemma for those of us who stay behind, as most of us will. These are not easy problems to solve, but your thoughtful consideration, comments, and active participation are invited. That, after all was the take-home message of the first Earth Day. □

—Lloyd MacAskill

## Remembering the Beginning of Earth Day

The first Earth Day was in 1970, but the ten years leading up to that date have an even bigger story to tell. The decade of the sixties has been in our minds a great deal lately. Network television produced a four-hour long program about those turbulent times just in time for sweeps week. The movies are full of sixties themes, the teenagers are wearing sixties clothes, and commercials are playing sixties music. Those times meant a lot to a great many people and still do. Aside from all the nostalgia and hype, it must be remembered that those times changed the way the world thinks in many, many ways. Not the least of these changes in thought had to do with the environment and what we have to do to save it.

It was in 1962, when most of America was still very naive and indifferent to the natural environment that the world was stunned by the revelations in Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*. This horrifying look at the dangers of organic pesticides is generally regarded as the start of the environmental movement as we know it today. Still, it would be an-



other ten years before the deadly chemical known as DDT would be banned from use in this country. Far longer still before its effects and the effects of so many other chemicals would be fully realized and understood.

But the sixties didn't only open our eyes to the dangers of insecticides. As awareness grew in the culture and in the counter-culture about so many other aspects of society, so did awareness of nature increase. As cities and populations expanded, more and more of us wanted a place to go to get away from those crowded places where we spent so much of our time. We wanted, in so many ways, to get back to nature. A big step in that direction was taken in 1964, when the Wilderness Act became the

See *Earth Day*, page 14

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Corporate Donations: Jack Reeder

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Hikes: Tom Johnson

Internet Services: Andy Hiltz

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Land Acquisition: Phil Paschall & Eric Olson

Legal: Eric Olson

Maps: Dave Pierce

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## Council Fire

### Club to Purchase Farmer-Lockhart Property

The Council held its regular meeting on February 9, 1999 at the Club headquarters. The meeting was attended by 22 Council members, 3 staff, 4 Club members, and 1 guest. The PATC membership stands at 6,582, of which 156 registered in the month of January. The Council will generally discuss impending actions at one monthly meeting, giving the Executive Committee and others time to consider ramifications before a vote is taken at the subsequent meeting.

Charlie Graf has been appointed chair of the Shelters Committee. The Council approved the construction of a new shelter to replace the Hemlock Hill Shelter in Maryland. Frank Turk will lead the shelter construction off-site with the help of Boy Scouts and students from Gallaudet University. The shelter is expected to cost less than \$10,000 and should be completed within a year.

Ric Francke has agreed to chair the Dogwood Half-Hundred to be held on April 24. It was decided to limit the enrollment to 250 participants.

After discussion in December and January, the Council voted to prohibit the purchase of alcoholic beverages with PATC funds even if the funds are later reimbursed from private funds.

The Council also voted to approve 32 policies on the AT and trail related activities for inclusion in the sixth edition of PATC's Local Management Plan for the AT, required by our trail maintaining agreements with various partners. Most of the policies reflect known Club intention, past practices, or formal statements by Council or are required for efficient and effective management of our trail responsibilities.

The Council voted to purchase, at a favorable price, 40 acres of the Farmer-Lockhart property on the Tuscarora Trail on the west side of the Great North Mountain. This sale permits better switchbacks on a steep section and protects the trail from developers. The Council also voted for appraisals on three other properties adjacent to the AT in Virginia that may be available for purchase in the near future. The Club may use these land acquisitions as a basis for a formal donations program. In addition, Council voted to fund the design and development of a brochure that explains land conservation options in "plain English" for landowners interested in preserving their property for the benefit of future generations.

Subject to General Counsel review, the Council authorized the President to enter into an agreement with ATC and three other maintaining organizations to allow PATC copyrighted guides and maps of the AT to be used in a CD-ROM product featuring the entire AT.

Hunting on PATC owned lands may presently be permitted on a parcel by parcel basis. There has been discussion to prohibit hunting on certain tracts on which PATC also owns cabins or other facilities. There is some sentiment to move toward a no hunting policy over time but being sensitive to local situations. The issue will be further studied before a recommendation is made.

Because of some recent incidents, a policy on fair consideration procedures for the dismissal of volunteers was discussed. The basis for a policy is the need for clear and open communication between the volunteer and the supervisor. There may be a need for leadership

*See Council Fire, page 6*

### Work Trip Reporting Form Back Online

The work trip reporting form overseers use to report their work hours "online" has now been reactivated on the PATC Website. The original form went "inactive" when PATC's host provider changed to a new server scripting language, effectively disabling the original form. However, thanks to the work of Assistant Webmaster Mike Ritoli, the form has now been revamped and reactivated, and it's better than ever. Overseers interested in sending in their reports over the Internet can find the new reporting form at: [http://www.patc.net/over\\_dat.html](http://www.patc.net/over_dat.html)

—Andy Hiltz, Internet Services Committee

## Walt's Notes

### Stewards of the Land

We are fortunate to live in an area where there are so many beautiful hiking trails readily accessible. From the busy pace of Washington, D.C., we can soon find ourselves on top of a mountain with breathtaking views. What marvelous opportunities we have for individual solitude or for enjoyment with family and friends. But along with the pleasures comes an obligation to maintain this environment for the future, to be good stewards of the land.

In his recent book, *Blue Ridge 2020: An Owner's Manual* (reviewed elsewhere in this issue), Steve Nash asks the question, "What are people going to do?" Nash is referring to whether people in the area have the will to take action in order to preserve the Blue Ridge in the future, to solve the environmental problems caused by pollution, urban sprawl, and other obstructions to the natural landscape. He goes on to provide some examples of how local communities have indicated their willingness to tackle the tough problems and develop meaningful solutions or forgo economic opportunities in order to

protect the surroundings. In Roanoke, Virginia, local citizens, developers, and planners changed the shape of two new housing developments along the Blue Ridge Parkway, in order to minimize any undesirable visual impact. In Frederick County, Virginia, the citizens decided that they did not want a new glass factory, in spite of many new jobs it would have afforded, because they wanted cleaner air. Do these examples establish a trend? To what extent does PATC become involved in solving these types of problems?

### Of What Shall We Be Stewards?

And on this Earth Day may we consider not only what we are going to do about environmental problems but also what it is that we want of the environment? What is our vision of the future places where we hike? Do we continue to place our emphasis on maintaining trails in the mountains far away from the District, or do we cooperate with other organizations in the development of Greenway Trails in urban areas? Is our main focus to be on trails in the natural environment, or should we branch out to connect historical sites and parks, such as the new National Civil War

Battlefields Park being developed in the Shenandoah Valley?

The Club began as creator of 240 miles of the Appalachian Trail; now, with nearly one thousand miles of trails currently under our stewardship, we have gone far beyond our original aim. And our growing membership encompasses a variety of increasing interests.

And how shall we maintain the properties we own? Shall they all be kept in natural woods, or shall some be developed as examples of frontier living, or of other historical settings?

Your Conservation and Lands Committees, and your Council, will be considering the paths our stewardship should take in the future. Your interest and participation in the decision-making will be needed. Please take advantage of the various media and make your voice heard. Please consider how we may be effective stewards of the land.

See you on the trail,



## Horse Riders and Mountain Bikers Demand Equal Access to Hiking Trails

*NOTE: Portions of the material in this article were taken by permission of the authors from the fall 1998 edition of the Keystone Trails Association newsletter.*

In early 1995, the Pennsylvania State Forestry office presented a draft for revising its State Forest Rules and Regulations. One of the items in the draft was to prohibit the use of horses, pack animals, and bicycles from Pennsylvania's two national hiking trails—the Appalachian Trail and the North Country Trail—and 18 designated state hiking trails maintained by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC), except for sections posted as open for these uses. This type of posting is called positive posting, which means that unless otherwise posted, a trail is to be used for human foot travel only.

Except for motor vehicles, previous policy on Pennsylvania state land has been negative posting; that is, unless a trail is posted against a specific use, horses, pack animals and mountain bikes are allowed.

One of the problems with negative posting is that non-hikers can enter a trail at a point where there is no sign and then claim that they did not see any signs prohibiting their use of the trail. This requires a large number of signs and the accompanying expense. Another problem is that the sign can be vandalized or removed, a not uncommon occurrence. Both of these problems were part of the impetus behind the initial decision to switch to positive posting for the 20 selected hiking trails.

### Mail Starts To Fly

Public hearings on the proposed changes to the rules and regulations were held across the state during the fall of 1997, during a 60-day public comment period. One of the surprises was that the equestrian community organized a letter-writing campaign and sent in around 1,000 form letters and 26 individual letters against the trail-related changes. The hiking community sent in several hundred letters in favor of the changes. The mountain bike community was not well organized and provided little input.

This past summer, the Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club, KTA, and a number of other Pennsylvania hiking organizations encouraged members to send letters stating their opposition to the use of hiking trails by horses and mountain bikes. As a result of these efforts, the Bureau of Forestry was flooded with letters from the hiking community during the summer months.



### Locking Horns

On Sept. 10, the Bureau of Forestry held an ad hoc committee meeting at the State Forestry Offices in Harrisburg to address the issue. The hiking community was represented by Ed Beck, president of the Keystone Trails Association, and Thyra Sperry, also of KTA. The Pennsylvania Equine Council sent two representatives, and a single mountain biker, representing no particular organization, also attended.

*See Equal Access, page 4*

## Trails Day Overseer Workshop Coming in June

The Blue & White (Central District SNP) Trail Crew will use National Trails Day 1999 to inaugurate its first Annual Central District Overseers Workshop. Modeled after George Walter's very successful North District workshops, our event will utilize various trail projects to demonstrate and practice the techniques of trail maintenance and construction. We're planning our workshop in conjunction with the Natural and Cultural Resources Staff of Shenandoah National Park, who'll be helping us with facilities and expert instruction. The workshop will provide an opportunity to learn trail skills from the pros and the chance to spend some time with the NPS folks who keep Shenandoah the jewel of the National Parks.

### Time and Place

The workshop will take place on Saturday, June 5th and Sunday, June 6th. We're planning to use the Pinnacles Research Station (a Park Service facility near Thornton Gap) as our staging area and campsite. The events will begin promptly at 9a.m. Saturday (Friday evening arrival is encouraged for those traveling longer distances) and wind up around 2p.m. on Sunday (chain sawyers may stay a little longer on Sunday to practice cutting techniques). All meals (Saturday lunch and dinner, Sunday breakfast and lunch) will

be included in the registration fee. Catering will be provided by Esther and Sam Aulhouse, favorite PATC chefs. Participants will need to bring camping gear for the weekend, work gloves, and an enthusiasm for hard work (Ben Gay® will not be included in the registration fee). Further details will be provided with the registration materials.

### Projects and Skills

The first day of the workshop will consist of several projects that will be designed to teach and reinforce trail maintenance skills. Tentatively, they include a Basic Overseer Course (that will cover blazing, vegetation, and erosion control), a Wilderness Tools Course (that will cover rigging techniques and crosscut saw use), and an Advanced Course (that will cover tread rehabilitation and construction). Sunday will provide an opportunity to utilize the variety of trail skills on a trail rehab project or, for those who'll require a third day of sawing (following the April Chain Saw Workshop), a chance to certify with an experienced sawyer. Safety and tool maintenance will be covered as part of each course.

### Registration and Fees

Because of limitations on camping space and the desire to keep our working groups small, participation in the workshop will be limited

to 20-25 registrants. Enthusiasm for workshops and Trails Day projects has, thankfully, been very high in recent years (the Blue & White 1998 Trails Day project attracted 25 hard working volunteers, and the North District Workshop routinely fills within a few weeks). For this reason, we're encouraging early registration. Current overseers (in any District) and potential overseers will be given highest priority, but all members are encouraged to attend. The registration fee will be in the \$15 to \$20 range. The registration form (included in the May edition of the *Potomac Appalachian*) will include final details and will be mailed to those who register in advance (see the Advance Registration Form in this issue).

Join Us! The workshop is being organized and coordinated by the Blue and White Crew (Charles Hillon and Kerry Snow, co-leaders) and the SNP Trails Management Staff (Trails Coordinator Shawn Green and Crew Supervisors C.T. Campbell, Roger Dovell and Don Harvey). In addition, we hope to have expert instruction from PATC regulars such as Pete "Gripmeister" Gatje and George "Chief Hoodlum" Walters.

We're looking forward to an excellent workshop, a fun weekend, some quality trail work,  
*See Workshops, page 5*

### Equal Access, from page 3

The meeting was quite confrontational, as might be expected. The horse people were adamant that all trails should remain open to horses and were reluctant to admit that horses do any more damage to trails than do hikers, storms, or herds of elk. When it was pointed out that hikers alone maintain the trails, the reply was that the Pennsylvania Equine Council hadn't received a formal request for help with trail maintenance. After much discussion, the horse people admitted that there probably were sensitive sections of trails that should be avoided by horses but that this was no reason to close the entire trail to riders.

The issue of hiker safety was also discussed, particularly with regard to the aggressive manner in which mountain bikes are often operated. About the only thing everyone agreed on was that the trails should remain closed to motor vehicles. Another meeting of this committee is planned at an unspecified future date.

### No Consensus

It is apparent that this issue is not going to go away. Despite the fact that all 20 of the District Foresters in Pennsylvania have indicated that they do not want horses and mountain bikes on the hiking trails in question, and that the Secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is in favor of positive posting, the Office of Forest Management appears reluctant to institute the positive posting that they had originally proposed. No one is certain what the ultimate outcome will be.

KTA is currently performing a soil survey on the 18 designated state trails to identify sensitive areas where horses and mountain bikes are inappropriate and where negative posting should be used to indicate foot traffic only. I have been told that in the George Washington National Forest, hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers are currently working together to maintain trails for their common use. While sharing trails is a reasonable and

evidently workable solution when there is a shortage of trails, it is a poor solution when adequate trails exist for separate use.

The fact of the matter is that there are enough forest roads, logging roads, and other trails in the 2.1 million acres of Pennsylvania's state forests that horses and mountain bikes don't need to share the same trails with hikers. In addition, many downhill and cross-country ski areas are now catering to mountain bikers during the off season.

