



# JOURNEYS

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY / SPRING 2018

## CELEBRATING 2,000-MILERS

How to Plan Right  
for Your Next Hike

Energy Equilibrium:  
Finding a Balance along  
the A.T. Corridor





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The Appalachian Trail Conservancy's mission is to preserve and manage the Appalachian Trail — ensuring that its vast natural beauty and priceless cultural heritage can be shared and enjoyed today, tomorrow, and for centuries to come.

# JOURNEYS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY / SPRING 2018

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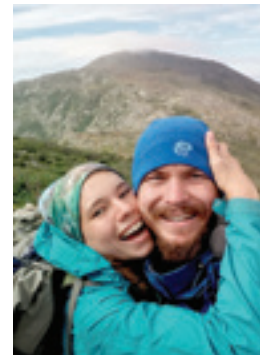
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# Hi A.T. Inspiration

**HEY Y'ALL, IT IS AN HONOR TO JOIN** the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) as the president and CEO. As I write this, I am 14 weeks into my new position, just long enough to form some strong and positive initial impressions I'd like to share with you.

Before my first day on the job with the ATC, as I began telling my friends and family that I was taking this position, I heard dozens of stories about weekend backpacking trips and aspirational thru-hikes on the Appalachian Trail; about Trail angels and people who eventually became life partners after meeting on the Trail; about encounters with bears and about dealing with loud snorers in shared shelters; and about the pleasures of hot showers and restaurant-served comfort food after several days on the Trail.

Delightfully — as I meet with members, volunteers, donors, clubs, and communities, federal agency partners, and elected officials — the colorful accounts of Appalachian Trail experiences continue. Everyone seems to have an A.T. story — or wants one.

Which leads me to the point: the Trail has a remarkable ability to inspire. Nearly 6,500 people are inspired every year to give up time and other pursuits to build privies, rip out invasive species, and clear the Trail of hazards after a storm. Local communities welcome thru-hikers and over three million day-hikers and weekend backpackers, appreciating that their future is closely tied to ongoing stewardship of the A.T. Educators and researchers discover new ways to connect young people, and all of us, to nature. Veterans find peace and refuge.

I have made it my mission to meet with the public and our partners to carry this message forward: the power of the A.T. motivates each of us and the very future of the Trail depends on what we do now. What we do now affects millions of Americans in the eastern United States, for generations to come.

That message is resonating. The ATC has responded to several requests to speak before large and small groups about the importance of the A.T. greenway. In March, the ATC was one of three organizations invited to present at the National Park Friends Alliance annual meeting, a gathering of 200 friends groups who support national parks around the country in various ways. I am proud to report that the reception to our message is positive and enthusiastic, and that we are building and expanding our base of support to help protect the Trail.

Over time, with the support of our great team at the ATC, our volunteers, and partners, I expect to build the profile of the ATC to draw in more and more supporters. I want to make certain the public understands that the work we do honors the forward-looking vision of Benton MacKaye, who, while walking in the woods, conceived of a unifying trail in 1921 — and is credited with getting the grand idea of the A.T. built. Now is our time to take MacKaye's vision to the next phase. MacKaye 2.0?

We need to let the nation know (the world, for that matter) that the inspiration of and for the A.T. prevails. Over the next several years, we will continue to welcome millions of outdoor recreationists. We will continue to assist Trail Communities in optimizing their economies and way of life. We will continue to be one of the most impressive volunteer forces in the country, and will catalyze the engagement and stewardship of youth. Our work will preserve one of the most important landscapes in the eastern United States so that it can continue to inspire each of us.

Our mission — together — is to build and mature broadened awareness of the significance, importance, and uniqueness of the A.T. Our strength is in our stories and in our shared commitment to the Trail. I am grateful to be on this journey with you. 🌱

Suzanne Dixon / President & CEO

Our work will preserve one of the most important landscapes in the eastern United States so that it can continue to inspire each of us.



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Lou Killion and Allie Tate pose with a handmade pizza box sign marking the end of their flip-flop thru-hike in Greenwood Lake, New York.

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Whether northbound, southbound, flip-flop, or by section — 1,254 hikers reported their completion of the A.T. this past year.

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**THE 14 STATE CHALLENGE IS A** marvelous initiative. The Winter issue of *A.T. Journeys* came in today's mail and I read Anne Baker's article ("14 States Endless Ways to Hike") with great interest. I have been walking on the A.T. for 46 years and lived beside it for 13 years. I have no ambition to walk the entire length. This notion of hiking some portion in each state is very appealing. I have my aspirational patch already. Seven states down, seven to go.

Barry "Loop Trail" Chafin  
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

**DID THE "LATE GEORGIA START** Flip-Flop": Springer Mountain to Harpers Ferry. Then Katahdin to Harpers Ferry — the best way to walk the Trail and see its demographic profiles and the most important ways of walking it! Loved starting with late starters, who are a fascinating mix. Loved the adventure down south (such as nearly getting killed by falling pines in the 80 mph winds in the Smokies, drinking moonshine, and talking politics with the [locals]). Loved to hate the bugs, flood-

ed parts of the Trail, and the mud (thank God for the slimy rocks and roots so one can hop from one to another for miles, right?!) Loved to meet the much more solipsistic SOBOs. Loved the solitude of the southbound hike. Loved southern Maine and northern New Hampshire, especially the part from Caratunk to Gorham — so beautiful one could die of happiness. Loved walking back into the NOBO bubble and meeting the people I had hiked with down south — oh, the joy of seeing so many friends again! Loved the challenging weather in the Whites. Loved getting back into the temperate kind of woods, descending from Mount Moosilauke. Had some hard time through Vermont and Massachusetts due to vitamin deficiency and a head cold. Loved coming out of the NOBO bubble and its straggler tail; the woods were again all mine. Was amused by the occasional and quirky late summer section-hiker. Enjoyed the slow descent that went on and on, all through Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania; it was like landing a big jet, gently,

oh, so gently. A big thanks to all of ATC, especially its volunteers. I am really grateful for being able to have this wonderful and insightful experience.

Jakob Jasa Kenda  
LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA

**I VERY MUCH LIKED THE ILLUSTRATION** by Rick Sealock of the damage going on to the ash trees along the Appalachian Trail ("Beneath the Bark" Winter 2018). If one picture can capture the carnage, then he was successful. We are losing the fight on most invasive species issues in this country. The battle to fight these things is worth the doing and we can win with one. This is not an American Chestnut story. We have the tools, we just need the effort. Thank you.

Frank Moulds  
DELRAY BEACH, FLORIDA

**I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE ATC FOR** making my hike possible. I am sure walking the Trail is quite simple compared to the issues that must be handled daily to keep the Trail intact and clear. Thank you for what you do!

Patrick W. Wright  
CHANDLER, NORTH CAROLINA

**f** I was introduced to backpacking at age 8. I had a homemade pack — my dad made the frame out of aluminum tubing and my mom made a pack bag out of canvas. I've passed on that passion to my son, now age 10 and already an experienced backpacker.  
— Douglas Wagoner

**@** @yellowstoneguy  
Ready to get my little ones into backpacks ASAP!  
Thanks for the inspiration!

**f** My oldest grew up to be kayaker and my younger one, who is now 29, is in Japan walking a thousand miles of trail and has climbed Mt. Fuji. They were 8 and 6 during our first backpacking trip. You

never know with a child, how something you do with them will change their lives. I was 24 the first time I stepped on the A.T. and it changed my life and the lives of my children. It is an experience that stays with you your whole life.  
— Monty G. Heise

**@** @gamer68  
Feels like a dream but I'm gunna walk thru that arch in a little over a day! Tuesday can't come fast enough. Just wish my pack was 20lbs :/ and not 40!

**@** @runhalifax  
I read the book about Grandma Gatewood last fall. Ugh! So good! Badass woman just doing what she wants, setting herself free

and handling with her own problems. #IWD#rolemodel

**f** Our little post office in Delaware Water Gap, PA gets more than 400 packages every summer for thru-hikers. I've seen folks sitting outside the PO with open boxes, putting on new socks or boots, new gear, etc. Our town streets are literally part of the A.T. (you have to walk through town to take the bridge over the Delaware to Jersey), so it's like having a mail drop on the Trail itself. We were told that the huge number of thru-hiker packages helped save our little post office from closure a few years ago. So, thanks hikers!  
— Terrence Fagan 📬

**ATC: KEEP DOING WHAT YOU ARE** doing! The A.T. is a treasure we must protect. The original intent is being well-served. The fact that there is a continuous "thread" of a path through the wilderness that extends from Georgia to Maine is still a major source of wonderment to me.

Jeff M. Connally  
AUSTIN, TEXAS

*A.T. Journeys* welcomes your comments.

The editors are committed to providing balanced and objective perspectives. Not all letters received may be published. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.



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**THE WIND HAS BEEN A BIG TOPIC** around here recently. We literally were buffeted by record-setting winds in the mid-Atlantic region. And, it seems, we figuratively are buffeted by strong winds of change and challenges daily. How we adjust our sails toward them says much about our character and our mission.

In early March of 2018, strong winds roared through from the Potomac Highlands to the Chesapeake Bay. Wind gusts were recorded at over 90 miles per hour. North and south of here the spine of the Appalachians also experienced large, late winter snowfalls as four different nor'easters made their way up the coast. Late winter is wreaking havoc on the Appalachian Trail.

In the section maintained by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC), overseers were reporting up to 30 downed trees on one to two-mile sections. Shenandoah National Park had to close to clear Skyline Drive. The impact of the spring snowstorms, not to mention the

anticipated runoffs and coming rains, for our northern and southern sections remain to be seen.

The weather, always a challenge to the Trail overseer, has reached a new level of impact. However, we are as always up to the challenge. PATC has done phenomenal work in a short timespan to ensure that the section of Trail they are responsible for will be open and ready for the hiking season. Trained volunteers deployed individually and in teams to all impacted areas, often working side-by-side with park personnel to clear trails and Trail accesses. I know that these actions are being repeated up and down the Trail by all of our clubs and partners. What our volunteers accomplish is truly without compare and represents the gold

standard of citizen contributions to our public lands.

Those figurative winds present different challenges. Our Federal partners are facing unprecedented changes to staffing and budgets. Questions as to the fundamental purposes of public lands is being debated, as is the definition of public access. Plus, the pull and push of energy resource development versus land protection continues unabated. Determining our role and responsibility during these times is something with which the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's (ATC) Board and staff continues to remain committed.

Yet again, though, the A.T. spirit always rises to the challenge. The ATC presented a large and unified coalition during "Hike the Hill" week in February. I was especially thrilled to see nine of our Next Generation Council members in town and ready to meet with elected officials to talk about the importance of the Appalachian Trail, keeping it and its hiker's experiences protected. Our website has been updated to highlight our role as the Protectors of the Appalachian Trail, including specific ways that members can support our mission through citizen action. And I must specifically acknowledge the work of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club and Diana Christopulos and their efforts to stop the Mountain Valley Pipeline across the A.T. in southwest Virginia. While part of a larger and extremely robust coalition of environmental and community groups, as well as local government entities, the A.T. club's leadership in this effort cannot be over emphasized.

The Appalachian Trail community has a long history of withstanding strong winds and we will always make sure the Trail is passable and protected from the impacts of both meteorological and society's storms. Thank you for joining us in these efforts. ⚡

**Sandra Marra** / Chair



Members of the ATC's Next Generation Advisory Council and ATC staff pose during a day of advocating for the A.T. on Capitol Hill this past February.

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PHOTO BY JORDAN BOWMAN



# ENERGY EQUILIBRIUM

Just after Christmas last year, the Deerfield Wind Project became the first commercial wind farm to operate on national forest land in the Green Mountain National Forest in Vermont. The field's 15 turbines will power 14,000 homes and generate up to \$7 million of payments to the towns of Readsboro and Searsburg — and accrue \$6 million in tax revenue to the state over the life of the project. It's a renewable energy installation with clear benefits, however, the towers are within the Appalachian Trail viewshed. While some may frown on the visual mark of the 400-foot towers and the environmental impact of its installation, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's (ATC) New England regional director Hawk Metheny was concerned that the standard FAA-required strobe lights would flash near an overnight site on the A.T. and impact the Trail experience.

The ATC appealed the Forest Service's permit of the project, and, at its urging, the federal agency agreed to require lighting that will flash only when radar detects an aircraft nearby. The appeal may have only tempered a portion of the project's impact, but the outcome was a small win for protecting the values of the Appalachian Trail, and may set a precedent for wind tower projects on other public lands.

Yet energy infrastructure projects like the wind farm in Vermont — both large and small — are becoming more common throughout the A.T. landscape. "I have a sense that we'll continue to see more energy infrastructure proposals," says Metheny. "We're starting to look ahead and prepare for appropriate ways to avoid or reduce impacts to the A.T."

Indeed, according to the University of Texas at Austin Energy Institute, the U.S. will experience a significant transition in the development of energy infrastructure. In addition to an aged energy grid, economic forces coupled with climate change and new technology will have a broad impact on how the U.S. acquires and delivers energy. The future energy grid may include more wind turbines, solar fields, gas pipelines, and transmission lines whose installations may have consequences for the Trail. While there are plenty of benefits of a switch to cleaner forms of energy and a more efficient power grid, experts and Trail advocates are worried that decisions about future energy infrastructure projects may be made without

understanding the full range of costs and the potential impact on natural resources.

"At the end of the month you usually get a bill. That's one metric for the cost of electricity," says Joshua Rhodes, a scholar at the Energy Institute. But, he adds, the full cost of acquiring and delivering electricity includes plenty of other externalities that may be difficult to quantify or anticipate, including environmental spillovers, such as air pollution, visual impacts, noise, and health and safety effects.

While the natural gas pipelines have lately been the center of attention, new and relatively cheaper power options — such as solar and wind — has created a completely new energy infrastructure landscape and with it, a different policy discussion. The anticipated transformation explains why the ATC is positioning itself to be more involved in shaping future policies related to energy production and delivery.

"Communities up and down the A.T. are grappling with the development of energy infrastructure," says Lynn Davis, the ATC's director of federal policy and legislation whose day-to-day work in Washington, D.C. is to help the organization navigate policy advocacy around complex energy issues. "It's not something that we're walking away from. We prefer to be in a position of working toward a solution." Davis points out that the ATC is willing to work with energy companies, government, industry, and communities, but plans to weigh in on projects and policies to help guide decisions on future projects.

The proposal for the controversial Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) that will cross the A.T. in Southwestern Virginia is why the ATC adopted a pipeline crossing policy in 2015. The policy includes eight standards outlining the organization's expectation for future projects, among them, that each pipeline minimize its impact through the Trail corridor and that the project must demonstrate a pressing public need. The ATC has also developed guidelines for wind energy projects and the ATC's Stewardship Council is working on a solar siting policy to give volunteers and staff guidance on when and how to comment on proposed installations.

"Energy issues are incredibly complex. So, the more that we know and understand their impact the better," says the ATC's vice president of conservation and Trail programs, Laura Belleville. While the ATC has supported numerous infrastructure



projects there may be cases, explains Belleville, where developments shouldn't go forward due to their impact on the Trail and the surrounding landscape. For example, this was the case with the recently scrapped Northern Pass transmission line in New Hampshire that would have had a significant impact on the White Mountains. While the ATC did not outright oppose the project, it provided public comments that were in line with the organization's guidelines that resulted in a siting alternative that minimized impact to the Trail

The ATC's pipeline crossing protocols may help guide energy companies on the least impactful ways to coexist with the A.T., but there are plenty of impacts that are difficult to predict.

For instance, pipelines routed over steep terrain have demonstrated that construction can lead to slope failures among an array of other scenic and environmental effects. Since pipelines are seldom angled across steep slopes to avoid potential damage from sliding soil and debris, pipeline routes follow a direct path up, which magnifies slope erosion problems and makes revegetation difficult. According to West Virginia resident Maury Johnson, who has been monitoring the expansion of a small pipeline on the Virginia-West Virginia line up the steep slope of Peters Mountain, what is being done to revegetate the site is not working. "What you see is a scarred mountain that will take decades to heal, if it ever does," says Johnson who has been monitoring the site since its completion. In addition to the challenges of steep slope construction, the resulting impact of the pipeline on Peters Mountain may have been compounded by non-compliance to best practices, relaxed regulatory oversight, and a lack of regional infrastructure planning. Of course, the MVP presents similar hazards and risks, but its impact is on a far greater scale. Spearheaded by the EQT Corporation, the pipeline will carry fracked natural gas over 300 miles through Virginia and West Virginia, and run parallel to the Appalachian Trail for over 90 miles. The route, critics say, will have an unprecedented impact on the A.T.

In fact, clearing for the MVP has begun. According to Joby Timm, the supervisor of the George Washington and Jefferson National

Forest, as of March 2, 2018, the pipeline had received permits from the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to begin clearing land managed by the National Forest system. In June 2017, 11 standards in the Jefferson National Forest land management plan were amended to exempt the MVP. For example, the forest plan limits public utility right of ways to areas where "major impacts already exist" in order to contain infrastructure in established corridors. The amended plan would exempt the MVP from the requirement. Critics argue that the project has troubling public safety consequences too, since it crosses steep slopes and karst topography, a landscape that features sinkholes, caves, and underground water. The pipeline will also bisect the largest active seismic zone in the state where a rupture could damage property and imperil water quality.

Safety and water quality concerns aside, the corridor route will likely have a significant impact on the viewshed. In the future, the ATC hopes to anticipate the visual impact of energy infrastructure projects by developing an inventory of vistas throughout the Trail corridor and establishing a criteria for measuring scenic values. The National Park Service's (NPS) "Enjoy the View!" is an inventory system developed by the NPS Air Resources Division to evaluate views within and beyond the boundaries of National Park units, including the Appalachian Trail, which is a unit of the NPS.



This view from the A.T. on Palmerton Cliffs in Pennsylvania shows a pipeline, power line, and highway — and is an example of an area where infrastructure surrounds, and has the potential to impact, the Trail corridor.

Photo by Chris Gallaway/Horizonline Pictures

### Strategy and Support

The sum of the short and long-term impacts — what are known as "cumulative environmental effects" — is what concerns central and southwest Virginia regional director Andrew Downs. He worries that the lack of regional infrastructure planning means that multiple pipelines may be delivering the same gas product to the same place, just along a different path. Imagine a college campus, he says, with no sidewalks. The system of spontaneously created pathways would likely serve each student's self interest, but may result in a campus dense with footpaths everywhere. "That's what we're doing now. Each

pipeline company is making their user-created trail,” he explains. “It’s really inefficient, costly, and unsafe. We want to see more thought put into the placement of infrastructure on a regional scale.”

While the ATC’s energy infrastructure policy guidance may help influence future projects, they need understanding and more support in Congress to have greater influence. That’s why the ATC has formed a caucus in the U.S. Congress to raise awareness and support for Trail corridor landscape issues and to advocate for legislation on issues that may have an impact. For example, the ATC has participated in crafting bipartisan federal legislation to address a number of concerns associated with the planning and regulatory process of pipeline projects. Known as the Pipeline Fairness and Transparency Act, the bipartisan bill was introduced by Republican U.S. Congressman Morgan Griffith who represents a portion of southwestern Virginia. Democratic Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner of Virginia have introduced similar legislation in the U.S. Senate. According to a press release from Griffith’s

Another component of the legislation favored by the ATC is limiting the ability to amend national forest land management plans that are vetted by the public. Each national forest is required to have a land management plan that’s revised every 15 to 20 years. The plan is developed using the best available science and public input to create a strategy to manage each national forest’s resources over a two-decade period of time. For decades, the ATC and other trail organizations have developed standard language and prescriptions to manage the A.T. corridor, such as rigid viewshed protocols, wildlife habitat protections, and preservation norms for cultural and historic sites. National forest planning rules dictate that national trails should be managed to maintain their unique special character or purpose. That’s particularly meaningful to the A.T. since half of the Trail passes through national forest land on eight national forests from Georgia to New Hampshire, each managed by a unique land management plan.

In fact, the outcome of the Deerfield Wind Project in Vermont was influenced by the ATC’s position as a collaborator in the Green Mountain National Forest planning process. “We welcome being an important stakeholder — that’s what will uphold our standards and values,” says Metheny. “I encourage the public to understand how the decision-making process works and turn out to public hearings or be involved as a citizen.” Both Metheny and Belleville suggest that involvement by the ATC’s members in shaping policy is more important than ever.

# “WE PREFER TO BE IN A POSITION OF WORKING TOWARD A SOLUTION.”

office, the bill addresses the protection of the A.T. and other national scenic trails as well as the public vetting and approval process by the Federal Regulatory Energy Commission.

“Knowing the long-term impacts of these projects, we must ensure that the right processes are in place so the public can more thoroughly evaluate the effects of a proposed pipeline, and opportunities for engagement should be a priority,” said Griffith in a press release. The bill would also focus on the cumulative visual impacts of any similar proposed project and include visual impact simulations depicting leaf-on and leaf-off views at each potentially impacted location. It would also mandate that multiple projects meeting certain criteria would be considered as one project, increasing the likelihood of locating multiple projects in a single energy corridor. Belleville is encouraged by the language in the legislation. “It’s thoughtful and forward looking and showcases the kind of policy work the ATC is working towards,” she says. “The Appalachian region is likely to see more proposed projects that fragment forests and that may be seen from popular recreation areas.”

The lack of an overarching national energy policy, says Belleville, has created an opportunity for the ATC to work with a range of partners on crafting better policies in the future. But navigating the complex regulatory processes of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and other agencies, or to anticipate the new wave of energy projects, has forced the ATC to rapidly adapt its approach.

“We’re going to see more energy projects that will have an impact on the Trail corridor. We need our members, volunteers, and supporters to engage with us as we advocate for meaningful policy development,” says Belleville who believes that stronger policies and more effective decision making processes can help limit the cumulative effects of future projects. “I understand why we’re developing new energy sources, but there may be better ways to build wind farms or pipelines. The ATC wants to be part of the discussion and develop a policy agenda that gives us a seat at the table.” ↗



For more information about ATC’s Energy Infrastructure Policy visit: [appalachiantrail.org/policies](http://appalachiantrail.org/policies)

# TRAILHEAD

★ ATC DIRT ★



## myATstory Season 2

High elevation grasslands like the Roan Highlands of North Carolina and Tennessee are just one part of the vast and varied, wild landscapes, communities, and culture that are unique to the Trail corridor and the Trail experience.



# CONNECTING TO SOMETHING GREATER

▶ [APPALACHIANTRAIL.ORG/MYATSTORY](https://APPALACHIANTRAIL.ORG/MYATSTORY)



# ATC OPENS D.C. OFFICE

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) has opened an office in Washington, D.C. to support the conservancy's work with Congressional members, federal agencies, and conservation allies. The office is located within the Wilderness Society's offices alongside a dozen other conservation organizations at 1615 M Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. ¶ "Establishing an office in D.C. is a significant part of the Conservancy's strategic direction," says ATC's president and CEO Suzanne Dixon. "Our work in protecting

the A.T. is important on a national level.

This office helps us to establish and position the ATC as a strong conservation

organization worthy of national attention

and support. Our future is in the people

we engage, the networks we build, and

the civic power we harness to address

important policy." ¶ The Appalachian Trail

Conservancy has a strong historical connection to the Wilderness Society. Benton

MacKaye advocated for the creation of the

Appalachian Trail in 1921 with a compelling

article that proposed the need for saving

and protecting wild open space in the

populous Eastern United States. Fourteen

years later, MacKaye co-founded the Wilderness

Society along with now-legendary conservationists

Aldo Leopold and Bob Marshall. The A.T. passes through 25

wilderness areas for a total of 150 miles of

the A.T.'s 2,191 miles, equating to approximately

seven percent of the Trail.

## myATstory

### « VOICES FROM THE MOUNTAINS

Large landscape conservation means maintaining not only the federally protected A.T. footpath and its corridor, but also protecting the areas surrounding the Trail. "Voices from the Mountains" — the first of season 2 of the myATstory video series — is about a connection to something larger than the A.T. footpath. The headwaters of creeks, streams and lakes dot the Appalachian Mountain Range, providing clean water to millions of people. The breeding grounds and migration flyways of many bird species run the length of the Appalachian Trail corridor. High-elevation grasslands, numerous wetlands, and a variety of alpine, coniferous, and mixed-hardwood forests host rare and endangered plants found nowhere else on earth. The A.T. also meanders past significant cultural and historical landmarks, from Civil War battlefields to the Dover Oak — the largest and oldest tree on the entire Trail — serving as a lens into our nation's cultural and natural histories. ¶ "On the East Coast, the A.T. is the backbone of the wilderness — a place where all protected lands are connected to something greater," says Nicole Wooten of the Hudson Highlands Trust. "[It is] a large landscape that really is important beyond just the East Coast of the U.S. Ecologically speaking, the Trail is part of the heartbeat of the wilderness along these [American] continents." The A.T. Landscape Partnership has identified a list of 10 Priority Focus Areas, including Maine's High Peaks, Kittatinny Ridge, Virginia's Blue Ridge and Catawba Valley, and the Roan Highlands. All of the focus areas exemplify a diversity of conservation values, threats to these values, and opportunities to protect these special places. "The A.T. was built on the idea of taking the impossible and making it possible," says the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's board chair Sandra Marra. "It is our legacy [to continue to] take on these impossible tasks and turn them into reality."

Watch this story and others — and get involved at: [appalachiantrail.org/myatstory](http://appalachiantrail.org/myatstory)



"LIVE-STREAMED"

## New Online Voting for ATC Board

New voting procedures are going into effect this August for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's (ATC) first "live-streamed" annual meeting. All ATC members will receive an email with information that will allow them to vote for the slate of five new members of the Board of Directors. Voting will require a membership number for access to the voting page. Paper ballots will not be distributed. ¶ The meeting will be held from **1:30 to 3:30 P.M. on Sunday, August 12, 2018**, at the National Conservation Training Center outside Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Participants must register in advance and cannot register on-site. The meeting will also be open to discussions of ATC corporate affairs in a town hall format — members can participate online or in person.

Members who have not yet provided an e-mail address should contact: [membership@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:membership@appalachiantrail.org) or call: (304) 535-6331

## NEW NAHMAKANTA STREAM LEAN-TO ENCOURAGES SUSTAINABLE CAMPING

By Lester C. Kenway



The Maine Appalachian Trail Club's newest lean-to was finished on October 14, 2017. Nineteen MATC members volunteered 1,239 hours to this project from June 2016 to October 2017. Nine weekend trips were made to complete the construction of the Lean-to. ¶ The lean-to is designed to accommodate eight hikers per night. The overall plan for the lean-to was adopted from the Horseshoe Canyon Lean-to, built in 1991. This is the first lean-to on the A.T. in Maine to feature a transfer platform for disabled hikers where a portion of the bunk is extended to the front of the deacon seat, in compliance with modern day accessibility standards ¶ The lean-to is located near the Nahmakanta Stream Campsite that was established in 1996. You can reach the lean-to via a three-mile hike south of Nahmakanta Lake. This site was chosen back then noting that a nearby stand of spruce trees was available for building a lean-to sometime in the future. ¶ During the construction of the lean-to we noted that the campsite was heavily used, with up to 20 people pitching tents each night. We hope that the new lean-to will attract hikers that might otherwise stay at unauthorized campsites close to the stream. ¶ On most sections of the A.T., you have two potential choices for camping: staying in a shelter or pitching a tent. Backcountry camping is available at about 100 designated camp sites and is also allowed in the immediate vicinity of most of the 250 shelters along the Trail. In some areas, you can choose your own campsite (called dispersed camping), but hikers are always encouraged to use designated sites even when you can legally choose your own, so please check local regulations and recommendations. Using designated campsites means you will have fewer impacts on vegetation and wildlife habitat and will keep the Trail corridor looking natural and pristine.