The reason that hikers spend many thousands of hours annually building and maintaining trails is to enjoy the unique experiences that hiking provides. Many of these experiences, such as birding, observing forest wildlife and simple solitude, will be lost when a trail is used by anything other than a soft-stepping hiker. Maybe we should have called our trails "footpaths" from the beginning. □

—Steve Koeppen, President,  
PATC North Chapter  
*Potomac Appalachian*

*Workshops, continued*

and the start of a long tradition. For further information, please feel free to reach me at my e-mail (kerrysno@sprynet.com) or phone (301/570-0596). Although my home phone is frequently busy in the evenings, I'll try to answer messages as quickly as possible. ☐

—Kerry Snow

**1999 ATC Conference  
July 9-16  
in Virginia**

All may attend. For a complete schedule of events, see [www.atconf.org.com](http://www.atconf.org.com) or the April issue of *Appalachian Trailway News*.

**ADVANCE REGISTRATION FORM**

**1st Annual Central District SNP Trails Workshop  
June 5-6, 1999**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # (day/evening): \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Areas of interest (basic/tools/rehab/other?): \_\_\_\_\_

Check if chain saw certification is desired ☐  
(Participants of April Chain Saw Workshop only)

*The final registration form will appear in the May Potomac Appalachian and will include additional details and fee information. Advance registrants will receive the registration form by mail in April.*

Mail to: Kerry Snow, P.O. Box 1169, Olney, MD 20830

**PATC's New "Campfire" on the Internet**

On Wednesday, February 10th, PATC started a new service on the website—PATC Chat. "Chat" is an Internet communication format where multiple people sign in to a single location and communicate in near real time by typing short messages on their keyboard, and then "sending" these messages to a central location where they can be read by all. Since the communications occur in "near real time", it's possible to carry on a "written conversation" with other chat members.

For some, using Chat can take some getting used to. With many participants online, message postings can sometimes move pretty quickly. But after a short while, most participants get used to the fast pace of the conversation. And for some, Chat can become an addiction. The nice thing about Chat is that it brings together Club members in a single location every night to socialize. There are no set topics (though individuals who decide to become members can start their own chat sessions if they like).

For those of you who have heard of American Online "Chat Rooms" and "Internet Relay Chat", you may ask if this new service is similar. The answer is "Yes", but with a distinct difference. AOL Chat Rooms are a lot more free-wheeling than PATC's Chat com-

munity and obviously you have to be an AOL subscriber to use the chat feature. The counterpart to the AOL Chat Room on the Internet is "Internet Relay Chat", or "IRC" as it is known to many. With IRC, it's necessary to download and configure IRC software on your computer and locate a log-on channel. In many cases, the channels are busy during peak hours, and it can be a challenge signing on.

The PATC Chat community has none of these limitations. You don't have to be a member to join the conversation, and no special software is required. However you DO need a current "Java enabled" web browser (like Microsoft Explorer or Netscape). Most browsers later than Version 2.0 have Java capability built in. (To identify your browser version, open your browser, go to the "Help" menu, and select "About...") The service we use also uses "cookies". Some of you more saavy web users might have disabled cookies in your web browser. You'll have to turn them back on to join the chat session. (You can turn them back off after you've finished your chat session if you like.)

Full details about this new free service can be found on PATC's website at <http://www.patc.net/patcchat.html>. While the chat area is "open" 24 hours a day, we've estab-

lished a time each night when you can join in on the conversation—8p.m. to 9p.m. daily. If you only have Internet access at work, you might consider checking the chat area during lunch. You never know who might be there to say hello.

Something new brought to you by PATC's Internet Services Committee. Give it a try. Will YOU get addicted to chat?? ☐

—Andy Hiltz PATC,  
Internet Services Committee

**Patrons**

- Capital Hiking Club
- Center Hiking Club
- Potomac Backpackers Association
- Sierra Club, MWROP
- Wanderbirds Hiking Club

**Corporate Supporters**

- Blue Ridge Mountain Sports
- Campmor
- Casual Adventures
- Duron
- Hewlett-Packard
- Hudson Trail Outfitters
- Outdoor Adventure
- REI
- The Outfitter at Harpers Ferry
- The Trail House
- Wilderness Voyagers

## It's The Dirt, Stupid

Well, rumors of spring abound. Washington's masses of spring bulbs are pushing up in all their glory. The *Potomac Appalachian* lists plenty of trail work trips as the crews come out of winter hibernation.

A few years back, I found myself signing on for one of those work trips. Regrettably, I was not driven by any great, high-minded instincts. Yes, I do hike a bit; yes, I am a tree hugger. The real motivation, however, was more mundane.

Boredom and escapism resulted in a call to a crew. Try it, something different for a change. Just for once, duck out of the weekend chore scramble. Run away from work-week stress. Of course, do it for a worthy, noble purpose. Ho, ho, ho. Sounds good.

Like most suburbanites, weekends for me are frantic scrambles to do chores—laundry, house repairs, cleaning, family, bill paying, all that fun stuff. By the time you get back to your home cubicle from your work cubicle and after you have performed all those weekend tasks, there is just time to manage a meal, some TV, and off to bed. After your fun-filled weekend, you go back to work to see the same stimulating suits. Press, push, frantically fast

track to achieve goals and solve problems. It is called a rut. My son refers to this as being a commuter rat.

### Dirt Is Good

Now for the dirty secret: I like dirt. I like being dirty. Take off the suit; do not splash on cologne; do not brush your hair all bouffant and neat. Get grubby and sweat and make rude bodily noises. A bit of dirt is the perfect antithesis to neat and tidy suburban reality.

My momma never could keep me in shoes. That is why they have laces, so you can tie them around your neck and maybe lose them if you are lucky. Huck Finn was my hero. He never wore shoes. He hardly ever took a bath.

As a child, I dug in the dirt with my toy trucks every chance I could get. I built forts and hideouts for homemade versions of Raiders of the Lost Ark. I moved toy soldiers around imaginary battlefields. Dirt is creative. Add water to make mud, and you can mold it into almost anything.

Those folks out on the crew actually encourage dirty fingernails. Positively, absolutely you do not have to dress correctly for the event (except for sturdy work gloves). And unlike

work in the city, there is no hidden threat of punishment if you do not do what the boss nicely asks you to do. Not being paid inverts totally the relationship between worker and boss. Best of all, getting in the car means leaving the beltway, not racing into commuter ratdom.

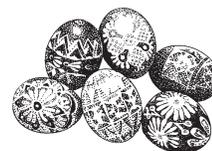
Then comes the bonus—food and lodging. Supper at a Potomac Appalachian Trail Club cabin is a laid-back event of lazy banter on the porch. Significant appetite increases can be indulged without guilt when you have sweated away excess *avoirdupois* all day.

The cost is a small contribution to the food kitty and a bit of sharing in the fixing and cleanup. Shelter is gratis, a reward for the labor of the cabin crews. Talk about rustic charm—these cabins have it. It has to be the cheapest weekend getaway in all of Washington.

Tried it. Liked it. □

—Ann O'Neemus

*The author is a member of the Cadillac Crew, which has a hideout on Shockey's Knob on the Virginia-West Virginia border. The rest of the crew do, in fact, have higher standards of deportment and motivation.*



### Council Fire, from page 2

training. The ATC is having such a leadership training on April 16-18. The ATC Mid-Atlantic Regional Office in Boiling Springs, PA is also developing a series of technical training courses and would like the support of PATC.

Rick Morgan of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association representing 41 organizations in the Alliance for Rock Creek Park provided the Council with a reworded resolution to be submitted to the National Park Service in their comment period on a master plan for that Park. The Alliance would like PATC to join, as PATC is a major and respected player in the Park. Mark Anderson, Overseer for Rock Creek Park pointed out that neither the Park plans nor the Alliance proposal greatly affect the trails. However, PATC should consider working with other organizations on compatible goals. This issue had been initiated at the beginning of the meeting in the remarks of the President. He will be working, with others, on an overall

vision for the Club, which may entail working with other groups partly because of population pressure. He commented on the work of Overseer Wil Kohlbrenner in the George Washington National Forest in which members of bicycling, horse, and other clubs are working jointly on a project.

After receiving input from meetings of Walt Smith with PATC Chapter Presidents, the Council discussed simplifying and increasing the dues reimbursements to the five chapters. □

—Gerhard Salinger,  
Recording Secretary



### BACKPACKING 101

A course for BEGINNING BACKPACKERS presented by the PATC Trail Patrol. Learn how to enjoy overnight hiking in the backcountry safely, comfortably, and with minimum impact on the environment.

Classroom instruction—Monday evening, April 12, 1999 at PATC headquarters.

Practical instruction—Saturday/Sunday, April 17 - 18, 1999, at Prince William Forest Park.

Weekend outing—May 15 - 16, 1999, location TBD.

For information, call Alexandra Lampros, 703/719-7846 weekdays, 7:00-9:00 PM.

## Snakebites on the Trail

Last month's article focused on learning to see snakes. This month we focus on dealing with a snakebite.

Snakebites can be very dangerous if they involve venom. If the venom goes directly into a vein, death can occur, especially in hikers who travel alone and have no companions to assist them in getting help. This is very rare; however, snakebites are not trivial.

Prepare for any snakebite by carrying a simple first-aid kit and a Sawyer "Extractor" snakebite kit. (The Extractor is recommended by PATC member, Dr. John McNamara, MD MPH). Add a pencil stub and an index card to each kit. Write "What time is it?" on each card. Always know how to drive to the nearest hospital. If you carry a cell phone, always know the *route number* of the road at your trailhead.

Snakes bite us only in self-defense. The snake perceives a threat and bites. Most bites come from stepping on or close to the snake. Step carefully when a rock, log, or bush limits your vision.

### When a snake bites—Don't Panic

When a snake bites, you are in pain and very agitated. Move away from the snake and sit down. Count to ten or say a prayer, or whatever you do to get hold of yourself. Open your snakebite kit and *write down the time*.

If you are certain that the snake was non-poisonous, do this: Wipe the scratches from the snake's teeth with an alcohol swab. Use the extractor on the scratches to encourage bleeding and flush out bacteria and any tiny teeth that have broken off. Wipe the scratches again

with an alcohol swab, apply an antibiotic and a plastic bandage, and continue the hike.

If you know the snake is poisonous (or you aren't sure), do this: Wipe the scratches or punctures with an alcohol swab. In the time that you were stepping on the snake it may have struck more than once, so you may have multiple punctures. Use the extractor on the punctures for at least 10 minutes in an attempt to remove some of the venom. Some bites inject no venom, but you have to assume you have venom in you. Venom looks like honey, but you will be pulling blood with it, so you won't be sure what you're getting. When done, clean the punctures again and apply an antibiotic ointment and a plastic bandage to reduce the chance of bacterial infection. Rinse and dry your hands so you won't rub blood or venom into your eyes.

Venom causes redness, swelling, and pain, but by the time you have finished with the extractor, you will have redness, swelling, and some pain at the bite site, even if it is primarily from applying strong suction to small punctures. You have to assume that you have been envenomed, unless you are certain the snake was non-poisonous.

If you do not have an extractor, note the time on the card in your first-aid kit. Clean the punctures and apply an antibiotic and plastic bandage.

### What not to do

Never make any kind of incision or use any kind of tourniquet, both of which only increase the injury and risk. Never attempt to suck venom out of the punctures with your mouth. Chilling or icing the area is potentially harmful and not recommended.

### Hiking out

Recognize that when you come down from your highly agitated state, you may get dizzy, nauseous, and feel faint. This is not a reaction to the venom. It is a normal recovery from fright. Remain seated or lie down and breathe slowly and deeply until you feel more composed. Get up carefully and be sure you are ready to walk before setting off down the trail. If this recovery reaction occurs while you are hiking out, sit down or lie down immediately—before you fall down.

Get others to carry your pack, or consider leaving heavy items behind. Hike at a moderate pace to your vehicle. Hiking may speed venom along in your blood, but there is usually no alternative. If you were bitten on an arm or hand, tuck your hand in your shirt or waistband to immobilize that arm and minimize blood flow in it, but don't bind your arm to your body. You may need to swing your arm out for balance occasionally and balancing with a bitten arm is better than falling!

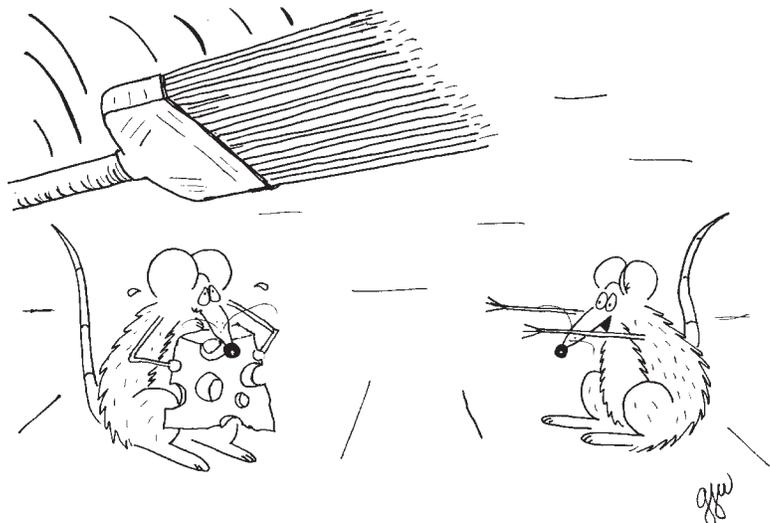
*See Snakebites, page 13*

### 1999 Dogwood Half Hundred Scheduled for April 24th



Volunteers still needed at checkpoints, to assist at the start and finish of the Dogwood, and to procure food. Contact Ric Francke at 703/356-2106.

### Tails from the Woods by George Walters



"Toss it ERNIE!... Toss it!"