The new Nahmakanta stream lean-to is ready for use. 📷 Photo by Lester Kenway

Lester Kenway is the president of the Maine Appalachian Trail Club. For more information about camping on the A.T. visit: [appalachiantrail.org/camping](http://appalachiantrail.org/camping) and [ATCAMP.org](http://ATCAMP.org)

## NEW A.T. BRIDGE NEAR DAMASCUS

A.T. hikers heading north out of Damascus, Virginia have a new landmark to look out for: a sturdy, engineered footbridge over Straight Branch. ¶ Five and a half miles north of town, near Highway 58 and a parking lot for the Virginia Creeper Trail, the clear waters of Straight Branch pass under the A.T. and tumble into larger Whitetop Laurel Creek. Due to the steep terrain, this humble mountain stream can swell dramatically after a thunderstorm. In 2013, a flash flood washed away the existing A.T. footbridge without leaving a trace. ¶ Since the area is prone to dangerous flooding, a much larger bridge was needed as a long-term solution. Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) regional staff, volunteers from the Mount Rogers Appalachian Trail Club (MRATC), and Forest Service personnel from the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area collaborated on a project proposal for state funding. The state of Virginia awarded grant funding for the new bridge through the Recreational Trails Program, and the Forest Service got to work designing a bridge that would be above the 100-year floodplain. ¶ Grant funding from the State of Virginia wasn't enough to cover the entire cost of materials and construction, so this bridge became a true partnership project. A Forest Service contractor installed concrete abutments to support massive wooden beams, graded the approach, and stabilized the bank with riprap. Meanwhile, the ATC used funds from the Virginia specialty A.T. license plate to purchase lumber and hardware for the decking, posts, and railings, which Mount Rogers A.T. Club volunteers were standing by to prep and install. ¶ The project was nearly waylaid in the final phase. The design called for rounded posts and railings, which had to be custom cut in order to fit together and fit onto the square decking. Fortunately, MRATC volunteer Ron Bobko had a sophisticated wood shop at his workplace, and the know-how required. Bobko got permission for the club to use the specialized tools and work space at the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, and MRATC custom cut each post and railing so they fit together perfectly. All told, **MRATC volunteers gave 473 hours of their time to the bridge project.** ¶ For four years, A.T. hikers were temporarily re-routed along the Beech Grove and Virginia Creeper trails in order to safely cross Straight Branch. Thanks to a strong partnership and some very dedicated local volunteers, they are back on the A.T. and crossing the creek high and dry. If you're heading to Trail Days, be sure to check out the bridge and admire those rounded posts and railings.



From top: Members of the Mount Rogers A.T. Club pose on the finished bridge — happy that their hard work is complete; The new foot bridge will keep hikers high and dry when crossing Straight Branch creek. 📷 Photo by Anne Maia

## BEAR CANISTERS AND BLACK BEAR AWARENESS

Due to an increasing number of serious human/bear interactions at many locations along the A.T., the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) continues to strongly recommend use of a bear canister by anyone staying overnight on the A.T.

📷 Photo by Ben Benvie

For more information visit:  
[appalachiantrail.org/bears](http://appalachiantrail.org/bears)





## Going to Bat for the Land and Water Conservation Fund

By Lynn Davis

An acquisition of 216 ecologically significant acres near the Appalachian Trail in Pawling, New York is a good example of why the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is teed up to promote the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Established more than five decades ago, LWCF supports the protection of federal lands and waters through voluntary conservation initiatives. ¶ Under congressional authorization provided through LWCF and the recent passage of the 2018 federal budget, \$2 million will purchase private property in Pawling along the Trail. An additional \$300,000 in private funding — including a contribution from the ATC made possible by the Volgenau Foundation — is being raised to complete the transaction. ¶ The Pawling land might be considered, in baseball terminology, a grand slam for its protection of wildlife, preservation of scenic views along the Trail, and improved recreation experiences for visitors, many of who travel from New York City to hike this Trail section. ¶ The National Park Service had identified this area as its number one priority for land protection in the United States and



U.S. Capitol Building 📷 Photo by Amanda Wheelock

essential to the management of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. ¶ The added acreage in this area enables rerouting of the Trail to protect the habitat of several important species. The acquisition allows the Trail to be relocated out of the wetlands to a more suitable area sustaining the striking views from Cat Rocks of the beautiful and historic Hudson Valley and providing visitors with enhanced hiking experiences. The Pawling, New York project is one of several LWCF-projects along the Trail this year and one of hundreds of similar undertakings along the Trail (and throughout the country) over more than 50 years. ¶ Congressionally established in 1964, LWCF does not use taxpayer dollars but, instead, invests earnings from offshore oil and gas leasing. Under this fund, Congress can appropriate up to \$900 million each year to provide grants to state and local governments and to federal agencies including the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service. The 2018 federal budget caps LWCF appropriations at \$425 million, less than half of what can be used to meet the intentions of the fund. ¶ A diverse coalition promoting LWCF — which includes the ATC — is actively and diligently advocating for increased appropriations and for all-important reauthorization of LWCF, which expires September 30, 2018 and could end this successful funding program. ¶ Protection of land along the A.T. has been a priority for Trail managers ever since the Trail was established. Over the years, this has resulted in one of the most significant and successful land acquisition programs in the United States. Today, there is a 250,000-acre greenway around the Trail that connects significant public lands in the eastern United States. The A.T. Landscape Partnership — a coalition of public and private partners, co-convened by the ATC and the National Park Service — is actively engaged in safeguarding the picturesque vistas, wildlife habitat, farmlands, and valuable historic sites that are all part of the Trail experience.

For more information about ATC's position on the Land Water Conservation Fund and appropriations to deferred maintenance visit: [appalachiantrail.org/lwcf](http://appalachiantrail.org/lwcf)



# NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

## YOU'RE INVITED TO THE PARTY!

In 2018, America is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act as well as the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Join the celebration by participating in a National Trails Day event, or simply head outdoors and #FindYourTrail. ¶ **Saturday, June 2, 2018 is National Trails Day** — the only nationally coordinated event designed to unite all muscle-powered trail activities with the goal of connecting more people to trails. Every trail beckons adventure and has a story to share with any person willing to discover it, and the American Hiking Society believes these trail experiences can improve the lives of every American. ¶ Each year, on the first Saturday of June, the American Hiking Society and the trails community invite people of all ages and abilities to find their own adventure and discover their unique story at one of the thousands of events hosted throughout the country. ¶ By coordinating a wide array of trail activities on a single day, National Trails Day attracts new trail users and helps connect existing trail enthusiasts with local clubs and organizations with the hopes of creating trail advocates and stewards. The task to protect and maintain more than 200,000 miles of trails in the U.S. requires a collaborative effort among trail clubs, organizations, government agencies, and most importantly passionate trail advocates and stewards.

For more information and to host or join an event visit:  
[americanhiking.org/national-trails-day](http://americanhiking.org/national-trails-day)



A guided hike on the A.T. through the Roan Highlands.  
Photo courtesy of the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy



## CALL FOR 2020 A.T. CALENDAR PHOTOS

Do you have that *perfect* photograph of the Appalachian Trail?

We are seeking photos for the official Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) 2020 calendar by **July 15, 2018**. The ATC calendar, co-published since 2012 with Rizzoli International's Publishing, features a mix of photographers and subjects and has always had a dual purpose: To show the visual allure of the Trail landscape to hikers and non-hikers alike — and to brag a bit about the volunteers who maintain it. You could be a part of that legacy.

**What we need:** High-resolution digital images (TIFFs only) of scenes on the Trail. Send images (limit of 36) to: Publisher, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, P.O. Box 807, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425. Digital images should be no smaller than 13 inches long and wide. Please include: location and month taken for each image — with the photographer's last name and image ID in the file name. Visible blazes are a major bonus; so is sunshine. Candid shots of hikers near blazes are a double bonus (each selected image is worth \$200 — posed shots cannot be considered). ↗

For detailed guidelines visit:  
[appalachiantrail.org](http://appalachiantrail.org)



# SUZANNE DIXON



Suzanne Dixon, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's (ATC) new president and CEO, walks into the room confidently. She takes a seat, leans in and says, "Hey, y'all. I'm here to learn all I can." It's her twinge of Irish brogue that tips you off to Suzanne's Irish upbringing. Just as her fancy cowboy boots give a nod to her work in Texas. Prior to becoming the ATC's CEO/president, Suzanne worked on behalf of 16 national park units in Texas where she impressively achieved World Heritage Site status for San Antonio Missions and, just as impressively, secured a presidential designation to create Waco Mammoth National Monument. One thing about Suzanne is that she is not easily stereotyped so *A.T. Journeys* (ATJ) decided to start our Q&A session asking about her boots.

**ATJ:** LET'S TALK ABOUT THE COWBOY BOOTS AND YOUR IRISH HERITAGE.

**SD:** (Laughing, and then getting serious). I suppose you could say I'm all about immersing myself, giving myself fully, to the work I do. I grew up in Ireland in the County Kildare in a village of less than 2,000 people surrounded by spectacularly scenic countryside. I moved to the States two decades ago and, within a short period of time, found myself working on behalf of national parks. It wasn't a stretch to join my childhood experiences and appreciation for beautiful places with America's national parks. And, for the record, whenever I can, I lace up my hiking boots.



Suzanne at Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge in Texas

**ATJ:** WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT CREATING A WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND A NATIONAL MONUMENT?

**SD:** Both took years and considerable work to achieve. Plus, both required building strong coalitions of supportive voices. I was fortunate to work with a broad spectrum of people — people like former First Lady Laura Bush — to help disadvantaged youth in Brownsville, Texas. I strongly believe that everyone who wants a seat at the table in protecting America's treasures should be given a place at the table.

**ATJ:** WHY DID YOU TAKE THE POSITION AS ATC'S PRESIDENT AND CEO?

**SD:** The mission of protecting the Trail corridor and the Trail's surrounding landscapes certainly appealed to me. The A.T. corridor travels along one of the most important land features in the eastern United States. I believe there are great opportunities we must pursue now to make certain the A.T. is protected in the future.

**ATJ:** IN THREE WORDS, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR FIRST FEW MONTHS ON THE JOB?

**SD:** On the road.

**ATJ:** WHAT ARE YOU LEARNING ON THE ROAD?

**SD:** First let me say, I've only scratched the surface in

my travels. It's important for me to meet with Trail clubs and community leaders, to learn the details of their work and hear about their challenges. I'm committed to getting out and meeting as many A.T supporters are possible.

**ATJ:** WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN YOUR TRAVELS?

**SD:** Believe me, the meetings with clubs and partners have impressed me greatly. I have met extraordinarily dedicated, smart people. I believe the Trail's greatest strengths include dedicated supporters and partners and the hard-working staff at ATC. I have also, of course, been spending time at Harpers Ferry and in regional offices, getting to know my team.

**ATJ:** WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES?

**SD:** Building the profile of the Appalachian Trail is my number one priority. We need to make certain the country — the world, for that matter — knows about the A.T. and regards it as important. The Trail is significant for many reasons — for its recreational value and contributions to local communities; for its natural resources and how those resources support clean water and air; for its open space that facilitates wildlife migration; and for its place in American history. Quite frankly, if we don't build public understanding and support now, we are likely to lose opportunities in the future.

**ATJ:** WHAT IS A TYPICAL DAY FOR YOU?

**SD:** I'm not certain I've had a typical or routine day. (Laughing.) I can tell you that, when I'm not on the road meeting with clubs and donors, I get up early to answer emails or I am in our Headquarters in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Also, I've been spending considerable time in Washington, D.C. in meetings with federal partners and our non-profit allies.

**ATJ:** SOUNDS GRUELING.

**SD:** Not at all. The A.T. is all about inspiration and aspiration. I am fueled by possibility.

**ATJ:** ARE YOU INTENDING TO THE HIKE THE A.T.?

**SD:** Enthusiastically, yes! I have spent time on the Trail but intend to log some serious miles this year and for years to come. 🏔️

To learn more about Suzanne visit:  
[appalachiantrail.org/ourteam](http://appalachiantrail.org/ourteam)



From top: Suzanne (middle) at the designation of Waco Mammoth National Monument with former National Park Service director Jon Jarvis, CEO of the National Parks Conservation Association Theresa Pierno, Former First Lady Laura Bush, and National Parks Conservation Association program manager Erika Pelletier. 📷 Photo by Bob Howen; In Guadalupe Mountains National Park; With friend Erika Pelletier in Big Bend National Park





Hanuel Lee / *Sky*

John Welt / *PaJohn*

Dan Byrnes / *Slim Shady*

Sharon Cassidy / *Shortcake*

Pamela Parker / *Chilly*

Srinidhi Venkatesh / *Tooth*

Pablo De Gárate / *Three Bells*

# MILERS

2000



This listing of determined individuals represents a record number of 2,000-milers for the 7th year in a row. Those included have reported hike completions of the entire Trail (thru-hikes or section-hikes) to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) since the last listing in *A.T. Journeys* a year ago. For the second time, the number of thru-hikers who reported completing a flip-flop itinerary was greater than the number of those reporting a southbound thru-hike, although northbounders are the largest category by far again. And for the first time, we received applications from hikers as far away as Poland and Slovenia. The rest are from previous years (there is no time limit on reporting a hike completion) — with **1,254** hikes of the entire Trail included. The ATC does not verify hike completion reports, which are submitted via an honor system.

**NORTHBOUND 806**  
**SOUTHBOUND 121**  
**FLIP-FLOP 160**  
**SECTION HIKER 167**

## 2017

Laura Abbey / *Minnie Mouse*  
 Hesham Abdunnasir / *Tall Boy*  
 Robert O. Abel / *O<sup>2</sup>*  
 Thomas Abel / *Red Beard*  
 Stefan Abraham / *Two Trails*  
 Trevor Abrams / *Frisbee*  
 Amanda Adams / *Tropical*  
 John Adams / *Kiltman*  
 Oakley Aguiar / *Velveeta*  
 Berkley Aiken / *TEN*  
 Christine Alexander / *Summercamp*  
 Sakkara Algje / *Nepala*  
 James Allen / *Crazy Tree*  
 Mathew Allison / *Single T*  
 John Alm / *Umbrella Face*  
 Sam Almy / *Cauldron*  
 Amy Aloe / *Tuff Broad*  
 Judi Alvarado / *Flicker*  
 Ethan Amerine / *Piper*  
 Jeff Amos / *Captain*  
 Dan Amundson / *Bullseye*  
 Yaakob Amzalleg / *Rock Spider*  
 Constance Anders / *Spiraea*  
 Kelly Anderson / *Sleeping Beauty*  
 Amanda Andrade / *Clearwater*  
 Al Angel / *Bodhi*  
 Kyle Ankeremann / *Chicklet*

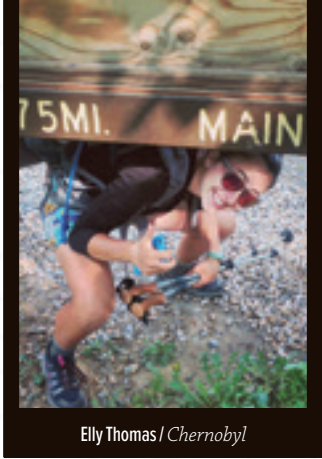
Patrick Annaloro / *Timber*  
 Shani Arbel / *snapchat*  
 Tom Armistead / *Swamp Fox*  
 Kelly Arnett / *Safari*  
 Charlie Arsenault / *TNC*  
 Ian Artinger / *Little Prince*  
 Kenneth Ashcraft, Jr. / *Piper*  
 Ashley Ann Asprocolas / *Leap Frog*  
 Patrick Auger / *Not Solo*  
 Dave Ault / *Magoo*  
 Christopher Autry / *Adele*  
 Katja Bachmann / *Flashfire*  
 Steve Bacon / *Huckleberry Finch*  
 Piotr Baidas / *Wiki*  
 Mark Bailey / *Uncle Pyro*  
 Bill Bailey / *B<sup>2</sup>*  
 Adam William Baker / *RootBeer*  
 Colin Baker / *Footprint*  
 Nathan Baker / *Hansel*  
 Philip Baker / *Sure Foot*  
 Linda Bakkar / *Soulflower*  
 B. David Baldwin  
 Kristy Ball / *Tattoo*  
 Elmar Bardill / *Cooper*  
 Michael Barger / *Tengo Hambre*  
 Jacob Barnett / *Chef BoyRD*  
 Jeffery Barr / *Tin Cup*  
 Abe Barrera / *Diablo*  
 Nigel Bates / *Tree Beard*

Andrew Bayer / *Carolina Red*  
 Matthew Bayer / *Long Dong*  
 Brian Beaty / *M.I.A.*  
 Walter Beauchamp / *Sensei*  
 Richard Beilock / *Sisyphus*  
 Gyula Bela / *4WD*  
 Christian Belcher / *Bruce Wayne*  
 David Bell / *House*  
 Ryan Benz / *Scrambler*  
 Colin Bernier / *Mr. Goodboy*  
 Betsy Bevis / *Hot Sauce*  
 Russ Bevis / *Ziploc*  
 Jay Bigelow / *JayBird*  
 Sarah Bigelow / *Towhee*  
 John Bilbrey / *Tennessee Boy*  
 Daniel Binde / *Knotts*  
 Eileen Biscaha / *Cheesy, Triangle*  
 Dustan Bishop / *Firecracker*  
 Michael Bishop / *BearBait*  
 Sym Blanchard / *Symbiosis*  
 Brian Bland-Clark / *Scar*  
 Katelyn Bland-Clark / *Monk*  
 Kevin Blonski / *TreeWalker*  
 Ed Bocklage / *Bull Dog*  
 McKayne Boedeker / *Senator*  
 Erin Bogert / *Tenacious*  
 Doug Bonacum / *NOWA*  
 Anthony Bonanno / *Bog Angel*  
 Carol Bontekoe / *No Chill*  
 Rebecca Booroajian  
 Jason Bordash / *Sallywag*  
 Ethan Boswell / *Dutchess*  
 Jonathan Botha / *Jono*  
 Amelia Bothel / *Body Bag*  
 Steve Botnick / *Wrong Way*  
 David Boudreaux / *Speckled Trout*  
 Joshua Bourke / *Goose*  
 Clay Bourne / *Scar*  
 Christopher Bowley / *Easy Goin'*  
 Drew Boysen / *Scooby*  
 Aaron Bradford / *Nicorette*  
 Graham Brandwood / *Don Quixote*  
 Charles Braswell / *Fishstix*  
 Krista Braun / *Pickles*  
 Bob Breakfield / *City of New Orleans*  
 Joe Brendler / *GI Joe*  
 Richard Brey / *Traveler*  
 Amy Britton / *Little Bear Stumbles*  
 Susan Brookreson / *Twisted Knickers*  
 Spencer Brothers / *Circus*  
 Chris Brown / *Seth Rogen*  
 C. David Brown / *VanMan*  
 Colton Brown / *Wallace*  
 Devin Brown / *Fried Green Tomato*  
 Dillon Brown / *Lumberjack*  
 Scott Brown / *Kreature*  
 Skye Bruggeman / *Just Right*  
 Julian Brugo / *Sardines*  
 Stephanie Brummett / *Bartender*  
 Steve Bruton / *Fescue*  
 Deborah Brzozowski / *Ranger*  
 Jeannine Buchanan-Cauthen / *B.B.*  
 (*Bumble Bee, Busy Bee*)  
 Brian Buchbinder / *Super Mario*  
 Ron Buckley / *Huckleberry*

Elliot Bulejski / *Airbud*  
 Christopher Bullock / *Mantis*  
 Jeff Bullock / *Chopstix*  
 Jeff Buncie / *Treehouse*  
 Bob Burgess / *Punchy*  
 David Burka / *Nashville Cat*  
 John Burkart / *Rogue*  
 Cole Burke  
 Tim Burke / *Plow*  
 Barbara Burns / *Ringer*  
 Natalie Burr / *Spice Girl*  
 Robert Burton Jr. / *Obi-Wan*  
 Stephen Bushman / *Still Steve*  
 Dustin Bussell / *Gus*

Joseph Cleary / *Pokey*  
 Marina Clementi / *Librarian*  
 David Clifton / *ManyMiles*  
 Edward Cline / *J*  
 Therese Coad / *Bangles*  
 Sean Cochran / *Nav*  
 Julie Coffman / *Trippin*  
 Max Cohen / *Wicked Wahine*  
 Deborah Coleman / *Mona Lisa*  
 Geneva Coleman / *Prism*  
 Isabella Comstock / *Scoots*  
 Daniel Condlin / *Falls*  
 Jeff Connally / *Greybeard of the Ogowa*  
 David Conner / *Just Dave*  
 Billy Connolly, Jr. / *Blue Ray*  
 Marlin Conrad / *Longfish*  
 Christopher Cook / *POGO*  
 David Cook / *Oblio*  
 Matthew Cooley / *Moose*  
 Ben Corr  
 Kristen Corrente / *Otto*  
 Ronald Cortese / *Faramir*  
 Jonathan Coss / *Butt-Tape*  
 Bryan Cote / *Mashum*  
 Euan Coull / *Juggernaut*  
 Jim Covington / *Pack*  
 Megan Cox / *J. Wiggles*  
 Christopher Cronk / *Ace*  
 James Crowe / *Ramsay Bolton*  
 Kálmán Csigi / *Walkamolé*  
 Rebekah Cullen / *Sun*  
 Timothy Cupp / *Birdperson*  
 Sadie Curry / *Sketchy*

David Curtis / *ShopTeacher*  
 Hal Curtis Jr. / *Old Bull*  
 Katina Daanen / *Arachne*  
 Zach Dalton / *Tenenbaum*  
 Shawn Daly / *Antman*  
 Kirty Danenberg / *Socks*  
 Mason Danheim / *Indy*  
 Trevor Darling / *Newfie*  
 Steven David / *Trek*  
 Victor Davis / *Wick*  
 Connor Dawson / *Clicks*  
 Kevin Dawson / *AKA Parin, Snails Pace*  
 Pablo M. De Gárate / *Three Bells*  
 Sean Deadwiley / *Journeyman*  
 Mark Dearfield / *Forrest*  
 Trudy DeCoste / *Olive*  
 Sarah deFerrari / *Fire Socks*  
 Lauren DeLand / *DustBuster*  
 Gina DeMeo / *Tumbleweed*  
 Nathaniel DeMeo / *Check-it*  
 Daniel Patrick DeRosier / *Puck*  
 Marie-Soleil Desautels  
 Laurent Desourdy / *Maple Syrup*  
 Dale DeVoe / *Will Call*  
 Joseph Diaz / *Lookout*  
 Tim Dickey / *Radar*  
 John Dickson / *Banshee*  
 John Dickson / *Pappy 12*  
 Shauna Dickson / *Best Wife*  
 Chris Dieringer / *O-Man*  
 Joel Diller / *Pippin B Trimpen*  
 Nicholas DiNardo / *SnowBird*  
 Kurtis Dinelle / *Sherpa*



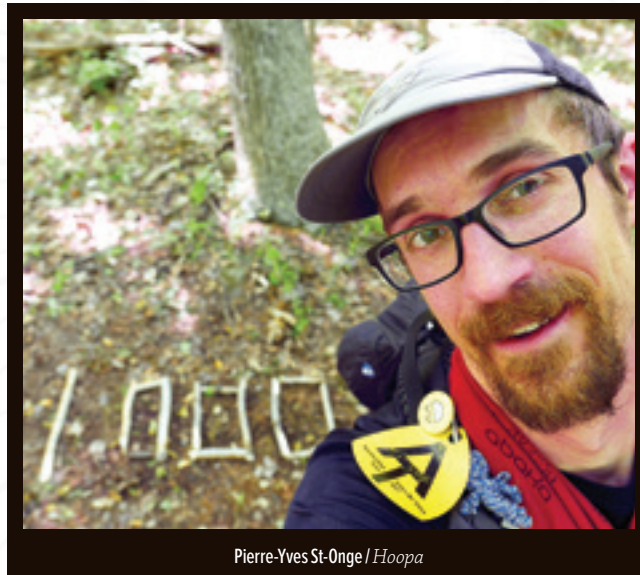
Elly Thomas / *Chernobyl*

Brian Dirker / *2CHAIRZ*  
 Daniel Dixon / *Colby Jack*  
 Katie Doane / *Raider*  
 Daniel Dodge / *Macro Man*  
 Michael Doeppler / *grams*  
 Karen Doherty / *Half-Pint*  
 Kate Dorough / *Haiku*  
 Christopher Doucette / *Frog!*  
 Burt Dowden / *Sir Linear*  
 Aubri Drake / *Timex*  
 Charlie Drake / *Mandrake*  
 Larry Drake / *Old School*  
 Sarah Dramis / *Hawaii*  
 Sean Drapac / *Purge*  
 Connor Drooff / *Sugar*  
 Alina Drufovka / *Abstract*  
 Matt Duckworth / *Chewie*  
 Milo Duffy / *Little Badass*  
 Michael Duncan / *Crispy*  
 Debbie Dunkle / *Pippi*  
 Raymond E. Dunn  
 Alaina Durkac / *Snap*  
 Aidan Durkin / *Kanalkanut*  
 Scott Durkin / *Mr. Shoes*  
 David Durling / *Deacon*  
 Kevin Dvorsky / *Picasso*  
 Molly Dymond / *Firefty*  
 Agnieszka Dziadek / *Zebra*  
 Bret Eady / *Suches*  
 Graham Eastham / *Blink*  
 Curt Ebert / *Disciple*  
 Richard Eckert / *Vince*  
 Katie Eckman / *Old Soul*  
 David Eddy / *Pathfinder*  
 Cathy Edson / *TORQUE*  
 Gary Edwards Jr. / *Super Squirrel*  
 Gary Edwards, Sr. / *Expendable*  
 George Ehrhoff / *Jager*  
 Rachel Eigner / *Spillz*  
 Leanna Eisenman / *Freebird*  
 John Elliott / *Gas*  
 Joseph Elliott / *Bushmaster*  
 Chris Elniff / *hobojoe*  
 Kim Elniff / *Kim*  
 Max Erasmus / *Baggins*  
 Zoe Erickson / *Lemony Snicket*  
 Ted Ernst / *Webb*  
 Linda Eshleman / *Bounder*  
 Peter Eshleman / *Bounder*  
 Sebastian Eugster / *Jukebox*  
 Gregory Eversole / *Candyman*  
 Victoria Fairfield / *Xena*  
 Raymond Fancher, Jr. / *Papa*  
 Brendon Fassett / *Outsourced*  
 Zack Feldhege / *Mamba*  
 Jerry Felinczak, Jr. / *Tasty*  
 Gregory Ferrell / *Flash Daddy*  
 Katelyn Ferrell / *Lady Bug*

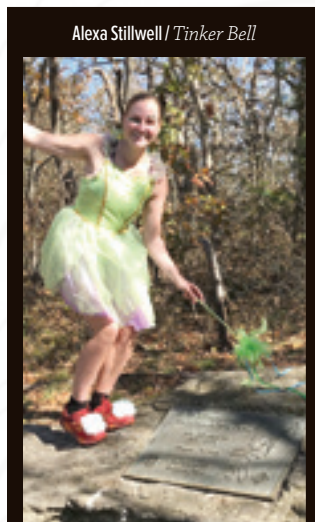


Shelley Hurtado / *WonderWoman*

David Butler / *Mulga*  
 James Byers / *AKA Slumberland*  
 Dan Byrnes / *Slim Shady*  
 Cameron Byrtus / *Powder*  
 Peter Calarie / *Repete*  
 Libby Camines / *Birk*  
 Thomas Camp  
 Marion Campbell / *Train Wreck*  
 Mary Campbell / *Berries*  
 Ralph Campbell / *Tiny Tim*  
 Scott Cantey / *Uno Socko*  
 Christina Carlson / *Turquoise*  
 Rich Carlson / *Still Thinking/Dirty Girl*  
 Jake Carr / *Spur*  
 David Carson  
 Geoff Carter / *G WaG*  
 Jordan Carter / *Aspirations*  
 Kyle Carter / *P.R.*  
 Jacob Casavant / *Doobie*  
 Sharon Cassidy / *Shortcake*  
 Tess Cassidy / *Rabbit*  
 Wes Caudle / *Pumba*  
 William Caulway / *Yoda*  
 Justin Cave / *Red Hot*  
 Claire Cawley / *Chip*  
 Brian Cerney / *Mountain Goat*  
 Josie Chen / *MVP*  
 Yen-Hua Chen / *Blue Smurf*  
 Sara Chico / *Sweet Cheeks*  
 Todd Childress / *Ranger Rick*  
 Peggy Chrisman / *Flow*  
 Robert Christianson / *Third Half*  
 Andy Christman / *Yinzer*  
 Byron Church / *BC*  
 Philip K. Cihwsky / *Hickory*  
 Stephen Claffey / *Hootie*  
 Carlton Clardy, Jr. / *Chip*  
 Dylan Clark / *Torch*  
 Grady Clawson / *Fun Size*