# FORECAST

## Chapters

### Charlottesville Chapter

The Charlottesville Chapter hikes every Saturday, summer, winter and in between. Hikes are about 8 miles. Trail maintenance is usually done on the last Saturday of the month. Meet at Sprint parking lot, 2307 Hydraulic Road at 9 a.m. with food and water for the day. We hike trails in the Southern, Central and occasionally Northern Districts of Shenandoah National Park, and in George Washington National Forest. INFO: Jere Bidwell 804/295-2143, John Shannon 804/293-2953 or Lois Mansfield 804/973-7184.

### North Chapter

The North Chapter of PATC conducts monthly trail work trips on the Maryland and Pennsylvania sections of the Appalachian Trail (AT) and on the Pennsylvania sections of the Tuscarora Trail. We also lead hikes on these and other trails. Maryland AT work trips are generally held on the first and third Saturdays—contact Mark Mitchell (mdtrail@yahoo.com), 301/461-7048 for information. Pennsylvania work trips are generally held on the AT on the first Saturday and on the Tuscarora on the third Saturday—contact Charles Irvin at 301/447-2848 or Pete Brown (peter.brown4@worldnet.att.net) 410/343-1140. Pennsylvania AT work trips also include an optional Saturday night stay at the Gypsy Springs cabin. Dinner, breakfast, and camaraderie available. For information on

upcoming hikes, contact Chris Firme (bncfirme@innet.net) 717/765-4833. For general chapter information, contact chapter president Steve Koeppen (patcnorth@iname.com) 410/756-2916 or visit the North Chapter home page ([http://www.patc.net/north\\_ch.html](http://www.patc.net/north_ch.html)).

### 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 to Martha Clark (mclark@visuallink.com) 540/665-2101.

### Southern Shenandoah Valley Chapter

See **Forecast** for work trips and hiking events sponsored by the Southern Shenandoah Valley Chapter. Most trips meet in Harrisonburg at the Cloverleaf Shopping Center at 8:00 a.m. Hikers from the DC area should allow about 3 hours to get to our region. INFO: in Harrisonburg, call Suzanne 540/269-4341; in Staunton or Waynesboro, call Vernon 703/886-9218, or Doris 540/885-4526.

### West Virginia Chapter

Chapter meeting at Highacre on the first Wednesday of the month; see **Forecast** for up-coming activi-

ties. For further information on chapter activities or to receive the chapter newsletter contact Jane Thompson 301/865-5399.

### 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: Katherine Stentzel 703/781-3249.

### PATC Midweek Hikes

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

### Other Clubs' Hikes

Capital and Wanderbirds hike on Sundays, traveling by bus and leaving from downtown, with suburban stops as well. Center Club, Northern Virginia Hiking Club and Sierra Clubs 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.

## 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 Wednesday evening for the following seven days. The **Forecast** can also be found on PATC's Web site at <http://www.patc.net>

### Earth Day Events

### Hiking Trips

### Backpacking Trips

### Trail Work Trips

### Cabin/Shelter Work Trips

### Special Events

### Meetings

### Cross-Country Skiing

**Note to all hike leaders:** Please ask nonmembers 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

### PATC Council - Second Tuesday

7:00 p.m. - sharp. The PATC Council meets the second Tuesday of every month to conduct business of the Club. All members are welcome, but members wishing to address the Council should call two weeks prior to the meeting in order to be included on the meeting agenda. INFO: Wilson Riley (wiley1226@aol.com) 703/242-0693 x11.

### Mountaineering Section - Second Wednesday

8:00 p.m. Second Wednesday of every month. INFO: Tony Sanders 202/362-3819 or see PATC's website ([http://www.patc.net/mtn\\_sect/](http://www.patc.net/mtn_sect/)).

### Conservation Committee - Third Monday

7:00 p.m. INFO: Mary Margaret Sloan 703/807-0746.

### The Futures Group - Third Tuesday

7:00 p.m. Meets to research, develop, and recommend to membership changes to PATC organization, constitution, and bylaws in order to meet challenges of the next century. PATC members welcomed. INFO: Walt Smith (wsmith@visuallink.com) 703/242-0693.

### Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group (Business meeting) - Last Tuesday

7:30 p.m. Meet in conference room. INFO: Martin Juenge (mjuenge@rpihq.com) 703/255-5034 then press #5.

### Meetings

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

### Trail Patrol - First Tuesday

7:30 p.m. Trail Patrol volunteers are PATC's good will trail ambassadors to the hiking public. They provide a visible, reassuring presence on the trails, educating the public on good hiking practices, minimum impact hiking and camping ethics. Patrol members are trained in land navigation, emergency procedures, radio communications and personal equipment. All patrol volunteers are also expected to become certified in a recognized basic first aid course. Some equipment and uniform items are provided upon completion of training. INFO: MickeyMcDermott 703/866-0928 or see PATC's website (<http://www.patc.net/patrol.html>).

### New Members (PATC) - First Wednesday

7:30 p.m. Curious about the Club? Want to learn more? The best way is to attend a New Members Meeting (but you don't have to be new to qualify). Attend the meeting and find the mysteries of PATC revealed in full. Refreshments will be served. Directions to PATC: Take Rt. 123 into Vienna, VA and turn east on Park St. (Rt. 675) to 118 Park St. on your left. INFO: Terry Cummings (TCIVP@aol.com) 410/489-4594.

### Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group (New Members meeting) - Second Monday

7:30 p.m. New members meeting. INFO: Martin Juenge (mjuenge@rpihq.com) 703/255-5034 then press #5.

## April

3/27 - 4/3 (Saturday - Saturday)

### SHELTER WORK TRIP - PATC's newest shelter Bowie, MD

Be part of this unique, local log shelter construction opportunity. Work has begun on a new log shelter being built "off-site" near Bowie, MD. When completed the shelter will be relocated onto its to-be-built foundation on the Appalachian Trail in Maryland. INFO: Frank Turk (FrankTurk@aol.com) 301/249-8243.

1 (Thursday)

### DEADLINE - May Potomac Appalachian Headquarters, Vienna, VA

5:00 p.m. All items for the next issue of the PATC newsletter must be submitted on disk if possible to headquarters, or via e-mail or e-mail attachment to bianca@moon.jic.com. Allow one week for postal service delivery.

1 (Thursday)

### CLASS - While My Backpack Gently Weeps: Backpacking With Kids REI, College Park, MD

7:30 p.m. Join Haley's Daddy for a brainstorming session on how to enter the wild, enjoy the trail and emerge harmonious with all fingers, toes, backs and children intact. We will discuss trail-time and load bearing, mealtimes, quality potty time, and a crawl-walk-run approach to sharing your joy of the outdoors with your children. Bring the entire family to this wild event! INFO: REI 301/982-9691.

2 - 4 (Friday - Sunday)

### TRAIL WORK TRIP - Massanutten Mt. West Trail Massanutten Mountain, VA

Wake out of the doldrums of winter with a high energy trail maintenance trip with Laura and David. This is our biannual trail work trip to clear blowdowns, winter debris, and foliage from a six mile section of the trail between Powell Fort and the Woodstock Tower (part of this trail is included in the Dogwood Half-hundred). Relax afterwards at Glass House; enjoy Laura's cooking, David's Death by Chocolate desserts, and entertainment rumored to be provided by this past years AT hiker Espresso Man. INFO: David Reifsnnyder (davidlaura@earthlink.net or wheelmaker@hotmail.com) 410/286-0195(h) or 202/387-3115(w).

3 (Saturday)

### HIKE - Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter Shenandoah National Park, VA

Spring History Hike, or A Little Bit of Everything Bushwhack. Follow Jack Reeder as he leads us around several old historical sites in and around Pass Mountain Overlook in the Shenandoah National Park. Visit Frog Heaven Swimming Pool, Toy Farm, and other sites. From there, we will go to see a nicely preserved cemetery. Then over and around Pass Mountain to an old, but clearly visible farm near Beachms Gap, and a possible mine on the way. Return on the AT over Pass Mountain, to an old farm site with a Civil War story, and possibly a very small private cemetery in a nearby thicket. Bring lunch and water, wear good boots, carry raingear, and a compass. Hiking time: about five hours, unless our leader gets lost. Then it will take longer, but will be more fun! This hike is a hard five miles, but all takes place within a few hundred yards of Skyline Drive. INFO: Martha Clark (mclark@visualink.com) 540/665-2101.

3 (Saturday)

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

Join the South Mountaineers for fun and rewarding work with the convenience of a day event in Maryland. Start at 9:00 a.m., lunch is on the trail and our good work is done by dinner time. INFO: Mark Mitchell (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/461-7048.

3 - 4 (Saturday - Sunday)

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

Spring is the most beautiful time of the year and the weather is perfect for the kind of strenuous work required for cabin building with primitive antique tools. Come out and enjoy the warm spring sunshine while you learn to create things of beauty with your hands. You have more skill than you knew. You will be amazed what you can do with a simple hand tool. INFO: Charlie Graf 410/757-6053.

6 (Tuesday)

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

6 (Tuesday)

### HIKE - Vigorous Hikers

POSSIBLE hike in North District of Shenandoah National Park along Jeremys Run — Knob Mt.—Neighbor Mt. for 17 miles. Call day before to see if leader has out-of-town house guests. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181.

7 (Wednesday)

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

7 (Wednesday)

### MEETING - West Virginia Chapter Highacre, Harpers Ferry, WV

7 p.m. Dr. Melody Roelke-Parker will discuss her work as a veterinarian studying lions on the Serengeti Plain of Africa. She discovered that a deadly epidemic was due to an outbreak of canine distemper virus. INFO: Jane Thompson 301/865-5399 before 9 p.m.

7 (Wednesday)

### HIKE - Easy Hikers Prince William Forest Park, VA

Quantico Falls Trail, about 6 miles. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at Turkey Run Education Center in the Park. From the Beltway, take I-95 south 19.8 miles to exit 150B, route 619 west. Second right into park entrance. First left at Park Scenic Drive. Pass parking areas A, B and C. After 1.8 miles on Park Scenic Drive, take left fork toward Turkey Run for half a mile to right turn on Turkey Run Road. Half mile to parking at Turkey Run Education Center. Bring lunch. INFO: John or Suzanne Kominski 703/751-3026.

8 (Thursday)

### CLASS - Edible Wild Plants REI, College Park, MD

7:30 p.m. Hungry on the trail? Forget your Power Bar? No Food? REI's Veronica Marjerison will discuss the basic principles for identifying and preparing local edible plants. Veronica will demonstrate recognition clues and recipes for using such regional plants as plantain, dandelion, paw paw, fiddlehead fern, mullein, and sumac. INFO: REI 301/982-9691.

10 (Saturday)

### TRAIL WORK TRIP - DC Metro Rock Creek Park, Washington, DC

8:15-11:30 a.m. The Theodore Roosevelt Side Trail relocation will continue. Come see how much progress we have made and help catapult us for-

ward. Meet at Rock Creek Nature Center. INFO: Mark Anderson 202/462-7718 or Ranger Ken Ferebee 202/426-6834 x31.

10 (Saturday)

### SHELTER WORK TRIP - PATC's newest shelter Bowie, MD

See similar SHELTER WORK TRIP on 3/27-4/3 for details. INFO: Frank Turk (FrankTurk@aol.com) 301/249-8243.

10 (Saturday)

### HIKE - Signal Knob Massanutten Mountain, VA

10.6 mile circuit hike on Massanutten Mountain. Lunch at Signal Knob overlooking Shenandoah Valley. We will also pass Buzzard Rocks overlook. Elevation Change of 1600 feet. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Oakton Shopping Center, Vienna. INFO: Todd Birkenruth 703/318-7735.

10 (Saturday)

### HIKE - Potomac Heritage Trail series Potomac Heritage Trail, MD

Join us on a series hike of the "original" route proposal for this, the eighth National Scenic Trail, hiking the section from Cumberland, Maryland to Confluence, Pennsylvania. The PHT is as yet undesignated west of Cumberland, so this route is still up for consideration. The series begins on April 10 with a one-day hike of about 12 miles from Cumberland to Frostburg, first over Haystack Mountain, and then over Dans Mountain. Adventures galore await the intrepid hikers on this mapped but completely unblazed route through rarely-hiked terrain. Have your compass ready! Dinner in Cumberland prior to return. INFO: Tom Johnson 410/647-8554.

10 (Saturday)

### HIKE - Natural History Wildflower Hike Turkey Run Park, VA

You know spring has arrived when Bob Pickett does his annual five mile wildflower hike along Turkey Run right here, along the Potomac River, inside the Virginia beltway. This is a "naturalist's shuffle" type hike, where we stop and identify and talk about the flowers, salamanders, snakes, birds or any other delightful sign of spring that we may observe. Forty or more species of blooming wildflowers are normally found. There will be some creek crossings and possibly slippery conditions. Hiking boots are recommended. Reservations/ INFO: Bob Pickett 301/681-1511.

10 (Saturday)

### HIKE - Strong Hikers North District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Meet locally at 8:15 a.m. and leave promptly at 8:30. Hike Overall Run via Thompson Hollow Trail. Circuit route is 10 miles, with elevation change of about 2,000 feet, and great views. INFO: Donna Brothier 703/435-8315.

10 (Saturday)

### TRAIL WORK TRIP - Massanutten Crew George Washington National Forest, VA

Near Elizabeth Furnace area. INFO: Wil Kohlbrenner 540/477-2971 or Hop Long (TheFLongs@erols.com).

10 (Saturday)

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

The woods are just wonderful this time of year, why not give back to the trail you love to hike. Expect to hike up to 4 miles, or less than one, then guess what is rotting in the trunk of the trip leader. INFO: Mark Mitchell (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/461-7048.

# FORECAST

## 10 (Saturday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - Tuscarora South Crew Tuscarora Trail, Massanutten Mt., VA

Spring cleanup time is here, and we can use all the help we can get to get these trails in shape quickly. Come out and join this one-day trip; newcomers particularly welcome. INFO: Rick Rhoades 703/239-0965.

## 10 - 11 (Saturday - Sunday)

### 🏠 CABIN WORK TRIP - Blackburn Trail Center Round Hill, VA

Yes! This is another Blackburn Trail Center work trip weekend. You know - that big renovation project that you have been reading about for the last two years - the one that you keep meaning to visit. Well, spring has arrived, daylight savings time is giving us longer evenings and boy, do we have lots of jobs for you! This month we will be framing and re-screening the porch, completing the bunk room, installing siding on the gable ends and COOKING FOOD! Yes, we are also on the lookout for new cooks. So don't hesitate, skilled or unskilled, we can use your help. INFO: Chris Brunton 703/560-8070 or Bruce Clendaniel 410/820-7550.