Pierre-Yves St-Onge / *Hoopa*



Alexa Stillwell / *Tinker Bell*



Linda Moore / *Ghosthiker*



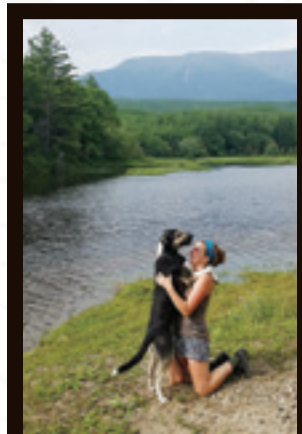
Henry Rorie / Viet Nam Vet

Jeffrey Ferry / *Lost & Found*  
 Jameson Fetzet / *Lorax*  
 David Fidrych / *Radio*  
 Mason Fields / *Jabba*  
 Timothy Fields / *Buc*  
 Joe Fink  
 Helena Fiore / *Auntie*  
 Steven Fishback / *Fish*  
 Chelsea Fisher / *PCP*  
 James FitzHenry / *JD, Chief Pretty Feet*  
 Sean Flanagan / *Gimli*  
 Rachel Flint / *Bearbait*  
 Stephen Fogg / *Foggy*  
 E.J. Fonda / *Wrong Way*  
 Amy Forinash / *Mrs Joy*  
 Bob Forsythe / *Planner*  
 Vincent Forte / *Cotton*  
 Zachary Fortenbaugh / *Sons of Thunder*  
 David Fox / *Jayhawk*  
 Julie-Anne Fox / *Travellingfoxes/Bugs*  
 Kenneth Fox / *Travellingfoxes/S*  
 Casie Frederick / *River*  
 Jacob Freeman / *Cheese*  
 Nicole Frias / *Legs*  
 Rose Friend / *Trail Spawn*  
 Laura Frings / *Landlady*  
 Larry Frisce / *One Stick*  
 Ken Frost / *60/40*  
 Natalie Frost / *Intrepid*  
 Charli Fulton / *Sturdy Peasant*  
 Thomas Funk / *GPS*  
 Vincent Fusco / *Dozer*  
 Matt Gagat / *EDGE*  
 Lucie Gagnon  
 Joey Gallant / *Samsquanche*  
 Gregory Galush / *Waves*  
 Troy Galyon / *Pretty Boy*  
 Kate Gant / *Glampress*  
 TJ Ganter, Jr. / *Fancy*  
 Lisa Garner / *Some Shine*  
 Adam Gary / *Neo*  
 Julie Gayheart / *Jester*  
 Kristen Geary / *Brightside*  
 Frederick Gedicks / *Freddo*  
 Kathy Gentry / *Seamstress*  
 Zachary George / *Non-Stop*  
 Gary Germany / *CornChip*  
 Jameson Giamo / *Old Man Jameson*  
 Neal Gibby / *NOBODY*  
 Courtenay Gibson / *Dessert First*

Sam Gibson / *Sam*  
 Daniel Giguere / *Lt. Dan*  
 Jordan Gilstrap / *RedLeg*  
 Olivier Girard / *Monty*  
 Sophie Glassford / *Floater*  
 Michael Glavin / *Magic Mike*  
 Jennifer Gleason / *Silky*  
 Greg Goforth / *RadaR*  
 Rose Goldberg / *Wildflower*  
 David Goldman / *Rocky Bottom*  
 Reid Goodfellow / *Mercury*  
 Ian Goodnow / *Hotpants*  
 Garrett Gorenski / *Bear Sweat*  
 Rory Gorman / *Tipperary*  
 K Andrew Gostel / *Woodbury*  
 Susan Gouveia / *Gone Gal (GG)*  
 Mario Graf / *Blitz*  
 Brady Graham / *Trail Name*  
 Christopher Graham / *COY*  
 Christopher Graham / *UNCLE FOOL*  
 Jessica Graham / *Checklist*  
 Jan Grajkowski / *Juicy Fruit*  
 Grant Granger / *Rocket Fuel*  
 Clifford Gray / *1st aIde*  
 Maston Gray / *GrayGhost*  
 Austin Graziano / *Dirty Harry*  
 Logan Greenhaw / *Gibberish*  
 Morgan Greenhaw / *MoonShine*  
 Maxwell Greenspan / *Fingerbang*  
 Thomas Gregg / *Cool Breeze*  
 Jack Griffin / *Voices*  
 Kevin Grooman / *Space Jam*  
 Hillary Groover / *Mona*  
 Jeff Grove / *ThunderBuns*  
 Michael Guffie / *Highlander*  
 Julie Guirl / *Lost*  
 Chris Guynn / *Two Speed*  
 Eric Haapaniemi / *Bear*  
 Caroline Hackett / *Johnny Utah*  
 Roger Hahn / *Samurai Blue*  
 Dann Hailey / *Night Crawler*  
 Tom Haldimann / *Skyman*  
 Andrea Hale / *Danger*  
 Matt Hall / *Trigger*  
 Maury Hall / *Deacon*  
 Ryan Hall / *Mantis*  
 Harley Halley  
 Emily Hancock / *Dragon*  
 Zack Hardoon / *Burning Man*  
 Keith Hargis / *Boo-Boo*

Matthew Harker  
 Beth Harper / *Purple Mist*  
 Jordan Harper / *Optimist*  
 Marena Harris / *Penny Machine*  
 Bob Harris / *Zen Master*  
 Ezekiel Hart  
 Gillian Hart  
 Sean Hartigan / *Snow Monkey*  
 Rebecca Hatch / *Flicker*  
 Richard Hatton / *Hatts*  
 Gray Hauser, Jr. / *Mudandflood*  
 Benjamin Hawes / *Sherlock*  
 Jackson Hawkins / *Granola*  
 Claudio Hayes / *Tarzan*  
 Jonathan Hebert / *Reddmage*  
 Blake Hedrick / *Turbo Turtle*  
 Quinn Hefferon / *Blackfoot*  
 David Heile / *Goliath*  
 Lizzie Heine / *Sunshine*  
 Brae Hemphill / *Waterboy*  
 Jordan Hendrickson / *Little Cards*  
 Mike Hennessy / *Turk*  
 Patrick Herrmann / *Persistent*  
 Ernie Hess / *Morning Song*  
 Lois Hess / *Towhee*  
 Brendan Hickman / *Speed Racer*  
 Joseph Hilbig / *NoBo Joe*  
 Lee Hill / *Road Warrior*  
 Sam Hindman / *Goose*  
 Shannon Hindman / *Maverick*  
 Talley Hite / *Tater*  
 Emily Hochheiser / *Pudge*  
 Shannon Holliday / *Dairy Queen*  
 Rick Hood / *Sleeve*  
 Rhys Hora / *Chongo*  
 Christopher Horan / *Turtle*

Chad Hornbacher / *Daddy Long Legs*  
 Christina Howard / *Indiana Jane*  
 Andrew Hubbard / *Peaches*  
 Mark Huber / *Mark*  
 Jim Hubler / *Weatherman*  
 Tyler Hudgins / *Bluedeer*  
 Daniel Hughes / *Bonesaw*  
 Jack Humphrey / *Red Walker*  
 Emily Hunt / *Walkie-Talkie-Nightingale*  
 Heath Hunt / *Heath Bar*  
 Shelley Hurtado / *WonderWoman*  
 Eli Huyard / *GQ*  
 Caroline Iantosca / *Amazon*  
 Baylor Ingram / *Keller*  
 Dustin Innerst / *Fifty Shades*  
 Kyle Irving / *Lanky*  
 Kenji Ito / *JAM*  
 Mateusz Jablonski  
 Mike Jachim / *Extra Mile*  
 Cody Jackson / *Feathers*  
 Keith Jacobson / *Counselor*  
 Ty James / *Lucky Penny*  
 Jacob Jansen / *EVAC*  
 Brian Janson / *Sasquatch*  
 John Jarrell / *Papa John*  
 Erik Jarvi / *Airhockey*  
 Evan Jarvi / *Highlighter*  
 Justin Jay / *Hook*  
 Manuela Jay / *Swiss Miss*  
 Bill Jensen / *77*  
 Justin Johnigan  
 Dennis Johnson / *OnthegO*  
 Judy Johnson / *French Bread*  
 Jon Jones / *Skippy Jon Jones*  
 Alan Jones / *Rambler*  
 Ben Jonkman / *Warthog*  
 Kate Jonkman / *Ansel*  
 Amy Jorgensen / *Just Amy*  
 Ethan Joseph / *St. John the Baptist*  
 Joe Joyce  
 Philippe Juhel / *Bug Bait*  
 Matthew Kahn / *Big Al Dente*  
 Jenny Kamm / *Gradeschool & the Staff*  
 James Kaptur / *Sir Dickspatcher*  
 Devin Karch / *Darwin*  
 Nicholas Karikas / *GATOR*  
 David Karr / *Tugboat*  
 Monique Katlin / *Frizzle*  
 Cameron Kearney / *Overload*  
 Daniel Keating / *Turtle*  
 Dana Kee / *Atlas*  
 Randy Keener / *Flying Amanita*  
 Cindy Keller / *Drive Thru Hikers*  
 Terry Keller / *Drive Thru Hikers*  
 Tasia Kellogg / *StinkyCheez*



Megan Tischbein / Boo-Boo (& Yogi)



Cathy Edson / Torque & Kate Gant / Glampress



Walter Beauchamp / Sensei



Ali Thomson / Peach, Zack Hardoon / Burning Man, Quintin Zima / Tin Cup, Taryn Anderson / Trinity, Ryan Anderson / MacGyver



Tom Moylan / Steamer

Erik Kolesar / Bean  
Travis Kosarek / WIP  
Tyler Kozlowski / Stubbs

Stephen Krake / Rabbit  
Ray Krautschneider / Tuna  
Garrett Kreiner / Yahtzee  
Micah Krell / Ferdinand  
Kathy Kristof / Splash  
Jennifer Krzikawski / Cubana  
Leah Kucenic / Drama Queen  
Eric Kuipers / Ricky Bobby  
Victoria Kuiwicki / HoochieMama  
Stacy Miller LaBare / Waterbug  
Mark LaGuire / 8-Track  
John Lambert / Mechanic  
Charles Land / Greeter  
Corey Lander / Strider  
Jake Langston / Humbuck  
Alexandre Lanoue / A-pic  
Jesse LaPrad / Good Feelin'  
John Larch / Loki  
Daniel Lavargna / Skipper  
Kasey Lawson / Commando  
Jerry Lechnyr / Salty Camel  
Haneul Lee / Sky  
Scott Lee / Rabbit  
Roman Lehmann / Hans  
Timo Lehmann / Franz  
Christopher Leininger / Peregrine  
Brooke Leister / Princess Vidalia  
Scott Lemmen / Two Hearted  
Josh Lemmon / Multi-tool  
Mark Lena / Maineiac Uno  
Steve Lentine / Crusher  
Dirk Lentz / skeeter  
Emily Leonard / Black Bear  
Evan Leonard  
Guy Lerner / Scout  
Daniel Lilley  
Jayn Lindholm / TBA  
Ryan Lindsey / Business Casual  
John Loomis / O'well  
Uwe Lorenzen / Walking Tree  
Estus Lott / Estus  
Kendall Lott / Jekyl  
Amanda Lourenco / GI Jane  
Lindsay Lovett / Mufasa  
Benjamin Loy / Ganzo  
Benjamin Loyal / Switchback  
Adam Loyd / For Now  
Anthony Lozzi / Honey-Badger  
Kevin Lundquist / Bubuh

Adam Luthin / Dance the Hiker  
Cliff Lutz IV / Lone Ranger  
James Macduff / Lobo  
Tomas Maciel / Top Peak Tommy  
Shannon Mackenzie / Inasias  
Nicholas Maddaloni / Zen  
Trisha Madeleine / Sherlock  
Kaitlyn Madge / Veto  
Doug Mahan, Jr.  
Sebastian Mahfood / Foxy  
Rachel Majors / Boss  
Travis Majors / Sweets!  
William Malfaro / Will's-Da-Beast  
Connor Maloney / Homeschool  
Naomi Manaster / gnome  
Lori Maney / Pied Piper  
Parker Maney / Little Bird  
Ryan Maney / Bulldozer  
Alexa Manley / McFlurry  
Jefferson Mann / Sticks  
Jared Marcus / Patch  
Renato Marisa / Lost Sole  
Kathleen Markey / Splat  
Travis Marks / Scarecrow  
Jamie Marsden / Dori  
Christopher Martin / Dancing Bear  
Clinton Martin / Pace  
Fox Marttinen / Finisher  
Stanton Mason  
Kara Mast / Piñata  
Kristopher Mast / Rash  
A.J. Matthews / Blue Steel  
Pam McAfee / Immram  
Anna McAuley / Tough Cookie  
Marcia McCarroll / Marciamallow