## 10 - 11 (Saturday - Sunday)

### 🏠 HIKE - North Chapter

#### Tuscarora Trail and Appalachian Trails, VA

Tuscarora Trail series # 11-10. Va. Rte. 340 to Va. Rte. 601. First 1999 overniter. First day: Matthews Arm Section. Rte 340 to Range View Cabin or Matthews Arm Campground. 10.8 difficult miles with an elevation change of 2800 ft. Second day: Gravel Spring Section. Range View Cabin or Matthews Arm Campground to Rte. 601 (PATC parking area). 15.3 moderate miles with an elevation change of 768 ft. Must bring tent, sleeping bag, food and dress according to the weather. INFO: Chris Firme 717/765-4833 after 6:00 p.m.

## 10 - 11 (Saturday - Sunday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - North Chapter Appalachian Trail, PA

Spring cleanup. Come out and help us get the AT ready for the coming throngs of fair weather hikers. Meet at US 30 and PA 233 at the parking lot of Caledonia State Park. Departure 9:00 a.m. sharp. Join us for a group dinner and overnight at the Gypsy Spring cabin Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. INFO: Charlie Irvin 301/447-2848.

## 10 - 11 (Saturday - Sunday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - Cadillac Crew Shockeysville, VA

We're climbing Shockeys Knob and relocating the Tuscarora Trail, so come on out and help! Overnight at a local cabin. Bring a lunch and water for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Please call by April 5 to let us know if you're participating! INFO: Fran Keenan (frannanc@erols.com) 703/938-3973 or Jon Rindt (jkrindt@erols.com) 703/573-2261.

## 11 (Sunday)

### CLASS - Basic Trail Maintenance Scott Farm/Mid-Atlantic Training Center, Carlisle, PA

This workshop will cover such topics as worker safety, use and maintenance of hand tools, clearing brush, blazing, clearing waterbars, blowdown removal, overnight facility maintenance, and sanitation. Instructor: Karen Lutz, ATC. INFO: John Wright (jwright@atconf.org) 717/258-5771.

## 11 (Sunday)

### CLASS - Basic Rock Scrambling for Hikers Great Falls, VA

This practical hands-on half day class will provide hikers the fundamentals of route finding and safe movement over rock hazards and obstacles encountered in alpine and rocky environments. Will include scrambling with the use of hands and feet, and elementary climbing techniques. Class at Great Falls Park, VA. Limited to 8 people. INFO: Tony Sanders 202/362-3819.

## 12 (Monday)

### 🏠 MEETING - New members (Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group), 7:30 p.m.

## 12 (Monday)

### CLASS - Backpacking Headquarters, Vienna, VA

BACKPACKING 101—a course for BEGINNING BACKPACKERS. Learn how to enjoy overnight hiking in the backcountry safely, comfortably, and with minimum impact on the environment. Classroom instruction—Monday evening, April 12, 1999 at PATC headquarters. Practical instruction Saturday/Sunday (April 17-18) at Prince William Forest Park. Weekend outing—May 15-16, location TBD. INFO: Alexandra Lampros 703/719-7846.

## 13 (Tuesday)

### 🏠 MEETING - PATC Council, 7:00 p.m. - sharp.

## 13 (Tuesday)

### 🏠 HIKE - Vigorous Hikers

Vigorous midweek hike. Out and back hike along Tuscarora Trail north from Hawk Campground in WV. Nice trail through old, overgrown farm land out at least to Jemima's grave. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181.

## 14 (Wednesday)

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

## 14 (Wednesday)

### 🏠 HIKE - Easy Hikers

#### Great Falls - Riverbend, VA

Meet at 10:00 a.m. in the parking lot beyond the Visitors Center. We will do a circuit hike of about 5 miles from Great Falls Park to Riverbend Park and return. Please bring drink and lunch. RSVP/INFO: Joanne Horgan 703/938-4662.

## 15 (Thursday)

### 🏠 HIKE - In-between Hikers Langley, VA

A taxing hike from Scotts Run Nature Preserve to Turkey Run Park and return. A moderate/fast paced 9 miles over varied terrain and a stream crossing. Hiking boots recommended. Meet at Scotts Run Preserve parking lot at 10:00 a.m. From I-495, exit 13 west (193), Georgetown pike for one half mile (2nd parking lot from I-495). INFO: Henri Comeau (hank.comeau@aol.com) 703/451-7965.

## 15 (Thursday)

### 🏠 MEETING - Publications Committee Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:00 p.m. The Publications Committee will conduct a general business and planning session including discussion of the upcoming Shenandoah Circuit Hike guidebook and the possibility of creating CD-ROM resource for hiking and camping in Shenandoah NP. INFO: Aaron Watkins (awatkins@rcn.com) 410/740-7082.

## 16 - 18 (Friday - Sunday)

### CLASS - Leadership Skills Camp Hebron, Halifax, PA

Leadership Skills for the 21st Century - A Comprehensive Workshop for Volunteer Leaders Ed Clark, founder of the Virginia Wildlife Center, will present this program on developing and enhancing volunteer organizations. Some of the topics include "Who are A.T. Volunteers and What Makes Them Tick;" "Leadership Style: Adapting Your Style to Meet your Followers' Needs;" "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Trail Club Leaders;" and "The Role of Staff in Volunteer Organizations," to name a few. Clark conducted a similar workshop in the ATC's southern region last year and presented an abbreviated version at the ATC Club Presidents' meeting last June. Both received excellent reviews from participating club leaders. Instructor: Ed Clark. INFO: Karen Lutz, ATC 717/258-5771.

## 17 (Saturday)

### 🏠 HIKE - Tuscarora Trail Series #12 Gore, VA

A moderately paced 18 mile hike west of Winchester, VA between Gainesboro, VA and Loman Branch, VA over the Devils Backbone Section. Elevation gain is 2600 feet. A car shuttle is required. PATC map L. Meet at Vienna Metro, Nutley Street North at 7:30 a.m. INFO: Jack 703/339-6716 or William 703/256-6735.

## 17 (Saturday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - Stonewall Brigade Racer Camp Hollow Trail, WV

After a winter on the other folks' trails, the Brigade springs into action on its home ground. We'll resume construction of the Racer Camp Hollow Trail in West Virginia— with help from mountain bikers and equestrians. Meet sturdy people and sturdy mules. INFO: Wil Kohlbrenner 540/477-2971 or Hop Long (The FSLongs@erols.com).

## 17 - 18 (Saturday - Sunday)

### 🏠 CABIN WORK TRIP - Tulip Tree Cabin Shaver Hollow, VA

April showers bring May flowers and they don't deter the Tulip Tree Cabin Crew. We will be in Shaver Hollow, come rain or shine, working on second floor joists and hewing rafters. At the end of the day we will retreat to our warm, dry summer kitchen for a delicious meal prepared by one of our crew members. We will bask in the glow of our accomplishments for the day and enjoy each others company. Some even come for just the day and make the long trek back home that evening. Whether you can stay just for the day or want to take full advantage of the weekend and camp over with us you are welcome. INFO: Charlie Graf 410/757-6053.

## 17 - 18 (Saturday - Sunday)

### CLASS - Wilderness First Aid Arlington, VA

This sixteen-hour class includes classroom study, hands-on practice, and results in a two-year certification. The cost is \$125. Registration is limited to 25 people. See course description and print registration from <http://wfa.net/>. INFO: Christopher Tate 703/836-8905.

## 17 - 18 (Saturday - Sunday)

### ✕ Italian TRAIL WORK TRIP - North District Hoodlums North District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Come and help work on the Appalachian Trail in the North District of SNP. The crew will work on erosion problems and/or tread rehab on one or more

sections of trail. Spring wildflowers should be up and running by now and we have requested picture-perfect weather for this weekend. No experience necessary - tools provided. Bring work gloves, lunch and a smile. This month's theme meal will be Italian—all may contribute. Overnight stay provided at Indian Run Hut. Come for the day, stay the evening meal, or spend the entire weekend. The crew meets at 10 a.m. in the park. RSVP/INFO: George Walters 410/426-2724.

#### 19 (Monday)

 **MEETING - Conservation Committee, 7:00 p.m.**

#### 20 (Tuesday)

 **MEETING - The Futures Group, 7:00 p.m.**

#### 20 (Tuesday)

 **HIKE - Vigorous Hikers**

A fast paced hike: Carderock to/from Georgetown along Tow Path. We'll buy lunch in G'Town and picnic along the Canal. 20 miles total. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181.

#### 21 (Wednesday)

 **HIKE - Easy Hikers  
Seneca Creek, MD**

10:00 a.m. Up to 7.6 slow miles. Bring lunch. Park along the generous shoulders of Riffle Ford Rd. at its crossing point over Seneca Creek. We'll hike through pines, forest, and ridge along Seneca Creek to Black Rock Mill. From I-270 north, take the second of two exits onto Rte. 28, go west towards Darnestown, not east towards Rockville. Shortly after crossing Rte. 124 (Quince Orchard Rd.), turn right on Riffle Ford Rd. After about a mile, park along the road, over Seneca Creek. Please call only if you need further INFO: Margaret Chapman 301/977-8988.

#### 22 (Thursday)

**EARTH DAY HIKE - Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter**

**North District, Shenandoah National Park, VA**

Come join the NSVC and celebrate Earth Day in one of the most beautiful places on Earth! Little Devil Stairs in the Shenandoah National Park. This eight mile circuit hike will take us up the fabulous Little Devil Stairs Trail, through the Fourway, and back to our starting point via the Piney Branch and Hull School Trails. It will be a day of waterfalls and early spring flowers, and a proper way to celebrate Earth Day. Leader/INFO: Lee Sheaffer (thumpers@visuallink.com) 540/662-1524.

#### 23 (Friday)

**CHAPTER DINNER - Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter**

**Winchester, VA**

Visitors welcome at a NSVC dinner and slide presentation at Manual's and Wife Restaurant in Winchester, VA. Time: 7:00 p.m. Gerry Boyd and Mary Powell will show slides of their summer trip to Glacier National Park. Reservations/INFO: Martha Clark (mclark@visuallink.com) 540/665-2101.

#### 24 (Saturday)

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

8:15-11:30 a.m. This is the official Rock Creek Park Earth Day outing. You can't afford to miss this once a year event. In addition to work on a trail relocation, we will likely have a special Earth Day activity. Meet at Rock Creek Nature Center. INFO: Mark Anderson 202/462-7718 or Ranger Ken Ferebee 202/426-6834 x31.

#### 24 (Saturday)

**TRAIL WORK TRIP - North Chapter  
Tuscarora Trail, PA**

For meeting place and other details, call Charlie Irvin, 301/447-2848.

#### 24 (Saturday)

**HIKE - Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter  
Loudoun Heights, Harpers Ferry, WV**

This hike begins at the Harper's Ferry Visitor's Center, where we will catch a NPS Shuttle into downtown Harper's Ferry. There we will begin a strenuous four hour hike to Loudoun Heights, noting a myriad of rich historical and geological features pointed out by Smithsonian geologist Bill Melson, along the Appalachian and Loudoun Heights Trails. INFO: Bill Melson (mcmelson@erols.com with copies to: melsonw@nrmh.si.edu and wjmelson@shentel.net) 540/933-6276.

#### 24 (Saturday)

**TRAIL WORK TRIP - REI/SCGT  
Seneca Creek State Park, MD**

8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Celebrate Earth Day on the trail! Join REI and the Seneca Creek Greenway Trail Coalition in constructing a section of the Seneca Creek Greenway Trail. We'll be cutting and grading 100 yards of new sidehill tread and erecting timber retaining walls to stabilize the trail. INFO: Mark Nelson (REI) 703/379-9400 or 301/982-9681.

#### 24 - 25 (Saturday - Sunday)

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

Please see same event on 4/10-11 for details. Reservations/INFO: Chris Brunton 703/560-8070 or Bruce Clendaniel 410/820-7550.

#### 24 - 25 (Saturday - Sunday)

**TRAIL WORK TRIP - Cadillac Crew  
Shockeysville, VA**

Shockey's Knob. Its late April and the weather is perfect for trail work — not too hot — not too cold. Come out and help us relocate the Tuscarora Trail. Dinner with the crew in the evening is an event not to be missed! Overnight at a local cabin. Bring a lunch and water for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Please call by April 19 to let us know if you're participating! INFO: Fran Keenan (frannanc@erols.com) 703/938-3973 or Jon Rindt (jkrindt@erols.com) 703/573-2261.

#### 24-25 (Saturday - Sunday)

**TRAIL WORK TRIP - Blue & White Crew**

**Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA**

Following successful sacrifices to the gods of blizzards and blowdowns, the B&W Crew will offer thanks by continuing the treadway projects we'd planned for the '98 season. Join us as we armor the trails for the onslaughts yet to come. Overnight accommodations provided; Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast will be pot-luck. A Saturday evening examination of Highland distilling arts is planned. Details, bunk reservation and chow assignment INFO: Kerry Snow (kerrysno@sprynet.com) 301/570-0596 or Charles Hillon (hillon@mnsinc.com).

#### 24 - 25 (Saturday - Sunday)

**SHELTER WORK TRIP - PATC's newest shelter  
Bowie, MD**

See similar SHELTER WORK TRIP on 3/27-4/3 for details. INFO: Frank Turk (FrankTurk@aol.com) 301/249-8243.

#### 25 (Sunday)

**CLASS - Basic Trail Maintenance  
Scott Farm/Mid-Atlantic Training Center,  
Carlisle, PA**

See 4/11 for details. Instructor: John Wright, ATC. INFO: John Wright (jwright@atconf.org) 717/258-5771.

#### 27 (Tuesday)

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

#### 27 (Tuesday)

 **HIKE - Vigorous Hikers**

Out and back hike in the Sky Meadows area. Toughness of hike depends largely on how PATC's Dogwood Half Hundred leaves us. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181.