Larry McCoy / Crazy Larry  
Mike McCue / Salesman  
Leslie McDonald / ReRoute  
Blane McEreath / Zookeeper  
Ashley McFall / Nosebleed  
Ryan McGehe / Hot Tub  
William McGovern / Yogi  
Alex McGuire / Ash  
Jack McKenzie / Mitten Man  
Maura McKenzie / Socko  
Ryan McLaughlin / Milkman  
Jeffrey McNamara / Easy Mac  
Mark Meadows / Sluggo  
Patrick Meehan / Tap  
Curt Meeks / The Colonel  
Stephen Mesch / Funky Moon  
Matthew Methot / Happy Hour  
Steve Metz / Jones  
Elliot Meyer / Faxmachine  
Charles Millaway / Baloo  
Al Miller  
Christopher Miller / RopeBurn  
Clark Miller / Ultra  
Jillian Miller / Glow Worm  
Kara Miller / Bagheera  
Kevin Miller / Shillelagh  
Russell Miller / Beaker  
Taylor Miller-Meeks  
Carla Mitchell / Jukebox  
Steve Moffitt / The Warden  
Carolyn Mohn / Spice  
William Monk / Whistler  
Chris Monson  
Elizabeth Moore / MoMiles  
Jared Moore / Crazy Horse  
Linda Moore / Ghosthiker  
Mark Moore / NoNail  
Michael Moore / Cmoore  
Stewart Moore / Super Ultra Lite  
Leah Moran / Avalanche  
Larry Morgan / Growler  
Alexander Morrill / Big Foot  
James Morrison / Mojo  
Avery Morrow / Lazy Bean  
Jurdan Mossburg / Trashman  
Sam Motter / Sequoia  
Ferrell Moultrie / Daddy Long Legs  
Thomas Mucken / Steamer  
Shawn Muckenhirn / Snow  
Marie Muir  
Tess Mullaney / Lotus  
Madison Mumma / Princess Leia  
Carissa Murillo / Pickles  
Al Musser / Just Al

Gregory Ferrell / Flash Daddy & Katelyn Ferrell / Lady Bug



Adam Kelly / Switchback  
Rayanne Kelly / Shortcut  
Jakob Kenda / Sulo  
Ross Kendall / Terminator  
Ashley Kennard / Sally Mae  
Will Kenyon / LaZBoy  
Jordan Kerley / Beach Party  
Sara Kersten / Heinz  
Susan Kettles / Iris  
Greg Key / The Traveler  
Hannah Kiermayr / Pearl  
Lou Killion  
Saehyun Kim / Buffalo  
Leah Kimbler / Honey Badger  
Snowden Kindler / Beany  
Ken King / StickShift  
Meredith King / Tunes  
Robert King / Doc  
Sylvia King / Maggie Simpson  
Rhiannon Kirby / Wonder Woman  
Jerry Kirk / Dreamcatcher  
Ken Klatt / Stamps  
Sam Klementovic / Long Haul  
Amelia Klos / Gin\*Gin  
Sierra Knotts / Sierra Mist  
Lynn Koeppen / Meadowlark  
Michael Koeppen / Montana Mike  
Charlotte Kolesar / Fresh

Raymond Myers, Jr. / *Rain Man*  
 William Nabinger / *HUMAN*  
 Daniel Nash / *Dapper Dan*  
 Max Nash / *Slip n' Slide*  
 Ashley Nelson / *Mishap*  
 Dalton Nelson / *Waterboy*  
 Brandon Neltner / *Young Scout*  
 Joel Neville / *Joules*  
 Tri Nguyen / *NoBo#1253*  
 Rick Niersbach / *Ragnar*  
 John Niesen / *JJ*  
 Christopher Nobblitt / *Sriracha*  
 Jake Nofsinger / *U.N.O.*  
 Joe Nofsinger / *SALSA*  
 Jonas Nold / *Wombat*  
 Erica Notini / *Spitfire*  
 Emily Nuckols / *Sweets!*  
 Paul Nuckols / *Beyonce*  
 Kelsey Nunn / *Curry*  
 Denver Oakley / *J.D.*  
 Tess O'Brien / *Shredder*  
 Leah O'Connor / *GrassHopper*  
 Tom O'Connor / *Redirect*  
 Brian Odom / *Middle Brother*  
 Kyle O'Donnell / *Sticks*  
 Takeshi Okamatsu / *CrazyPants*  
 Mariah Olczak / *Junk*  
 Eddie O'Leary / *EdBeard*  
 Caitlin O'Neal / *Committed*  
 Kevin O'Neil / *Ringo*  
 Tony Or / *Tiger*  
 Orville Orr  
 Collin O'Shea / *Mudflap*  
 Davis Ozier / *Engineer*  
 David Pagano / *Malink*  
 Robin Paguia / *Sonic*  
 Robert Palermo / *Sparky*  
 Philip Pappas / *Too Clean*  
 Spencer Parkinson / *Birdperson*  
 Beau Parks / *Joiner*  
 Tim Parritt / *X-Ray*  
 Connie Parsons / *Tinkle*  
 Mike Parsons / *Doc*  
 John Parsons  
 Joan Paswell / *Sojourner*  
 Patrick Paton / *Pat Symbol Akin*  
 to Prince. It is Indecypherable  
 Darryl Patton / *Poncho*  
 Kim Patton / *Idgie*  
 Beth Pearson / *Sweet Pea*  
 Valerie Peckarsky / *Sprinkle*  
 Steve Pekarshiy / *Baskets*  
 Alex Pellerin / *Baguette*  
 Lee Pennebaker / *Candles*  
 Alan Pentecost / *GQ*  
 Nick Perkins / *Pheasant Melon*  
 Samantha Perkins / *Clementine*  
 Mark Perlin / *Wizard*  
 Gregory Peters / *Painted Turtle*  
 Veronica Petersen / *Valkyrie*  
 Malaika Petersen-Pelletier / *BulletProof*  
 Jeff Peterson / *Just Pete*  
 Grant Pevahouse / *Cashew*  
 William Phifer / *Phife Dawg*  
 David Phillips / *Just Dave*  
 Jeff Pieklik / *Sassysquatch*  
 Nathan Pierce / *Stretch*  
 Scott Pierce / *Squire*  
 William Pierce / *Remix*  
 Dylan Pilger / *12 Pack*  
 Tim Piotrowski / *Pio*

Merry Plocki / *F-Stop*  
 Olivia Plumb / *Tick Tock*  
 Alex Popp / *Mile Back*  
 John Poppe / *Grey Wolf*  
 Orval Porter / *GO*  
 Frederik Pöschel / *Backgammon*  
 Jamie A. Potchett / *The Almighty Zeus*  
 John Potter / *Call me Ishmael*  
 Jeffrey Poulin / *Dr. J*  
 Stefan Pouliot / *BARREL!!!*  
 Hans Praller / *Norm!*  
 Hans Praller / *jNorm!*  
 Matt Prather / *VISA*  
 Thomas Priestner / *Cricket*  
 Thomas Pryputniewicz / *Fireball*  
 Leon Przybilla / *Peanut Pan*  
 Cathryn Pugh / *Sunshine*  
 Jack Qualey / *Half Squatch*  
 Ryan Qualizza / *Peaches*  
 Kyle Quick / *Iron Lungs*  
 Kevin Quinn / *Gray Mountaineer*  
 Creg Rabun / *Augusta*  
 Owen Rachampbell / *Sir Owen*  
 VanGrizzle, Duke of Beartown  
 Matthew Radford / *Dirty Harry*  
 Andy Rainer / *Orphan Andy*  
 Kristen Rankin / *Pixie*  
 James Ransford / *Cricket*  
 Kalle Rasinkangas / *Bambi Magnet*  
 Bethany Rawleigh / *Inside Out*  
 John Rayburn / *Dingo*  
 Rebecca Reddish / *Busdriver*  
 Molly Reese / *Gretel*  
 Nicholas Reese / *Venture*  
 Sydney Renaud / *Potato*  
 Jessica Reynolds / *Woodpecker*  
 Susan Reynolds / *Sweet Blood*  
 Timothy R. Reynolds  
 Carrington Rhodes / *Mortis*  
 Andrea Rich / *Already Stinky*  
 Kate Richard / *Lost & Found*  
 Simon Richard / *Rictic*  
 Janet Ridgeway / *Girl on Fire*  
 Steven Riecker / *Rooster*  
 Andrew Riker / *Raggidy*  
 Daniel Riordan / *Straps*  
 Jonathan Riordan / *Stoat*  
 Grace Rivera / *Katniss*  
 Scott Robert / *Beast*  
 James Robertson / *Dice*  
 Seth Robertson / *Hob*  
 Michael Rodriguez / *El Vago*  
 Randall Rodriguez / *Last Call*  
 Joshua Roesener / *Turkish*  
 Shane Romig / *Terminator*  
 Lauren Roppolo / *Eleven*  
 Marc Roppolo / *Daze*  
 Henry Rorie / *Viet Nam Vet*  
 David Rosenau / *Story Teller*  
 Jimmy Ross / *Moving Target*  
 Rodney Rossignol / *Chilli Dog*  
 Peter Rosswaag / *POKEY*  
 Matt Roth / *Onion*  
 Scott Rothermel / *Scouter*  
 Tom Rottmann / *Daypack*  
 Chris Roundtree / *Halfway*  
 John Routh / *Hop Along*  
 Randy Ruble / *Shady*  
 Dylan Runde / *(Rav)io!*  
 Paul Rus / *Tailgate*  
 Gavin Russell / *2x's*



Trevor Darling / *Newfie*

Lulu Russell / *Smalls*  
 Dillon Saas / *Early Bird*  
 Sandra Sachs / *SHEHULK*  
 Joe Saffron / *GI Joe*  
 Brian Salvesen / *Downwind*  
 Chris Samples / *UP*  
 Dale Sanders / *Grey Beard*  
 Beth Sanfield / *Walden*  
 Taylor Santa / *Hamilton!*  
 Jeff Santos / *Speedy Gonzalez*  
 Jeff Sargent / *Tinman*  
 Theodore Sas / *Sassafras*  
 Jeremiah Satterfield / *Tobaggan*  
 Katie Saunders / *Bottles*  
 Nathan Schaefer / *Henry*  
 Christopher Scharfglass / *Sleepy Bear*  
 Matthew Schillawski / *Johnny Bravo*  
 Calvin Schirmer / *Gandalf*  
 Tenley Schofield / *Lucky*  
 Eric Schott / *Pick of the Litter*  
 Tahoe Schrader / *Fizz*  
 Adrian Schrell / *Washbear*  
 Greg Schulte / *Billy Goat*  
 Philippe Schuppisser / *Swag of Switzerland*  
 Michael Schwitek / *Skittles*  
 Kelly Scott / *Hillz*  
 Jared Scripture / *Scrip*  
 Steve Seegmiller / *Funky Duck*  
 Melissa Seidel / *Lumber Jill*  
 Joanna Seirup / *Rockhopper*  
 John Seirup / *Honest Abe*  
 Lynn Seirup / *Linnaea*  
 Kevin Selfe / *Tornado*  
 Victor Selmon / *Puddles*  
 Ashby Semple / *OMG*  
 Ivetta Severance / *Caboose*  
 Steve Severance / *Engine*  
 Greg Seymour / *Sunsets*  
 Jen Seymour / *Chica*  
 Ruth Shafer / *Home-Ec*



Stefan Abraham / *Two Trails*



Kálmán Csigi XIV / *Walkamolé*

Matthew Shannon / *Log Jam*  
 Alison Shelford / *Lemsip*  
 Bruce Shepherd / *Boss*  
 Ashleigh Sherman / *Clover*  
 Zachary Sherman / *Yogi*

Denise Horen / *Nemo*, Julie Gayheart / *Jester*, Patti Stechschulte / *Beacon*





Manuel / Goalie & Berkley Herden / TEN Aiken

Brandon Shewmake / *Smeagol*  
 Josh SHI / *Handy Josh*  
 Nicholas Shigo / *REX*  
 Alan Shorr / *Flatbush*  
 Charles Shugrue / *Hooch*  
 John Sindewald / *Thor*  
 Travis Sindewald / *Finn the Human*  
 Justin Singh / *Badger*  
 Mark Skouby / *Scooby*  
 Bobby Joe Smith / *PawPaw*  
 Bryan Smith / *Smitty*  
 Dean Smith / *Stick in the Woods*  
 Austin Smith / *Buffalo*  
 Jim Smith / *Gravity*  
 Kerri Smith / *JK*  
 Margo Smith / *Pitbull*  
 Ronald Smith / *Geezer*  
 Sharon Smith / *Mayzie*  
 Tom Smith / *Frog*  
 Thomas Smith / *NEWT*  
 Hannah Smothers / *Milkshake!*  
 Christopher Snyder / *Atlas*  
 Kelly Snyder / *Summer Breeze*  
 Steve Snyder / *Torch*  
 Calvin Sossoman / *Southern Planter*  
 Jean-Marc Souchon / *Froggy*  
 Christopher Souliere / *G.Q.*  
 Leslie Spangler / *H2NO*  
 Amanda Sparger / *Barbelle*  
 John Speck / *Carpenter*  
 John Speer / *Cakes*  
 Beth Spencer / *Bam Bam*  
 Jessica Spiltoir / *Jellybean*  
 Thomas Spiltoir / *Papabeane*  
 James Spurk / *Drop Top*  
 Alexander St. Angelo / *Garbahnzo*  
 Evan St. Angelo / *Firetruck*  
 Cory Stager / *DaVinci*  
 Gail Stairs / *Rockette*  
 Roger Stairs / *Rocket*

Wayne Stargel / *Medicine Man*  
 Chris Staron / *Thumper*  
 Michael Staudaheer  
 Melanie Stempowski / *Ma'am*  
 Cole Stevens / *Pole Runner*  
 John Stifler / *Whistler*  
 Michele Stiles / *Misplaced*  
 Alexa Stillwell / *Tinker Bell*  
 Adam Stone / *Chipotle*  
 Forrest Stone / *Buck Wild*  
 Pierre-Yves St-Onge / *Hoopa*  
 John Strandberg / *Hodge Podge*  
 David Stroebel / *Timeless*  
 Caitlin Struhs / *What's Her Name*  
 TJ Struhs / *TJ*  
 Brittney Stuard / *Two Step*  
 Dylan Suhr / *Superfly*  
 Mark Suiters / *Stumpknocker*  
 Greg Sullivan / *MEGAPHONE*  
 DJ Suter / *Captain Hot Legs*  
 Micheal Sutton  
 Michael Swartz / *Speedy*  
 Alison Swing / *Atlas*  
 Tom Swinhoe / *Imagine*  
 Wayne Sylvester / *Spiderman*  
 Andrea Tabb / *Cousin Eddie*  
 Maureen Tait / *Momentum*  
 Allie Tate  
 Nick Taylor / *Cricket*  
 Richard Taylor / *Sabre*  
 Dianne Tebbe / *Night Hawk*  
 Elly Thomas / *Chernobyl*  
 Brian Thomasset / *BR*  
 Lee Thompson / *Leebob*  
 Ken Thompson / *Scout*  
 Ali Thomson / *Peach*  
 Samantha Thorpe / *Honeystick*  
 Anonymous / *Crayola*  
 Evan Tice / *That Guy*  
 Bill Tidey / *Bill T*