#### 28 (Wednesday)

 **HIKE - Easy Hikers**

**Jug Bay, Patuxent River Park and Merkle  
Wildlife Sanctuary**

Meet at 10:00 a.m. in parking lot near Jug Bay park office. Hike preceded by 1.5 hour cruise on "Otter" with naturalist. Capacity 20 hikers. Short walk in area before lunch. Then drive to Merkle for additional hike. Total of about 5 miles. Directions: Beltway (I-95) exit 11. Go SE on Pennsylvania Ave. (Md 4) 6.2 miles to cutoff for Crain Hwy. Bear right 0.2 miles to fork then right again 1.8 miles to US 301, ease right 0.6 miles to Croom Road (Md 382), turn left 3.1 miles to Croom Airport Rd, turn left 2.1 miles to park entrance road, and left again 1.6 miles to park office. Total distance: 15.6 miles from Beltway. Reservations (necessary!) and INFO: Henry Shryock 202/479-4130 or Pauline LeMarie 202/484-2966.

#### 29 (Thursday)

 **HIKE - In-between Hikers  
Sugarloaf Mt., MD**

Moderate paced 7-8 mile circuit hike on Sugarloaf Mountain in Maryland. Elevation change is 1200 ft. Meet 10 a.m. at lower entrance to Park. INFO: Nena Ewing 301/652-9147 or Hank Comeau 703/451-7965.

#### 30 - 2 (Friday - Sunday)

**BACKPACK TRIP - New River Gorge  
New River Gorge, WV**

Backpack in and backpack out with a day hike in between. Hike your own distance, 6 to 30 miles. Elevation gain is about 200 feet. No carpooling involved. Travel to trailhead by Amtrak. INFO: Mike Gingerich 202/767-5873.

## May

#### 1 (Saturday)

**DEADLINE - June Potomac Appalachian  
Headquarters, Vienna, VA**

5:00 p.m. All items for the next issue of the PATC newsletter must be submitted on disk if possible to headquarters, or via e-mail or e-mail attachment to bianca@moon.jic.com. Allow one week for postal service delivery.

#### 1 (Saturday)

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

The work of the South Mountaineers seems never to get done. Lend a hand and give back to the trail on a beautiful spring day. We meet in Frederick County, MD at 9:00 a.m. INFO: Mark Mitchell (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/461-7048.

# FORECAST

## 1 - 2 (Saturday - Sunday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - North Chapter Appalachian Trail, PA

Meet at US 30 and PA 233 at the parking lot of Caledonia State Park. Departure 9:00 a.m. sharp. Join us for a group dinner and overnight at the Gypsy Spring cabin Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. INFO: Charlie Irvin 301/447-2848.

## 1 - 2 (Saturday - Sunday)

### 🏠 SHELTER WORK TRIP - PATC's newest shelter Bowie, MD

Be part of this unique, local log shelter construction opportunity. Work has begun on a new log shelter being built "off-site" near Bowie, MD. When completed the shelter will be relocated onto its to-be-built foundation on the Appalachian Trail in Maryland. INFO: Frank Turk (FrankTurk@aol.com) 301/249-8243.

## 1 - 2 (Saturday - Sunday)

### CLASS - Chainsaw Certification Scott Farm/Mid-Atlantic Training Center, Carlisle, PA

Trail volunteers should be certified if they use a chain saw in their maintenance activities. These two-day courses will cover safety issues, chainsaw function and maintenance, proper use of equipment, and modern felling, limbing, and bucking techniques. Two-week advance reservation is required. INFO: John Wright (jwright@atconf.org) 717/258-5771.

## 2 (Sunday)

### 🏔️ HIKE - Natural History Trillium Hike G. Richard Thompson WMA, Linden, VA

The first weekend of May is the time the millions of white-flowered trillium are in full bloom along the Appalachian Trail near Sky Meadows State Park. This is the Mecca of the wildflower crowd in this neck of the woods. In addition to the trillium, both pink and yellow lady's slippers, as well as the showy orchis, should be in bloom. This is also a favorite place for the scarlet tanager and other newly arrived nesting and migratory birds. The "merkles" in this area are often ripe for picking at this time as well. This is a moderately difficult seven mile hike. Reservation/ INFO: Bob Pickett 301/681-1511.

## 4 (Tuesday)

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

## 5 (Wednesday)

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

## 5 (Wednesday)

### 👉 MEETING - West Virginia Chapter Highacre, Harpers Ferry, WV

7:00 p.m. Clyde Hicks from the Trail House in Frederick, MD will talk about hiking and biking along the Catoctin Trail which they maintain. This local trail will be featured in a 3-part hiking series during March, April & May. He will bring along some new sleeping bags for us to check out. INFO: Jane Thompson 301/865-5399 before 9:00 p.m.

## 7 (Friday)

### 🏔️ Wildflower HIKE - Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter G. Richard Thompson WMA, Linden, VA

Join the NSVC as they take a short, easy walk through the G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area and an area of the Appalachian Trail. This area is renowned for its displays of wildflowers in general, and the trillium in particular. Besides literally millions of trillium, there are hundreds of other wildflowers in bloom in the area at this time, some quite rare. Time permitting, we may extend this hike

in either direction on the Appalachian Trail, and get a larger view of this very special place in all its spring-time glory. Leader/INFO: Debbi Richter (Whalenwolf@aol.com) 540/955-1813.

## 8 (Saturday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - DC Metro Rock Creek Park, Washington, DC

8:15-11:30 a.m. Your mother would want you to give back to the hiking trails through a morning of volunteer work in Rock Creek Park. Wouldn't she? Don't disappoint her by coming to this pre-Mother's Day work trip. Meet at Rock Creek Nature Center. INFO: Mark Anderson 202/462-7718 or Ranger Ken Ferebee 202/426-6834 x31.

## 8 (Saturday)

### 🏔️ HIKE - Strong Hikers North District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Meet locally at 8:15 a.m. and leave promptly at 8:30. Hike Jeremys Run. Circuit route is 14 miles with an elevation change of 2,765 feet. INFO: Donna Brother 703/435-8315.

## 8 (Saturday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - Massanutten Crew George Washington National Forest, VA

Near Elizabeth Furnace area. INFO: Wil Kohlbrenner 540/477-2971 or Hop Long (TheFSLongs@erols.com).

## 8 (Saturday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - Tuscarora South Crew Tuscarora Trail, Massanutten Mt., VA

Spring cleanup time is here, and we can use all the help we can get to get these trails in shape quickly. Come out and join this one-day trip; newcomers particularly welcome. INFO: Rick Rhoades 703/239-0965.

## 8 - 9 (Saturday - Sunday)

### 🏠 CABIN WORK TRIP - Blackburn Trail Center Round Hill, VA

See similar CABIN WORK TRIP on 4/10-11 for details. Reservations/INFO: Chris Brunton 703/560-8070 or Bruce Clendaniel 410/820-7550.

## 9 (Sunday)

### 🏔️ HIKE - Mother's Day/Family Hike Sugarloaf Mt., MD

Bring mom on the road less traveled to White Rocks near Sugarloaf Mountain (or Dad's - give her a break for the day). Pack your child - suggested age 6 months to 4 years. Up to 6 miles (depending on experience). 2 miles per hour pace. Meet at Sugarloaf entrance on the Comus Road at 10:00 a.m. (or convoy there). Limit: 12 participants. INFO: John Butler (John-Butler@msn.com) 301/263-0141.

## 10 (Monday)

### 👉 MEETING - New members (Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group), 7:30 p.m.

## 11 (Tuesday)

### 👉 MEETING - PATC Council, 7:00 p.m. - sharp.

## 12 (Wednesday)

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

## 15 (Saturday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - North Chapter Tuscarora Trail, PA

For meeting place and other details, call Charlie Irvin, 301/447-2848.

## 15 (Saturday)

### 🏔️ Fossil Collecting HIKE - Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter

#### Sites in Northern Shenandoah Valley, VA

A science trip with Chris Morrow of Shenandoah University for those interested in geology and paleontology. Collect fossil samples from approved sites west of Winchester; study sharply folded and faulted rocks. A hammer and rock chisel is helpful but not required as we learn some techniques of fossil extraction from the experts. Bring sturdy clothes and shoes as well as a lunch and plenty of water, and enjoy a day of learning about the prehistoric life and times of your nearby surroundings. Leader/INFO: Carl Bock (cgbock@erols.com) 703/323-5306.

## 15 (Saturday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - Stonewall Brigade Racer Camp Hollow Trail, WV

We are constructing the Racer Camp Hollow Trail in West Virginia. INFO: Wil Kohlbrenner 540/477-2971 or Hop Long (TheFSLongs@erols.com).

## 15 (Saturday)

### 🏔️ HIKE - Tuscarora Trail Series #13 Wardensville, WV

A moderately paced 15-mile hike northeast of Wardensville, WV over the Jemima Section of the Tuscarora Trail between Loman Branch and WV 55. Elevation gain is 2300 feet. A car shuttle is required. PATC maps F and L. Meet at Vienna Metro, Nutley Street North at 7:30 a.m. INFO: Jack 703/339-6716 or William 703/256-6735.

## 15 - 16 (Saturday - Sunday)

### 🏔️ HIKE - Potomac Heritage Trail series Potomac Heritage Trail, MD

Join us on the second weekend of our hike through the "original" route proposal for this, the eighth National Scenic Trail, hiking the section from Cumberland, Maryland, to Confluence, Pennsylvania. The series continues with a two-day hike from Frostburg, Maryland to New Germany State Park. Saturday is about 11 miles; Sunday, about 7 miles. Saturday, overnight either in local motels or at New Germany State Park campground. This route is mapped but unblazed, so bring your compass and be ready for adventure. INFO: Tom Johnson 410/647- 8554.

## 15-16 (Saturday - Sunday)

### BACKPACK TRIP - Dolly Sods Dolly Sods Wilderness, WV

Spring is here and it's time to put on the boots and sling the pack. We'll do a moderate 16-18 miles in this unique wilderness area. Depending on the weather we'll either explore Red Creek Canyon or head south to Roaring Plains. Depart Friday evening. INFO: John Koutze or Kathy McDermott 703/846-9207.

## 17 (Monday)

### 👉 MEETING - Conservation Committee, 7:00 p.m.

## 18 (Tuesday)

### 👉 MEETING - The Futures Group, 7:00 p.m.

## 22 (Saturday)

### ✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - DC Metro Rock Creek Park, Washington, DC

8:15-11:30 a.m. By now, we hope to have moved beyond the much touted trail relocation. Come find out what we will do next on the D.C. trails. Meet at Rock Creek Nature Center. INFO: Mark Anderson 202/462-7718 or Ranger Ken Ferebee 202/426-6834 x31.

22 (Saturday)

### HIKE - North Chapter Appalachian Trail, VA

Appalachian Trail series # II-1. Va. Rte. 601 (PATC parking area) to Manassas Gap (Va. Rte. 55). 11.0 moderate-to-difficult miles with an elevation change of 900 ft. INFO: Chris Firme 717/765-4833 after 6:00 p.m.

22 (Saturday)

### HIKE

#### Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

7:30 a.m., meet at Vienna Metro, Nutley Street North for a moderately paced 10.3 mile hike with an elevation change of 1600 feet. We shall go south on the Appalachian Trail (gradual ascents, nice views with option of Stony Man summit), then back via beautiful Lumberlost, Indian Run (steady drop), and Nicholson Hollow (uphill) Trails. INFO: John Rothberg 540/948-6745 or Tom Johnson 410/647-8554.

22 (Saturday)

### HIKE - Half Moon Peak & Views Trout Run Valley, George Washington National Forest

Enjoy great views on this scenic, seven-mile hike from 1600' at the Trout Run trailhead to the 2800' summit on Half Moon Mountain, location of a former fire lookout station. Hike in diverse environments from open deciduous woods with spring flowers, up the hollow created by Half Moon 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 Half Moon Mountain itself, seen from the rock outcrop in vicinity of the intersection of the Half Moon Run & Tuscarora trail. One mile of the return from this vista will be via an old road, off the trail, downhill to Half Moon Run. For those not wishing to hike off the trail, you may return from Half Moon Mountain directly to the trailhead, for a total distance of six miles.

Leader/INFO: Walt Smith (wsmith@visualink.com) 540/678-0423.

22 - 23 (Saturday - Sunday)

### CABIN WORK TRIP - Blackburn Trail Center Round Hill, VA

See similar CABIN WORK TRIP on 4/10-11 for details. Reservations/INFO: Chris Brunton 703/560-8070 or Bruce Clendaniel 410/820-7550.



### Snakebites, from page 7

If you have a cell phone, and you are lucky enough to be in a location where it works, dial 911 and try to get a rescue squad to meet you at the trailhead. They will need the route number. Tell them your hiking route to the trailhead. If they come up the trail to meet you, they will expect you to get on their litter. They are skilled at carrying people down stairways and up from a ditch along the highway, but they may not have enough sturdy people to negotiate a long narrow, rocky trail. Decide for yourself before getting on the litter. They will put padding around you and strap you in. Their job is to minimize additional injury and to keep you breathing on the way to the hospital. They don't have anti-venom, but they can alert the hospital.

If you are hiking with friends, one or more can go ahead to get help. However, if you are hiking with just one friend, consider whether you might prefer your friend's support as you hike out together.

### What to expect at the hospital

Hospital personnel will want to know when the snake bit you. They will be amazed that you noted the time. They will then ask what kind of snake it was, even though their anti-venom is made for all pit vipers. They will not administer anti-venom until you show clear symptoms of being poisoned because of the risk of an allergic reaction to the anti-venom. Anti-venom is seldom used in adults bitten by copperheads, but a serious rattlesnake bite may require as many as 30 vials of anti-venom! Newer anti-venom technology, called F(aB) technology, offers reduced risk of an allergic reactions, but it is very expensive and may not be available at the hospital.

Whether or not you receive anti-venom, expect a six-hour stay in the hospital for observation.

Some folks recommend killing the snake and toting it to the hospital, so the doctor will know for sure what it was. A snake in rocks, grass, or brush is hard to kill when you have no killing tools with you. You will waste lots of time, remain highly agitated, and risk another bite. It is better to move away from the snake, calm down, and get to work at first aid measures and your plan to get to a hospital.

### Children and snakes

A child's smaller body mass makes the child more susceptible to the effects of the venom, or even to a simple bacterial infection. Children are also more likely to be bitten because they have not yet learned to see snakes or because they may be petrified by their encounter with a snake. At every opportunity, teach your children to see, respect, and accept snakes as natural creatures of the wild.

### Pets and snakes

Dogs are usually bitten on the face or a front paw if they challenge the snake, or on a hind leg if they step on the snake without seeing it. The action plan is the same: record the time, calm the dog, and get it to a veterinarian. The venom extractor is probably useless. A call to 911 may get you to a fire department, dog warden, or a veterinarian, but probably not a rescue squad. Rescue squads are not equipped to handle a dog, and their first priority is to aid people. A vet will have to get anti-venom from a nearby hospital (same anti-venom), so calling ahead may speed that process along. Stay away from

other dogs and people—a panicked dog may bite a stranger. If your dog is too big for you to carry a long distance on the trail, consider what you will do if it is bitten. Ask your vet for advice.

There are thousands of poisonous snakebites every year. Most people make a full recovery and are left with only a story to tell around the campfire. □

—Wil Kohlbrenner,  
with review by Dr. John McNamara,  
MD MPH

### Common Snakes in our Area:

(NOTE: There is a lot of variation in coloring and pattern in these snakes. This is a general guideline only.)

**Timber rattlesnake** (common on the AT): Broad triangular head, vertical pupils and heat sensitive pits. The body color may be yellow, gray, dark brown or black, with dark, V-shaped crossbands across the back. A distinct rattle on the end of a darkly colored tail produces a buzzing sound when vibrated. May be all yellow during fall and spring when snakes molt. Heavy-bodied.

**Copperhead** (very common on the AT): Also a pit viper. Rich copper colors, but variations from pink to red or tan are possible. Hourglass pattern in their coloring. Heavy-bodied.

**Coral snake** (rare on the AT): Black, yellow, and red brightly colored bands or rings, short pair of fangs in the front of the mouth.

## Braving A Gray Day For An Urban Hike

At ground level, thick fog hung above the ice-crusted snow, while down in the catacomb-like Arlington Cemetery Metro station, a chill breeze in the dank vaulted opening gave a funereal atmosphere. What a fitting place, on a day like this, for Betsy Fowler to start the lead of her first hike! Betsy's beautiful colored handout map charted the walk through the cemetery, through Rosslyn, around Theodore Roosevelt Island, across the bridge, through Georgetown and ending at the Foggy Bottom Metro station. Some of the seven people who showed up for this trip came all the way from the Valley. Where were the others—the 11 who didn't show? Oh, we know, home snug in your beds or clutching a cup of hot coffee in your hands while looking through your window at the snow and fog and rain, saying something like, "I just don't know, it looks so iffy."

The Stalwart Seven climbed from the catacomb and faced a sky that seemed to promise a sorry kind of day: gray, probable rain, no sun. We made our way to the Arlington Cemetery Visitors Center, where we learned that access to most pathways was denied because of the ice-covered snow. That meant we couldn't exit via the north gate into the Car-

illon and Iwo Jima Memorial area. So we backtracked through the cemetery to the entrance and found that urban hiking requires the trail to follow the crosswalk, which is monitored closely by the uniformed cemetery patrol. No trail cutting tolerated by these guys! We did get to the Iwo Jima Memorial where we gathered for a group picture.

The soles of our shoes were like cookie cutters, punching through the icy snow as we headed toward Rosslyn. At Freedom Park, it started to rain lightly. We decided to duck in to the Newseum, a huge, spherical structure, much like a planetarium, where a 20-minute film, projected on the concave inner surface of the sphere, told us what the news was and explained the different kinds of news. Very hi-tech and very plush. Upon exiting, a rowdy hiker cried, "When do we eat?"

The rain was light, but still a nuisance as we walked to Roosevelt Bridge. From the west end of the bridge, a pathway leads down to the Roosevelt Island trail entrance. The plan had been to circle the island, but the ice and snow, combined with the rain, made us decide to save that trip for another day. Besides, we had to feed the rowdy. As we crossed the

bridge, we stopped to puzzle over the source of the strange patterns of holes in the river ice; several hypotheses were advanced, but with no close observation possible, all were discarded in favor of getting closer to lunch.

Our stroll through Georgetown brought us to Georgetown Park mall, a very upscale place to hang out in on a Saturday such as this. The food court had a wide selection of good food (why don't these words rhyme?) that satisfied everyone. We lost one of the Satiated Seven at the mall as she couldn't resist the urge to shop, hopefully not until she'd drop.

One of the mall exits leads directly to the C&O Canal, along which we walked for several blocks, remarking about the stonework and the arch bridge made of sandstone, now weathering away. A walk along Washington Harbor waterfront let us inspect the flood gates that rise up out of the pavement and help prevent serious flooding of the very, very exclusive shops. The route took us past the Watergate and through the narrow streets of old Georgetown until we came to the Foggy Bottom Metro station. By now the fog had lifted, and our urban walk had ended. But we couldn't help but think of what the "iffies" had missed. □

Jan. 9, 1999, Hikers: Wendy Taylor, Judy McCarthy, Bill Melson, Martha Clark, Andy Clark, Carl Bock, Betsy Fowler.

—Carl G. Bock

### *Earth Day, from page 1*

law of the land. This bill designated 9.1 million acres as wilderness, thus assuring the generations to follow that some places would be left untouched by the chainsaw and asphalt pavement. Fortunately, in the years since, many other millions of acres have been added to that treasure chest.

That same year, Congress also passed the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act. This Act, which allotted funds with which to purchase park and refuge lands, used monies derived from the oil industry. This "robbing Peter to pay Paul" law was one of the first times that one of the root causes of a problem came to be used to heal another aspect of that same problem. Four years later, in 1968, a new National Park was established with the specific goal of protecting the world's largest living trees, the great evergreens of the Pacific Northwest. Redwood National Park, located along the California coast just south of Oregon, has trees that grow to 350 feet in height, and that in some cases can live for over 2,000 years. These arboreal wonders were in danger of being logged out of existence before

national parklands were developed for them. Both the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the National Trails System Acts were also signed into law in 1968. The Rivers Act would designate certain rivers as wild, and thus prevent their being dammed or otherwise restricted for use in electric power generation. The Trails Act officially recognized the Appalachian Trail as the first national scenic trail. It authorized federal and state land acquisition in order to provide a protected right-of-way that is now nearly complete in 1999.

So the next time you're out on the trail, remember the sixties. Don't remember the tie-dye shirts or the anti-war marches. Don't amuse yourself with thoughts of naked-Twister or love-ins. Think about how the sixties helped save those trees you see, those birds you hear, and the trail that your feet are treading upon. Earth Day 1970, and all the other Earth Days since wouldn't have happened without the sixties, and the hike you are taking today might not be happening either. □

—Vincent G. Ferrari

### **Denning lean-tos removed from Finger Lakes Trail**

With removal of the Denning lean-tos in the Catskill Mountains, the eastern end of the Finger Lakes Trail will now be the junction of the Phoenicia-East Branch Trail and the Peekamoose-Table Trail. It is also a junction with the Long Path, which runs north to the Adirondack State Park. (The Long Path was originally—in the 1940s and 1950s—planned to connect the AT from somewhere near the Bear Mountain Park with the Adirondacks. Its exact dimensions are unclear today.) The Denning lean-tos are to be reconstructed at a somewhat different location but still close enough to the Finger Lakes Trail-Long Path intersection for overnight use. (From *Finger Lakes Trail News*, Winter 1998)

—Paula Strain

# NOTICES

## NEW NOTICES

**NATIONAL TRAILS DAY EVENTS!** If you're planning on having a work trip or other event on National Trails Day, please alert the editor, so we can include it in the PA and on the website. E-mail bianca@moon.jic.com, or mail your item to HQ.

**GRAND TETON HIKE.** Join a group of 6 PATC members and 6 members of the Idaho Alpine Club for an extended backpack in the heart of Grand Teton National Park. Enjoy short days for opportunities to peak-bag and explore side canyons. September 3-September 11, 1999. For details contact Frank Francisco 301/352-5832 or John Hagarty, 703/620-2485.

**SIGNMAKERS NEEDED.** PATC needs volunteer with router available to produce some new signs for our trail system. Materials and bits will be reimbursed. Please contact Heidi Forrest at 703/242-0693x12.

**CABINS RESERVATIONS CHAIR.** Seeking person to oversee the cabins reservation system, preferably with reservations experience. Recruits, trains, and schedules volunteers for reservation desk; supervises the Cabin Coordinator. Interprets and applies policies; makes recommendations on policy and procedure for Executive Committee and Council. For information contact Walt Smith: wsmith@visuallink.com or 703/242-0693.

**ARCHITECT.** Seeking person, with space design experience, to assist in redesigning interior of Club Headquarters building. To work with President, General Secretary, and Headquarters Committee. For information contact Walt Smith: wsmith@visuallink.com or 703/242-0693.

**MARKETING SPECIALIST.** Seeking person with marketing experience to assist Publications Committee in developing marketing strategy for Club sales of publications and CD-ROMs. For information contact Walt Smith: wsmith@visuallink.com or 703/242-0693.

**MAINTENANCE AND PLUMBING.** Seeking persons with relevant experience to work with the Headquarters Committee in improving and maintaining the Club Headquarters. For information contact Walt Smith: wsmith@visuallink.com or 703/242-0693.

**TRAINER.** Seeking person to develop training and provide training on "How to Train". Experience with leading teams, especially work teams, desirable. For information contact Walt Smith: wsmith@visuallink.com or 703/242-0693.

**VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT FOR KEYSTONE TRAIL CREW.** The Keystone Trails Association is seeking volunteers for its 1999 Pennsylvania summer Trail crew. Crews will work for five days each (Thurs.-Mon.) on three different trails around the state. Housing will be in cabins or tents and meals and equipment will be provided. Outdoorspeople, retired persons, college or high school students 18 or older, male or female, anyone in good health and interested in keeping hiking trails alive and viable in Pennsylvania are urged to apply for positions on the crew. Applicants can sign up for one or more weeks. To apply, or for more information, contact: Joe Healey, 93 Cedarwood Drive, Laffin, PA 18702. PHONE: 570/655-4979. Deadline to Apply: May 10, 1999.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**CORRIDOR MONITORS.** Trail corridor monitors are needed in MD, VA and WV. Although the work is not as visible as other trail related jobs, corridor monitoring is no less important. Corridor monitors are responsible for the inspection and protection of lands owned by the National Park Service along the AT corridor. Corridor monitors get to explore off the trail and play detective locating property boundaries. Strong map and compass skills are needed as well as good people skills to deal with trail neighbors. For more information contact Tom Lupp at 301/271-7340 or e-mail at mdacent@erols.co.

**PATC SHELTER COMMITTEE IS SEEKING OVERSEERS** for Rocky Run Shelter in MD, and Boone Run Shelter in the southern Massanutten Mountains. Applicants may inquire by contacting PATC's Chairman of Shelters, Charlie Graf by e-mail at Cagraf@aol.com or at 410/757-6053.

**SUMMER CARETAKER JOB IN THE BLUE RIDGE.** Perfect summer job for a couple who enjoy the sometimes quiet but always beautiful Blue Ridge mountains of Northern Virginia. Meet and greet hikers stopping at the Blackburn Trail Center located on the AT 12 miles south of Harpers Ferry. Duties include some light maintenance of the house, the hiker's hostel, and the camp ground. Prefer April through October stay, but dates are negotiable. Knowledge of the AT a plus. Modest stipend provided. For more information, write PATC, 118 Park Street, SE, Vienna, VA 22180. Att: Chris Brunton or call Chris at 703/560-8070.

**THROUGH-HIKER NEEDS YOUR HELP!** Del Doc will be a thru-hiker on the AT beginning March 1, carrying a Global Positioning System (GPS) for mapping purposes. Del Doc volunteered to hike the AT to get a digitized trail on our maps that will be accurate to within two meters. John Killam, ATC HQ Volunteer is identifying persons who can help provide support to Del Doc, as he progresses along the trail, so that: (1) he does not have to carry too much weight in addition to the GPS equipment, (2) the information can be down-loaded frequently to a permanent storage, (3) the GPS and laptop batteries can be recharged and returned to him without waits that recharging would require, and (4) perhaps arrange transportation for supplies or to a motel or hostel might be arranged upon occasion. For more information, contact: John Killam, c/o Appalachian Trail Conference, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425-0807; Phone: 304/535-6331, e-mail: jkillam@atconf.org.

**PATC DOGWOOD HALF HUNDRED:** The premier endurance hike on the east coast needs your help. Give something back to the trail by volunteering to watch a checkpoint, arrange logistics, cook, make phone calls, assemble and mail packets, or just clean up afterward. Please take one small step now to make this 50-K hike a successful event. Phone Ric Francke for additional information or to volunteer. 703/356-2106

**DEAF TRAIL WORKERS.** PATC's Massanutten Crew has an interpreter who will volunteer her time if there are deaf members who want to maintain trails with us. We work the second Saturday of the month. Call a week ahead so that we can send our usual newcomer material about what to expect on a work trip. Interpreter: Kelli Watts 202/543-4618 (tty). Crew leader: Wil Kohlbrenner: 540/477-2971 (relay).

**NOT INTERESTED IN WORKING OUTDOORS?** PATC has a continuous need for Headquarters Volunteers willing to help out with a variety of tasks — from manning the sales desk in the evening, to providing typing or office support. It takes a lot more than trail workers to keep the Club going! INFO: Wilson Riley (wrliley1226@aol.com) 703/242-0693, Ext. 11.

**PATC OVERSEERS** get BIG discounts from the following merchants who support our volunteer programs: -Blue Ridge Mountain Sports (Charlottesville/Tidewater)-20% -Hudson Trail Outfitters (DC Metro Region) 15% -The Trailhouse (Frederick, MD) 15% -Casual Adventures (Arlington, VA) 10% -Campmor (Mail Order via PATC HQ) 10% Check the back page of the PA for the latest trail, cabin, and shelter overseer opportunities. And all PATC members receive a 10% discount from Blue Ridge Mountain Sports. Be sure to have your membership ID or overseer ID ready when you shop.