Megan Tischbein / *Boo-Boo*  
 Becca Tompkins / *Brave*  
 Christina Triantafyllidis / *Pockets*  
 Amy Trujillo / *Dilly-Dally*  
 Bren Trusty  
 Anne Turner / *Lighthouse*  
 Jake Twydell / *J2*  
 Agustin Umanzor Jr. / *Guac*  
 Ethan Uradnik / *Lizard King*  
 Megan Urban / *Overdrive*  
 Deb Vacek / *Utturn*  
 Matthew Valle / *Granite*  
 Maria Julia Calzadillas Valles / *Autumn Leaf*  
 Oliver Van Assche / *B.C.*  
 Reed Van Den Bergh / *Chef 6.0*  
 Mark van der Linden / *Dutch*  
 Loretta Van Ekris / *PB*  
 Lucas Vance / *Scuba*  
 Justin Vandaveer / *Preacher*  
 Natalie Vandaveer / *Stretch*  
 Ken Vande Vrede / *Treadmill*  
 Joseph Vanderkooi / *Tin Man*  
 Maddy VanderVeen  
 Lelia Vann / *Princess*  
 Bethany Varner / *Snap*  
 Srinidhi Venkatesh / *Tooth*  
 Chris Verry / *Norseman*  
 Robert Vettel / *Bob*  
 Bryan Vick / *Houdini*  
 Bryan Victor / *Red Fox*  
 David Voda / *Jumanji*  
 Mike Vogel / *Bazinga!*  
 Jordan Wade / *Rabbit*  
 Jonah Wagan / *Powerade*  
 James M. Wages / *JustMike*  
 Chris Walker / *Stay Puft*  
 Rick Wallace  
 Derick Walsh / *Dirty Jesus*  
 James Walsh / *True Grits*  
 Jeff Walsh / *Potable*  
 Pearl Wapner / *SweetSpot*  
 Bailey Ward / *Stargazer*  
 Valerie Wargo / *Possum*  
 Murrah Watson / *Foghat*  
 Adam Weaver / *Coach*  
 Jared Weeber / *Fuego*  
 Rebecca Weimann / *Beast*  
 Zachary Weinman / *French Dip*  
 Rachelle Weintraub / *Firefly*  
 John Welt / *Pa.John*  
 Carson West / *Yardsale*  
 Gregory West / *Hoot*  
 Ben Westervelt / *Grease Spot*  
 David Westfall / *JD*  
 Andrew Weyer / *Imposter*  
 Katherine Whitaker / *Lumberjack*  
 Paige White / *Snacks*  
 Tory White / *Lakes*  
 Bill Whitehead / *Quietman*  
 Colette Whitney / *Grinder*  
 Josh Wigley / *Peter Pan*  
 Carl Wilcox / *Avalanche*  
 Courtney Willemin / *Hoops*  
 Travis Wilhelm / *Tunnel Rat*  
 Brandon Williams / *Waldo*  
 Bridget Williams / *Giggles*  
 David Williams / *1st Sgt*  
 Joshua Williams / *Switchback*  
 Larry Williams / *Sarge*  
 Noah Williams / *Narwhal*  
 Jenny Williams / *Cassandra*

Wesley Williams / *Yahtzee*  
 Drew Williamson / *Fresh*  
 Nancy Wilson / *Singing Sister*  
 Ned Wilson / *Willie*  
 Keith R. Wingad / *COWG*  
 Alex Wnorowski / *Creedence*  
 David Wood / *Ringo*  
 Ethan Wood / *Piper*  
 David Woodard / *Sir Poops-A-Lot*  
 Adele Woodmansee / *Pantry*  
 Dan Woody / *Logan*  
 Jessica Woody / *Pippi*  
 Andrew Workman / *Mello Yellow*  
 Brian Workman / *Stogie*  
 Renee West / *Roam*  
 Fiona Wright / *Trail Mouse*  
 Graham Wright / *Survivor*  
 Jon Wright / *UnOriginal*  
 Kaleb Wright / *Jetpak Jedi*  
 Patrick Wright / *Mando*  
 William Wright / *Frozen*  
 Lynne Wummel / *Lioness*  
 Heejong Yang / *Spontaneous*  
 Brian Yoder / *Chopper*  
 Larry Yoder / *Murray*  
 Tom Young / *Grey Eagle*  
 Zachary Zaccaro / *Pop Tart*  
 Edwin Zatkovic / *Happy Feet*  
 Anna Zimmerman / *Stinker*  
 Daniel Zube / *Screech*  
 Grant Zulick / *Smalls*  
 Tracy Zupich / *Pippi*  
 Eli Zwilling / *Einstein*  
 Jacob Zwilling / *Cheese*

## 2016

Joey Alonso / *Gasket*  
 Kevin Arsenijevic / *Chaco*  
 Amos Atwell / *Moose*  
 Stephen Bables / *Crocamolé*  
 Ethan Barach / *Tormund Giantsbane*  
 Grant Barnette / *Achilles*  
 Nicholas Bast / *False Top*  
 Ryan Bax / *Redwing*  
 Claudia Brown / *Claudia*  
 Zachary Brown / *Corn*  
 Richard Bull / *Sage*  
 Vinnie Burke III / *Snooze*  
 Christopher Burrell / *Walker "Trail Blazer"*  
 Kaitlin Busse-Wolffgram / *Kalamity*  
 Nicole Cary / *Pebbles*  
 Dale Castle  
 Clancy Clawson / *Dogface*  
 Whitney Clement / *Wednesday*  
 Jodeob Cogbill / *Mr Sunshine*  
 William Cole III / *Pookie*  
 John Cowart / *Journey Man*  
 Lee Culler / *Stowaway*  
 William Dale / *Agent*  
 Jeff Davis  
 Nathan Davis / *Sleeping Beauty*  
 Anonymous / *Toasty Hands "Burner of Dreams & Bread"*  
 Shawn DeLancey / *Waterboy*  
 Rachael Delano / *Rabbit*  
 Jim Eagleton / *Rambler*  
 Robert Earll / *Fisherman*  
 Brenda Eckrose / *Velcro*  
 Diana Erber / *Moontire*  
 Jessica Eshleman / *Skooch*

Jason Bordash / *Sallywag*, Amy Novek / *Giggles*, Juan Rodriguez / *JuanGone*



Nicholas Espinosa / *Master Splinter*  
 Eitan Feldstein / *Trout*  
 John Fowler / *Shaggy*  
 Benjamin Fox / *Obi-Wan*  
 Michael Francisco / *Curly*  
 Andrew Franklin / *Zen Master*  
 Jonny Geeslin / *Poophands*  
 Adam Geilker / *Handmade*  
 Jake Gerhardt / *Fish n' Chips*  
 Stephen Gibson / *Beast*  
 Anonymous / *Bachelor*  
 Justin Graff / *Al dente*  
 Kelsey Gregory / *Greyhound*  
 David Grover / *Pumpkin*  
 Caroline Grundy / *Weasel*  
 Dalton Gunderson / *Barack Obama*  
 Kenneth Hacker / (aka "Tuna")  
 Brittany Hawkins / *Smash*  
 Justin Hawkins / *Sunrise Chaser*  
 Lia Heinze / *Pinky Purple*  
 Derek Hoffman / *Honeybuns*  
 David Johnson / *New Dave*  
 Taylor Judice / *Cousteau*  
 Barbara Kelly / *Nice Lady*  
 Casey Kemper / *Bambi*  
 Maia Kenney / *Recon*  
 Rob Kerr / *Sherpa*  
 Greg Key / *The Traveler*  
 Cody King / *Ron Paul*  
 Erin Kirkpatrick / *Weebles*  
 Monique Knaggs / *Scorpion*  
 David Lane / *Squarepeg*  
 Stephanie Langner / *Pancake*  
 Robert Leiphart / *Bake*  
 Florian Lerch / *Cous Cous*  
 Lindsey Loving / *Charge*  
 Erin McDowell / *Fire*  
 Jared McKenny / *Smokey the Bear*  
 Donald McNaughton / *Blue*  
 James McShane / *Songbird*  
 Brian Miglorino / *Peanut Butter*  
 Eric Mills / *Evergreen*  
 Jeff Mogavero / *Burger King*  
 Kelcey Moreau / *Fern*  
 Benjamin Moster / *Tailspin*  
 Terri Gilmore  
 Patrick Murray / *Princess Peach*  
 Mackenzie Myers / *SOS Sunshine*  
 Steven Nance / *Superman*  
 William Nelson / *Pharaoh*  
 Sam Oseroff / *Safety First*  
 Bob Parker / *BLUE*  
 Pamela Parker / *CHILLY*  
 Anne Peterson / *Pokey*  
 Eric Peterson / *Moose*  
 Georgina Podany / *Mama Cheddar*  
 Jaime Robertson / *Wrecking Ball*  
 Katie Ryan / *Flat Lander*  
 Alex Smith / *Cap*  
 Lauren Smith / *Danger*  
 Bob Snyder / *Great AT 58*  
 Travis Spencer / *PBS*  
 Chelsey Sproul / *Steel*  
 Christopher St. John / *Backbone*  
 Greg Stutz / *Magellan*  
 Jordan Sykes / *Timber*  
 Melissa Szabo / *Chicken Hawk*  
 Michael Szabo / *Dregs*  
 Jacobsen Thurman / *Feel Good*  
 Marian Tichy / *Hawk Woman*  
 Jeffrey Tourigny / *Just Jeff*

Andrew Tucker / *Daddy*  
 Martin Waters / *Journey*  
 Geoff Weathersby / *A\$\$Captain*  
 David Weitz / *DAS MACHINE*  
 Kris Wenschuh / *Spirit of 76*  
 Maxine Weyant / *Dys-feng-shui-nal*  
 Nathaniel Wirta / *Rocky Raccoon*  
 Ivor Wood / *Stumbledwarf*  
 Mack Yarbrough / *TRIPPER*  
 Patti Yarbrough / *SLIPPER*  
 Alex Young / *Boomblox*  
 Laura Zingrone / *Crash*

## 2015

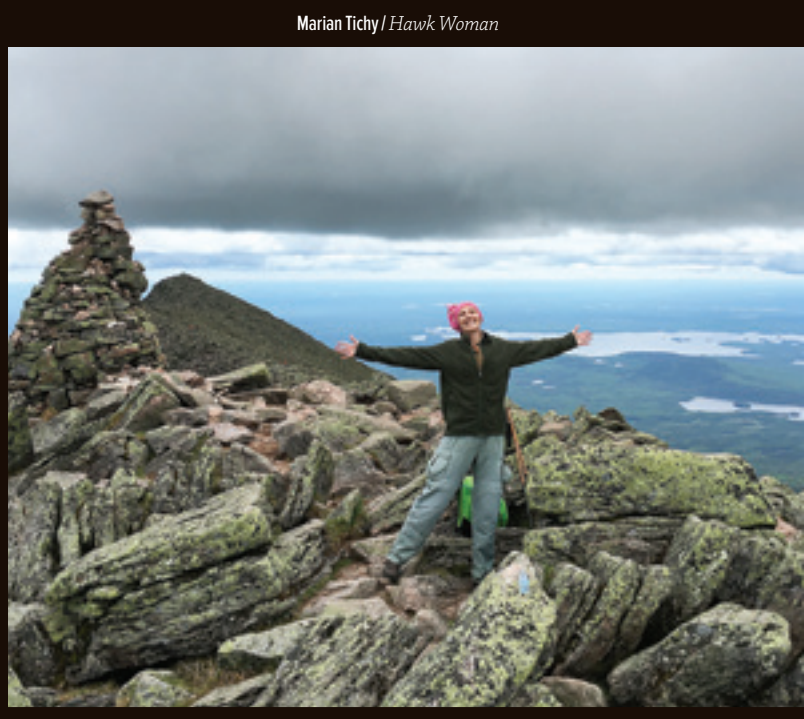
Len Barnes / *Mystyr Lymyrd*  
 Genevieve Beals / *Killer*  
 Tony Bloom / *Bloomer*  
 Scott Dameron / *Captain Pants*  
 George Hansbrough / *Huckleberry*  
 Paul Ingram / *Pie*  
 Padraic McGarry / *Forger*  
 Alisande Osuch / *Warm & Toasty*  
 Ron Pace / *Old Man with Two Women*  
 Jone Reid / *Wildflower*  
 Chad Relinski / *Hillbilly*  
 Stephen Rolle / *Smokescreen*  
 Sarah Shores / *Cooter*

## 2014-1974

'14 Brooks Dame / *Giggles*  
 '14 Riley Kern / *Chef*  
 '14 Gary Kling / *Grouch*  
 '13 Jason D'Ambrosia / *Cornflakes*  
 '13 Julio Rodriguez / *Patience*  
 '12 Jeff Davis  
 '12 Matthew Hess / *Easy Rider*  
 '12 Charles Smoot / *Relic Hunter*  
 '11 Garrett Gorenski / *Bear Sweatz*  
 '11 Tim Jackson / *Trek*  
 '10 Tim Jackson / *Trek*  
 '09 Tim Jackson / *Trek*  
 '08 Tim Jackson / *Trek*  
 '08 Eric Markley / *Chainsaw*  
 '0 Tim Jackson / *Trek*  
 '07 Christopher Martin / *Mowgli*  
 '06 Tim Jackson / *Trek*  
 '06 Steve Lake / *Stray Cat*  
 '06 Colby Morrill / *Doc Cords*  
 '05 Sarah Brownlee / *Poet*  
 '05 Tim Jackson / *Trek*  
 '05 Joe Marshall / *Epistemological  
 Megalomaniac (EM)*  
 '05 Mike Renn / *Pumbaa*  
 '04 Tim Jackson / *Trek*  
 '04 Marit Janse / *Lulu*  
 '03 Tim Jackson / *Drifter / Trek*  
 '03 El Matador  
 1998 Belinda Young  
 1993 Gregory Griffith / *Sugarfoot*  
 1985 Mark Miller / *The Well-Dressed  
 Woodsman*  
 1984 Tom Durban / *Tallahassee Tom*  
 1976 Leigh Bloom  
 1976 Scott Bloom  
 1974 Richard Brannon ↗



Micah Krell / *Ferdinand*



Marian Tichy / *Hawk Woman*

The ATC would like to thank volunteer Sandra Ragsdale and other volunteers in the Harpers Ferry Visitor Center as well as ATC's visitor services representative Dave Tarasevich for maintaining, editing, and compiling this year's listing.