**SHENANDOAH MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP (SMRG)** is seeking people interested in wilderness search and rescue. New member orientation meetings are held every month at PATC headquarters. NO EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY. INFO: Martin Juenge 703/255-5034, then press #5.

**TOOL ROOM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** to help sharpen and maintain tools at PATC Headquarters. INFO: Pete Gatje 703/242-0693 x13.

## HIKING PARTNERS WANTED

**PARENT AND CHILD HIKING PARTNERS WANTED.** My son and I would like company for day and weekend hikes. If you have a child (or children) approx. 3 to 6 years old and are interested in joining us please contact Lynn at Earthconc@aol.com or call 410/730-3672.

## HIKING VACATIONS

**DISCOVER THE LAKE DISTRICT IN ENGLAND.** An invitation to fellow PATC members. Come and enjoy a leisurely guided hiking and sightseeing holiday in this beautiful corner of England. It is an area of outstanding natural beauty—land of Wordsworth, lakes and mountains. For more details contact Derek Teasdale on DTeasdale1@aol.com or write to 25 Queens Drive, Whitley Bay, NE26 2JU, England (tel 0191-2520752) Call John Mason at 703/450-5009 for local reference.

**HIKE THE SPECTACULAR DOLOMITE MOUNTAINS OF NORTHEASTERN ITALY** September 6-15. Sandwiched between the Austrian border on the north and the vast Venetian plain of the south, its enormous rock walls (a rock climber's paradise) explode to startling heights above the pastoral green countryside. The Dolomites are stunning in shapes and dramatic with brilliant colors and enjoy a reputation of unsurpassed appeal and beauty. Join us for 6 nights in Cortina, our hiking home base, and for 2 nights experience the culture and beauty of Venice. The fee includes: air; ground transfers between Venice and Cortina and airport transportation; lodging in two superior tourist class hotels; all breakfasts and 7 dinners; guide; and hotel taxes and service charges. INFO: Donna Brother, 703/435-8315.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**HIKING RECOMMENDATIONS NEEDED!** Family will be hiking and camping in Nova Scotia late July, early August. We would like information on where to stay and hikes to take. Contact Bob Huber at 301/277-6736.

**SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN.** House to share on the mountain (access from Rte. 270 Urbana exit). Enjoy the mountain culture, the wildlife, and the view. Walk 10 minutes to blue trail. Drive 10 minutes to downtown Frederick. Non-smoking male/female. INFO: John, 301/253-3050.

**THE PATC WEBMASTER MAINTAINS A SPECIAL "MEMBER'S ONLY" E-MAIL LIST.** The list is used to distribute special information of interest to the PATC membership, special volunteer opportunities that miss the regular issues of the *Potomac Appalachian*, and other items of note. If you'd like to be added to the list, send an e-mail to PATC Webmaster Andy Hiltz (hiltz@mindspring.com), and you'll be included following membership confirmation.

**THE PATC STORE** would like to ask our members for their opinion. We would like to have your suggestions as to what you would like to see available for sale in our store. You can send your suggestions to the PATC Headquarters to the attention of Maureen Estes, Sales Coordinator. We appreciate your feedback and hope to receive some helpful suggestions.

*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. PLEASE let us know when your notice is no longer applicable.*

## After the Storm—Reflections on the Storm of 1998

I reached the trail marker before noon: Knob Mountain Summit, 250 yards. It was still raining. The fog was dark and heavy, swallowing everything beyond two feet in a gray nothingness.

### A Veritable Wasteland

Conditions continued to disintegrate with each vertical foot. What should have been a fertile ridgetop was instead a desolate mass grave. Every tree in sight was barkless and limbless. Some had been snapped in half. Others lay awkwardly on the forest floor, their lifelines ripped out of the ground. A few held on, standing as naked witnesses to this deceduous tragedy. The trail disappeared into a war zone of fallen maple, oak and birch.

I was exhausted from climbing over, under, through and around but pushed on. "It has to be better on the other side of the ridge," I convinced myself. The dread of retracing the entangled maze I had already penetrated kept me moving. Finally, the summit was in sight, but my fears were realized—I had been beaten. I just could not pass. There was no way around this one. I should just lie down here and join the others who were tattered and worn.

But unwilling to give in, I swallowed hard and pushed ahead blindly. The story has been told so many times now about the Nor'easters that hit the East Coast during the winter of 1998. An El Nino weather pattern brought unusually warm temperatures and heavy precipitation to the region. So when the storms arrived, Baltimore and Washington received record rainfalls. But the mountains to the west, including Shenandoah National Park, were layered in inches of ice. These forests were especially vulnerable, being mostly second-growth trees. They could not hold up under the weight of the heavy ice. And so the lungs of our beloved mountains fell hard, scattering sorrow from ridge to ridge.

Shenandoah has always been a special place for me. Her mountains whisper to me in my sleep, and her waters run through my dreams. My heart longs for her cool hemlock forests, and my legs ache for her ridgelines of dreamy blue fog. So it only made sense when an unexpected storm hit my own life that same winter that I would return to Shenandoah.

### Searching For Solace

I do not know what motivated me to get up at 5:00 a.m. that April morning and head for the mountains. With the drastic changes in my life, it was all I could do to find the energy to go hiking. But I convinced myself that a leisurely, peaceful weekday hike in the spring was just what I needed.

By 6:00 a.m. I was on the road, and by 8:00 a.m. I had reached the park's northern gate. Then, unexpectedly, at the entrance station I was turned away. "The road's only open a few miles because of the downed trees," the ranger explained. "You'll have to go to the next entrance and backtrack if you want to get beyond that." The hike I had naively planned was Jeremy's Run/Knob Mountain; a 12-mile circuit hike about 20 miles into the park. So yes, I did want to go beyond that.

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*"No words could completely prepare me for the flood of emotions that poured through me as I stood on the edge of such total devastation. The mountains' pain and mine seemed to merge into one."*

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Surprised at the ranger's statement, I turned around and headed to the next entrance via the highway. The second entrance was open, but no ranger, no cars, no people. The mountains were slowly being engulfed in thick storm clouds, and I still had no clue of what I was about to face.

I reached the trailhead by 9:00 a.m. The temperature had dropped significantly, and the rain was now pounding my car at a steady pace. Visibility had been terrible on the road, so it was not until I tossed my pack over my shoulders and started down the trail that I witnessed the storm damage firsthand. I had read some articles and heard a few news reports, but no words could completely prepare me for the flood of emotions that poured through me as I stood on the edge of such total devastation. The mountains' pain and mine seemed to merge into one.

Standing at the summit, with rain dripping from my hair and sweat rolling down my back, I paused long enough to eat a pack of crackers. It was not exactly how I expected the pinnacle of the hike to be, but it didn't matter because I was beginning to understand

many things about life and change. I had bushwhacked through what would be considered the worst storm damage in a century for Shenandoah and, similarly, the worst storm damage in a lifetime for one individual.

### Light Dawns

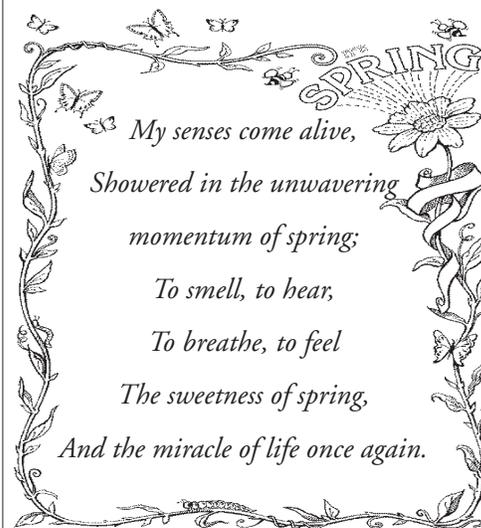
As I headed down the ridge toward Jeremy's Run, the front began to recede in the east. The elevation difference improved trail conditions significantly. With each step, I slowly entered springtime in the mountains! Wildflowers speckled the sides of the trail: birdfoot violets, cut leafed toothwort, wood anemone, Dutchman's breeches, and hepatica.

Distant mountains peeked in and out of lifting storm clouds, while redbuds and dogwoods painted the foreground in pastel whites and pinks. I was overwhelmed. Shenandoah was blooming; in the midst of such utter destruction, she was blooming where she could. It made me realize that through my own storm I would have to preserve and carve the landscape of my life, no matter how hopeless it seemed.

Finally, seven-and-a-half hours later, I reached the trailhead and turned one last time to look down the trail that had brought me so far. I had just taken the first steps on a much longer path.

Sometimes events in our lives break every limb, every tree of our being. But at every end there is a beginning. The past will always shape the ridgeline in our circuit trail of life. With strength, we can weather any storm, knowing that the wildflowers will rise from the fallen trees, bringing about a season of change. □

—Pam DeVier



## Ice Alert: Beware the Siren's Song

The sign at the lower parking lot warned of icy conditions on the trails leading to Old Rag summit. Mathematicians use a term called “external problems” that applies to solving problems at the extreme limit of human endurance. The term could have applied to us as well. The parking lot sign served as a formal alert—it was for real. But when we saw the ice-coated trail, we took it as a challenge to our abilities.

Although we debated how reasonable it was to start out and what chance we stood of reaching the summit, six people with four trekking poles, one ice axe and no crampons began the gentle slope at the start of the Ridge Trail. Mist—or was it clouds—hung about us, coating us with a layer of damp that was hardly perceptible, but which eventually soaked the outer layer of our clothes. The air temperature was just above freezing, but the ground was solid, frozen hard, even below the iced-over trail.

The song of the siren called to us, coaxing us straight up the trail. And indeed, the gentle beginning slopes up from the trail head were not hard going. Although the ice was slick and covered the entire trail, we hikers quickly adapted to the conditions and began walking on the very edge of the downhill side of the trail, walking on the outer edge of our boot soles.

### Reality Sets In

But the siren song had betrayed us. Our hiking method worked well until an obstruction forced us to walk on the ice in the trail proper, and then it was kaboom—a pratfall of the most severe and embarrassing kind. After this setback, we tried the uphill side of the trail, walking in the icy leaves, but a slip there sent us down to the icy trail and another uncontrolled, luge-like slide. While seemingly discounting the potential for injury, we certainly were not unaware of its possibility.

Each hiker took a turn at falling—more than once—and we commiserated with each other, asking, “Are you okay?” As time wore on, the temperature rose probably a degree or two so that there was a film of meltwater on top of the ice. That reduced the coefficient of sliding friction to a number close to zero, and we now recognized that the summit was probably not a reasonable goal on this day.

By noon, we reached The Rocks (~2,600'), a relatively flat place along the trail with a jumble of mega-boulders mounded as a result of an ancient unraveling of the mountain. This seemed to be a good place to stop for lunch and review our efforts, so we did both. It was with trepidation that we envisioned the boulders, exposed rocks above, coated with ice and no leafy duff to step off onto. The prospect of slipping off the edge of the mountain pretty well put the “icing” on the cake.

### We Celebrate Anyway

To the surprise of us all, Lee Sheaffer, trip leader and birthday celebrant, pulled a stove, water, foam cups and chocolate mix from his pack and proceeded to prepare hot chocolate for the group. Not many trip leaders would haul that kind of load under those conditions for the comfort of his hikers—at least not on his birthday! It was a touch of class, and the chocolate tasted great, too. During the break, Tim Anderson told of adventures on his Appalachian Trail through-hike, which he completed in November, and remarked that in his journeys he hadn't encountered anything quite like this ice.

After lunch, atmospheric conditions had not improved, and the forecast had suggested afternoon showers to boot—an eventuality we did not need. We posed for pictures for Angus Phillips of the *Washington Post* (see *Outdoors*, Sunday, Jan. 17, 1999, page D11), including a fall or two, and then started our return. It was a unanimous decision to descend, but we found that going down was a lot more treacherous than going up. The group sustained many a fall, but no injuries. However, I suspect that the hikers, as they stood in their showers that evening, found bruises and scrapes they hadn't realized they had.

Just as we reached the cars, a light rain did materialize, and our next thought was that this could turn to ice. We had indeed escaped the siren's call and left unscathed—more or less.

Hike: Old Rag via the Ridge Trail, Jan. 14, 1999; Leader: Lee Sheaffer; Hikers: Terrie Sheaffer, Tim Anderson, Doug Meikle, Angus Phillips, and Carl Bock

—Carl Bock

*Ed. note: Fortunately it should be too warm by now for any readers to be attempting this.*

## Book Review

Steve Nash. *Blue Ridge 2020: An Owner's Manual*. The University of North Carolina Press, 1999. 211p. illus. \$19.95.

“The natural systems of the mountains are of critical importance for us, and in their own right. We can afford to sustain them; we can't afford not to”, writes Steve Nash, in this primer for those who wish to understand some of the basic natural issues of the Blue Ridge. This book is also for those who are looking for solutions to the problems created by exotic plants and insects, the development of residential sub-divisions on the mountain ridges, worsening air and water pollution, and some forest management practices, including clear-cutting. Nash's coverage of the Blue Ridge extends a distance of 550 miles from Georgia to Pennsylvania.

In eleven chapters, Nash, an associate professor of journalism at the University of Richmond, documents the concerns that he believes must be addressed during the next twenty years or so. Much of his understanding is based on first-hand interviews, some from research that has not yet been published.

All is accompanied with numerous plates, charts, and tables that are of value for reference purposes.

Particularly appealing in Nash's presentation are the lists of twenty-one possible solutions to environmental problems. They are scattered throughout the text in appropriate chapters. Solution 3, for example, provides specific measures that could be taken to provide “a fighting chance against exotics.” Skip to Solution 13 if you are interested in “Planning for Growth in Mountain Communities.” Something for everyone, Solution 16 discusses “Disappearing Songbirds.” Each solution clearly documents a source.

The author writes that during the course of researching and writing his book he discovered three things about the potential reader. He indicates that you are “wary of, but not cynical about, pronouncements on the environment; you care about the mountains for any of several possible reasons; and you don't have much time.” You may want to read the

*See Book Review, page 20*

## Trailhead

Thankfully we have escaped a repeat of last February's ice storm, and hopefully March will have been just as kind. By April, snow and ice should be gone for good, and just like the rising sap, the overseers' urge to check their trail should become overwhelming. Most trail crews and district managers will have checked their rosters, tools, and supplies. Some work trips have already been scheduled (See the Forecast), and routine trail maintenance can begin.

### Chainsaw Workshop

April 17-18th (Earth Day) is the scheduled weekend for the Chainsaw Workshop at Pinnacles in SNP. Overseers are reminded that you must complete the training and be certified before operating a chainsaw in the Park. By the time you read this, most attendees will have been selected and received details on the workshop. There may be some last minute cancellations, so check with your district manager or contact Heidi Forrest at PATC Headquarters.

### Overseer Worktrip Reports

Mike Ritoli announces that the Overseers Worktrip Report Form is back on line at [http://www.patc.net/over\\_dat.html](http://www.patc.net/over_dat.html). Feedback from overseers who helped test the revised form indicates that the reporting process is more user friendly than the previous version. In addition, district managers have the option of receiving a copy of reports for their district directly from the PATC web site as soon as they are submitted. This feature allows managers to be quickly notified about reported trail problems.

### Pirates In GWNF?

The Stonewall Brigade worked recently with the trail crew of the STS mountain bike club doing tread rehab work on a trail in the GWNF. The crews met at a locked gate on a forest road four miles from the trailhead. The bikers had obtained a Forest Service key and FS permission to use an ATV to ferry tools around. Jennifer, a PATC member on her first-ever work trip, was late. The crew leader left word with campers nearby to tell Jennifer that they would come back for her and drove off behind the locked gate. Jennifer drove up moments later, talked with the campers, and sat down to wait. Later, a biker resembling Blackbeard the pirate, chewing on a cigar, drove up on an ATV and invited Jennifer to hop on. Whether it was Blackbeard's

trusting smile or Jennifer's sense of adventure, she was soon swinging a pick with the rest of the crew. Jennifer says she may plan to be late if being late involves such an exciting start to the workday.

### Cadillac Crew Keeps Active in February

In an attempt to keep in trail working shape, the Cadillac Crew managed to organize two work trips in February. The first was at Highacre in Harpers Ferry, where arrangements were made to do some clearing and landscaping for Pat Fankhauser and the house overseer committee. A special thanks to Pat for working with the ATC and Park Service to obtain the proper permission for the work. Fran Keenan amazed the crew as he demonstrated past arborist experience in tree climbing and felling. And, not to miss an opportunity, Bernie Stalman and his chainsaw took time off from helping his wife at craft show in Frederick to lend his expertise. As soon as the Harpers Ferry Park Service, per agreement, clears a few trees on their property in front of Highacre, the superb view will be reestablished.

The second work trip involved preparation for the crew's fourth year on the Tuscarora Trail relocation project at Shockey's Knob. Crewmembers got their first good look at the 70-acre PATC lot which must be crossed in order to tie the relocation into the Sleepy Creek trail system. Fortunately, they found less rock and elevation gain to deal with in crossing the lot than had originally been expected. Tools were cleaned and sharpened. And, in spite of rain, some new trail was cut and the next section was surveyed and flagged. A couple members of the Massanutten Crew joined in to make this a multi-crew work trip.

Cadillac Crew member and former *PA* editor Dave Pugh has begun telemarketing trail opportunities with the new members lists and helping these folks become more active in the Club. Although people have used these lists in the past to call new members and invite them to get more involved with the Club, these efforts may have been sporadic at best. Anyone with questions who would like to hear from Dave is invited to send him a message at [pughdave@hotmail.com](mailto:pughdave@hotmail.com).

### Tuscarora South

Fingers are still crossed that we don't get any big storms as winter concludes, so far it looks

to be a "good" winter with only normal deadfalls, etc. Tuscarora South overseers are chomping at the bit to get out and get those trails cleaned up. The district manager is going to be a bit gimpy as spring starts, having broken a collarbone late in February.

The Tuscarora South crew happily added three new overseers during the winter. We're pleased to have Regina Roe of Toms Brook, and Becki Swinehart and Ethan Meurlin, both of Alexandria. Regina and Ethan have sections near Elizabeth Furnace, and Becki's section comes right out of SNP. We're looking forward to working with them. The Tuscarora South Crew works every second Saturday and is always looking for newcomers. Contact Rick Rhoades 703/239-0965.

### SNP North District AT/ Florida Everglades

George Walters reports that John McCrea and Ray Galles hiked and inspected most of the SNP North District AT in early February, removed blowdowns along the length of the trail and produced a detailed report on current tread conditions. Ray is a Hoodlum whose job caused a transfer to the West Coast in May of 1996, but he returns periodically to do trailwork in the North District. By the time that this Trailhead is published, he should be well on his way in through-hiking the AT from Georgia to Maine.

George also reported that he and Maureen Harris inspected trails in the Everglades in Florida in mid-February to see if they measured up to PATC standards. They found absolutely no drainage devices (checkdams, waterbars, etc.) on any of the trails. Of course, all the trails are absolutely flat (or under water).

On a more serious note, Walters noted, "Anyone who has seen the diversity and quantity of plants and wildlife that exist in this ecosystem surely must recognize that its destruction in this century has been a sad travesty." On efforts to reclaim the River of Grass, perhaps Marjory Stoneman Douglas said it best: "The Everglades is a test. If we pass, we get to keep the planet."

### SNP Central District Overseer Workshop

Central District's Blue and White crew announces they will be sponsoring the First Annual Central District Overseers Workshop

on June 5-6 (National Trails Day). Although sponsored by the Central District, the workshop is open to all overseers, trail crew workers and potential overseers. The probable site is the Pinnacles Research Station (near Thornton Gap). Registration will include lunch and dinner on Saturday along with breakfast and lunch on Sunday. Plans are to register about 20-25 applicants and to organize the workshop into small learning/working sessions that will specialize in "Advanced Techniques" (probably a major treadway rehab), a crosscut workshop, a rigging workshop and a "basic" overseer course. Pete Gatje, Supervisor of Trails, has agreed to conduct grip hoist training and arrangements are being made for Park Service chainsaw in-

structors to be available to certify sawyers-in-training from the April chainsaw workshop.

Kerry Snow would like all Central District AT overseers to walk their section by early April and report as quickly as possible. This information will be useful in planning and prioritizing projects for Blue & White Crew trips, the Overseer Workshop and possible Mid-Atlantic Crew work.

Please send any interesting tale, technical advice, individual or group accomplishments, and trail maintenance questions to Trailhead, c/o Jon Rindt, 7861 Colonial Village Row, Annandale, VA 22003 or to jkrindt@erols.com. □

### Manassas National Battlefield Park is involved in another bitter skirmish.

Elliott Harrigan, owner of Virginia Towers LC, is planning to build a 199-foot, steel-lattice cellular telephone tower just outside the park. The tower would impact the views from several important Civil War sites. The Park's superintendent and local preservationists are arguing that the goal of the park is to enable visitors to see what the scene was like at the sites of two momentous battles, and a modern tower rearing over the view will not exactly engage the imagination. Harrigan also faces opposition from Fairfax County planners, who feel the proposed tower is taller than necessary. Harrigan, a self-professed preservationist who is on the board of the Historic Richmond Foundation, is a descendant of Confederate brigadier General Barnard Elliott Bee. Bee's memorial at the park (for bestowing the nickname "Stone Wall" on General Thomas J. Jackson) would provide a view of the tower. (from the "Manassas Preservationists Embattled Again," January 3, 1998, *The Washington Post*)

—Lynn Witwer

## Volunteers - Appointed in February

### District Managers

Randy Buie                      Massanutten North  
Mike Karpie                     SNP South - AT

### Trail Overseers

Larry Baldwin                Gap Run-Rt. 628 Access Trail to End of Rocky Mt. Trail  
Harry deVenoge             Massanutten Mt. East-Scothorn Gap Trail to Waterfall Mt.  
Richard Dugan                Elkwallow-Mathews Arm Campground to Elkwallow Wayside Trail  
Stacey Heimerl                Appalachian Trail-Ashby Gap to Second Logging Road  
Kirt Milam                      Appalachian Trail-South End of waterline to Bear Creek

### Shelter Overseers

Charlene Cheatham        Boone Run  
Nancy Hughes,                Co-Overseer                Deer Lick

## History of Dick's Dome

I got to know Tom Floyd in the 1970s when my Air Force Reserve assignment in the Pentagon offered me the opportunity to combine my training there with the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) work trips. Tom was Supervisor of Trails, and we struck up a friendship that continues to this day. I had visited Tom's Wayside, hiking that area many times. I envied his opportunities to drop down from his nearby cabin to relax with hikers, swapping trail stories.

Soon after a hike I took with Tom to flag a new route for an Appalachian Trail (AT) relocation, I inquired about land in a development we had passed. I subsequently purchased two five-acre lots with the intention of eventually building a retirement home in proximity of the AT. (It was also not far from the then headquarters of American Youth Hostels in Deleplane, VA, where I envisioned doing volunteer work.) The symbol of Tom's Wayside kept reminding me of Tom's feeling that his shelter was another way to en-

rich the AT for the years of Happy Trails he'd experienced.

A lawyer in Brunswick, GA, had built a series of geodesic domes on his property, dubbed Hostel in the Woods, which was affiliated with the American Youth Hostels. The dome concept intrigued me, and in 1987 my twin sons Sky and Everett, who had hiked much of the AT from Georgia to New Jersey with me, joined in constructing a 12 ft. dome shelter about a half mile from the AT. Located 5.5 miles north of Mannassas Gap Shelter, Dick's Dome (George's Geodesic) was designed to provide hikers another alternative for overnight stops.

To erect this onsite, we hired a local carpenter with a generator and power saw to help cut the uniform plywood triangles, which mounted to the metal star plates to form the dome. My sons and I had to drag all of the materials down from the top of the hill since the road was wet, and we couldn't be sure of

driving our pickup back up!

The completed structure was wrapped in roofing undercoat and then covered in earthtone roll roofing. A hook at the peak provides a hanger for packs. Warren Sharp, then overseer of this segment of the AT, along with Tom Floyd, flagged a route for a blue-blaze trail. PATC crews built a privy and added a picnic table. While there isn't a protected spring, water from the creek can be treated.

As an Eagle Scout project, Rob McCubin of Winchester, VA, asked me for permission to design and build the wooden bridge over a portion of the creek leading to the shelter. Over the years, I've made periodic trips to provide improvements, but successive PATC work crews have done most of the maintenance.

Last year the property became part of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. □

—Richard George

# TRAIL OVERSEERS WANTED

Trail Overseer Openings February 22, 1999. Contact the District Manager for the region that interests you.

## SNP NORTH BLUE-BLAZE ( Map #9)

[CALL BERNIE STALMANN AT 301/725-8876 or  
E-mail: Bstalmann@aol.com]

### Dickey Ridge Trail

MP 2.1 to Snead Farm Road [2.60 miles]

### Tuscarora Trail

SNP Boundary to Thompson Hollow Trail [2.30 miles]

## SHENANDOAH CENTRAL BLUE-BLAZE (Map #10)

[CALL CHARLES HILLON AT 703/754-7388  
or E-mail: hillon@mnsinc.com]

### Cat Knob Trail

Laurel Prong Trail to Jones Mountain Trail [.50 mile]

### Corbin Hollow Trail

Old Rag Fire Road to Weakley Hollow Fire Road [2.00 miles]

### Corbin Mountain Trail

(Co-Overseer) Nicholson Hollow Trail to Old Rag Fire Rd. [4.4 miles]

### Jones Mountain Trail

Fork Mountain Fire Road to Cat Knob Trail [.80 mile]

### Jones Mountain Trail

Bear Church Rock to Cat Knob Trail [2.80 miles]

### McDaniel Hollow Trail

Staunton River Trail to Jones Mountain Trail [.40 mile]

## Nicholson Hollow Trail (Upper)

AT to Indian Run Trail [1.7 miles]

### Staunton River Trail

Fork Mountain Fire Road to Jones Mountain Trail [1.50 miles]

### White Oak Canyon Trail

[1<sup>st</sup> section] Skyline Drive to First Waterfall [3.00 miles]

## MASSANUTTEN NORTH (Map # G)

[CALL RANDY BUIE at 540/622-6476]

### Massanutten Mt. East Trail

Waterfall Mountain Trail to US Rte. 211 [1.8 mile]

## MASSANUTTEN SOUTH (Map # H)

[CALL BILL SCHMIDT AT 301/585-2477

or E-mail: weschem@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu]

### Massanutten Mountain South Trail

TV Tower Road (FR375) to Pitt Spring [3.4 miles]

### Massanutten Mountain South Trail

Pitt Spring to Morgan Run Trail [3.3 miles]

### Morgan Run Trail

Cub Run Rd. to Massanutten Mt. South Trail [1.4 miles]

## VIRGINIA METRO (Map # D)

[CALL PETE GATJE AT 703/255-4705]

### Potomac Heritage Trail

(Co-Overseer) Water Tower to Live Oaks Drive [2.70 miles]

*Book Review, from page 17*  
book and see for yourself whether PATCers fit that pattern. In any event, the book will provide those who do care about the mountains with a better understanding of the problems humans are creating there and some of the solutions being suggested to solve them.

—Walt Smith

## Not Just Possums Play Dead

My father, at a tender age, encountered a hog-nose snake lying on its back in the path in front of him. Curious, the six-year-old turned the snake over with a stick. The snake immediately flopped over on its back again, determined to maintain its death stance. So the boy picked the snake up, put it in his pocket and carried it to the little red country schoolhouse he attended in rural South Dakota.

You know what happened next. Once at school, Dad produced the snake in the most dramatic fashion possible, scaring his teacher witless. Pleased with the stir it had caused, Dad kept the snake as a "pet" for a week or so, carrying it around with him in his pocket wherever he went.

"That was such a nice little hog-nose snake," Dad likes to tell me, assuring me that in the end he let the snake go.

—Joanne Erickson

## POTOMAC APPALACHIAN

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