ADDITIONAL STATISTICS  
 CAN BE FOUND AT:  
[APPALACHIANTRAIL.ORG/2000MILERS](http://APPALACHIANTRAIL.ORG/2000MILERS)

A dirt hiking trail winds through a lush green forest. The path is flanked by dense vegetation, including numerous small yellow wildflowers. A wooden post with a white marker is visible on the right side of the trail. The overall scene is vibrant and natural.

# PLAN- NING YOUR HIKE

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AMANDA

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## HAVING SPENT MY ENTIRE CHILDHOOD IN

north Georgia and east Tennessee, at 17 I was presumptuous enough to think I knew the Appalachians. I had spent countless days exploring their rivers and trails. I loved their slopes and their swimming holes, their draws and ridges that undulated endlessly across the landscape. Then I moved to New Hampshire for college. The first time I saw the White Mountains soaring skyward from Franconia Notch on I-93, I felt like I was in a completely foreign land. There was no way that these sharp, imposing peaks could be part of the same range that hugged my hometown.



Spring wildflowers along the A.T.  
in West Virginia  Photo by  
Raymond Salani III

From those craggy granite peaks to the clear lakes of Maine and the picturesque pastures of Virginia, the Appalachians encompass many diverse landscapes, and the Appalachian Trail

traverses them all. This variety is one of my favorite things about the A.T. Each section of Trail feels unique, and there are always new adventures to be had.

But because of this richness, planning a trip on the A.T. can be daunting — it's like 2,190 destinations in one. How do you decide what section to hike? What state, even? And once you've settled on a destination, the questions have only begun. What do you need to bring? Do you need a permit? Will the Trail be overrun with summer campers singing their way down the mountain, or will you find the peace and quiet you desire? Well, worry no more. Consider this your guide to help you start planning your dream A.T. vacation.



**BEST FOR:** Spotting wildflowers and flip-flop thru-hikers in the northern half of Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland

## APRIL

Although the first half of April is unpredictable, the end of April is generally a pretty good bet for some warmer days and wild blooms along the A.T. in Virginia,

West Virginia, and Maryland. If you'd like to meet some aspiring thru-hikers, you'll encounter a smattering mostly walking north. A few dozen will start their journey around the time of the fourth annual Flip Flop Festival in the A.T. Community of Bolivar-Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, on April 28–29. Check out the festival, then hike south to help disperse traffic. Winter conditions can persist anywhere along the Trail this month, so be sure to pack some extra non-cotton layers in your pack and stick to lower elevations. As with any hike in the Appalachians, don't forget your rain jacket and pack cover or trash bag to waterproof your pack. If you decide to camp along the A.T. in Shenandoah National Park, you'll need to acquire a free backcountry permit at a visitor center or entrance station. Some facilities may not be open for the season yet. In Maryland, you're required to stay at designated sites overnight. Avoid hiking in New England (it's still winter there) and in Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and southern Virginia — high numbers of northbound thru-hikers and spring breakers searching for warmth make these states awfully crowded this month, which can make for an uncomfortable experience when you have to share a shelter site with dozens of other hikers.



**BEST FOR:** Exploring the wild side of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York

## MAY

While the A.T. passes within an easy drive of several major cities in the mid-Atlantic, it feels surprisingly wild as it traverses beautiful river valleys, gentle

ridges, bogs, and wetlands. The Trail meanders at relatively low elevations through these states, so it's best to explore them before summer brings heat and humidity. Wear light-colored clothing that has been treated with permethrin (you can spray it on clothing you already own, buy pre-treated clothing, or send your clothing away to be factory treated), and check yourself at least daily for ticks, because these states are home to high concentrations of the disease carriers. Camping is only allowed at designated overnight sites in New Jersey, and New York, and restrictions vary widely in Pennsylvania, so you'll need to plan your days wisely. Virginia becomes increasingly busy this month as northbound thru-hikers continue their journeys, and it's still not quite time to hike in New England. The end of winter there simply ushers in the start of mud season, when trails range from unpleasant to impassible.



**BEST FOR:** Taking in the vistas in Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee

## JUNE

Now that the wave of north-bound thru-hikers has moved through, June is the perfect time to visit the Southern Appalachians. The high-elevation balds

that dot this region provide beautiful views of the surrounding forests and towns, and picturesque waterfalls often await those willing to take short detours off the Trail. The A.T. Community of Roan Mountain, Tennessee, hosts their world-famous Rhododendron Festival just down the mountain from the A.T. on June 16 – 17, where you can experience this quintessential Appalachian flora in all its splendor. The month of June can get hot and humid at any elevation in the Southeast, so bring plenty of water and refill whenever you get the chance, being sure to treat and/or filter your water. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) recommends using a bear canister to store your food along the entire length of the Trail, and proper food storage and bear awareness are especially important in the South. Bear-human interactions have become significantly more frequent in this region in recent years.

**BEST FOR:** Beating the heat in northern New England

## JULY

Those of us who are familiar with the Appalachians know that it gets hot in July. The higher elevations of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine stay a bit

cooler this month, and their many lakes, creeks, and swimming holes provide welcome relief. Always exercise caution when swimming in natural bodies of water, and don't swim alone. Maine's many river crossings can be dangerous, especially after rain, so know your limits, remember to unbuckle your pack before crossing, and when in doubt — don't cross. Never cross the Kennebec River on foot; the water can rise rapidly, and the ferry is the official route of the A.T. There are many summer camps and other groups who hit the Trail this month, so registering your hike using the ATC's A.T. CAMP tool becomes especially important so you can avoid crowded campsites. And if you head to Maine's Baxter State Park, be sure to do your research into the special rules and regulations there before your trip.



Clockwise from left: May flowers on the Trail near Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania. 📷 Photo by Suzy McKelvey; A July hike — crossing the Pleasant River in Maine. 📷 Photo by John Bilbrey; Late summer trek to Bromley Summit in Vermont. 📷 Photo by John Stiffler



**BEST FOR:**

Embracing the last days of summer in southern New England

## AUGUST

August is a wonderful time to experience summer in New England. The forest is lush, the days are long and, if you're lucky, you may even experience the first

crisp nights signaling that fall is soon to come. Just four miles from the Trail, the A.T. Community of Manchester, Vermont, knows how to celebrate summer in style. The Vermont Challenge bike race, the Green Mountain Bluegrass and Roots festival, sidewalk sales, and a fly fishing festival all hit town this month, so enjoy some classic New England charm and spend a night or two in town recuperating after your hike. Many college orientation groups will test their new classmates on the steep trails of northern New England this month, so stick to Connecticut, Massachusetts, and southern Vermont unless you want to be kept awake by the sounds of get-to-know-you games played long into the night. Remember that camping is only allowed at designated overnight sites in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and these states also have restrictions on campfires. If you venture south of New England this month, bring more water than you think you'll need; you're likely to encounter dry water sources and persistent heat.

## SEPTEMBER

**BEST FOR:** Finding some solitude in the Smokies

Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most visited national park in the country, with almost 11.4 million visitors in 2017. A.T. hikers who visit the

park in September, however, have a good chance of sharing stretches of Trail with few other people. Kids are back in school, leaf peepers won't show up in droves until October, and most southbound thru-hikers haven't made it quite this far yet. One group you may run into is the ATC's Rocky Top Trail crew, so be sure to thank this merry band of volunteers for all their hard work. In the Smokies, camping on the A.T. is only allowed at designated shelters and campsites. Visit the park website to get a general backcountry permit in order to camp on the A.T. and other trails in the park. The A.T. stays mainly on high elevation ridges here, so you may see some early fall color, and you'll need lots of layers and a three-season sleeping bag. In large part because of the high numbers of visitors and bears, the animals are particularly problematic in the Smokies. Before your go, read up on what to do if you see a black bear, and remember to properly store your food and all scented items, even small ones like lip balm, toothpaste and sunscreen — bears have a much stronger sense of smell than humans do. Bear canisters remain the most animal-resistant way to store food. A.T. campers who are carrying bear canisters in the Smokies should hang them on the cables provided at each shelter, as required by park regulations.



Above: Fall colors on the Trail near Buena Vista, Virginia. Photo by Cathy Shiflett; Right: 2017 thru-hikers "Torque" and "Glampress" at the start of their flip-flop hike at Amicolola Falls.

### Books to help you plan YOUR next A.T. experience are available at the Ultimate A.T. Store

- Appalachian Trail Thru-Hike Planner*
- Leave No Trace in the Outdoors* – by Jeffrey Marion
- The Best of the A.T. (available in May)*
- The Appalachian Trail Food Planner*
- How to Hike the A.T.: The Nitty-Gritty Details of a Long-Distance Trek* – by Michelle Ray
- The Appalachian Trail by Day Hikes:*
- Tips for the Timid* – by Polly Schoning
- Best A.T. Hikes (New England, Mid-Atlantic, and South*

## OCTOBER

**BEST FOR:** Leaf peeping in Central and Southwest Virginia

While many people flock to New England, Shenandoah National Park, and western North Carolina to see fall foliage, the mountains of central and southwest Virginia

put on a spectacular show of their own. The Mountain Day festival in the A.T. Community of Buena Vista, Virginia, which takes place October 13, highlights traditional Appalachian culture and generally coincides with peak color in the region. Elevations above 4,000 feet, common along the A.T. in Tennessee and North Carolina, often get below freezing this month. So, while it may seem counterintuitive, it's best to stay north of Marion, Virginia, unless you enjoy and are prepared for some serious cold-weather backpacking. If the summer was dry, October can bring dry springs and high fire danger along much of the Trail, so be prepared to carry extra water, stay up-to-date on local fire restrictions and, as always, completely douse any allowable campfires you choose to build before you leave.

Before heading out on a hike, check the ATC Trail Updates page at [appalachiantrail.org/updates](http://appalachiantrail.org/updates) to learn of any Trail closures or Trail conditions you need to be aware of.

And there you have it! While it's certainly possible to backpack in the winter, conditions along the length of the A.T. can be unpredictable and even dangerous in the winter months, which is why I've only made trip suggestions from April to October. And remember — the ATC has a plethora of great information about planning any length of hike in any season on their website. Happy trails!





# START WELL

## at Amicalola Falls State Park



In 2016, in response to the increased pressure that growing numbers of thru-hikers placed on the natural resources of Baxter State Park, the ATC opened a Visitor Center in the A.T. Community of Monson, Maine. Almost 7,000 people visited the center in its first two seasons of operation, learning about topics including hiking the A.T. in Maine, Leave No Trace, and the local communities. In 2017, 83 percent of northbound thru-hikers (NOBOs) stopped in at the Visitor Center, where staff and volunteers ensured they knew about the free permit they would need within Baxter State Park. Seeing the success of this effort to help NOBOs Finish Well, the ATC — along with the Georgia A.T. Club, National Forest Service, and Amicalola Falls State Park (AFSP) — launched a new initiative this year to help them Start Well, too.

In the past, many NOBOs have chosen to start their journey by driving to near the southern terminus of the A.T. at Springer Mountain, as opposed to starting with the A.T. Approach Trail that connects Amicalola Falls State Park to Springer. Starting at Springer Mountain, however,

can pose hazards to hikers and the Trail. The dirt Forest Service roads used to access Springer are sometimes impassable due to deep winter mud, and the small parking lot and nearby campsites are often overcrowded. For these reasons, the ATC has long encouraged NOBOs to begin at AFSP but with the increased numbers of thru-hikers, it is even more important — and an AFSP start also provides the best opportunity to provide NOBOs with crucial information.

So, beginning in February, ATC ridgerunners and volunteers from the Georgia A.T. Club began offering free courses designed to help thru-hikers understand the essential items and skills they need. “Every year, we see hundreds of aspiring thru-hikers set themselves up for discomfort, abandoned thru-hikes, and potential danger due to a lack of expert advice and preparation,” said the ATC’s southern regional director Morgan Sommerville. “The Start Well class is designed to help instill some of these valuable skills before NOBOs begin their journeys, simultaneously increasing their chances for success and, ideally, decreasing the impact they will have on the Trail itself.” Additionally, thru-hikers who start at AFSP are able to pick up the coveted A.T. hangtag they earned by registering their thru-hike through A.T.CAMP, the voluntary registration system, get a gear shakedown, and begin their journey by hiking through the iconic AFSP archway at the beginning of the Approach Trail. Early signs indicated that these efforts were successful in encouraging thru-hikers to consider their impact on the Trail: as of March 1, registrations of thru-hikers planning to start at Amicalola Falls instead of Springer increased from 52 percent to over 90 percent. When you Start Well, you are bound to Finish Well. ▲

To register your thru-hike or overnight camping trip on the Trail visit: [appalachiantrail.org/thruhikeregistration](http://appalachiantrail.org/thruhikeregistration) and [atcamp.org](http://atcamp.org)





"The Point" — Harpers Ferry, West Virginia — Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia converge overlooking the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers



## MOTHER NATURE'S FINEST PALLET

Landscape photographer Raymond "Flash" Salani III says he delights in, "capturing the beauty of the Appalachian Trail one frame at a time for people of all ages to enjoy." He was born and raised in north central Monmouth County, New Jersey where he purchased a home four years ago. As a section hiker, he has logged more than 550 miles on the Trail so far — usually with his camera in hand. "Any day on the Trail, Mother Nature shows us her finest pallet," he says. When on the Trail, he is usually with members of the Appalachian Mountain Club, his college cross country coach Welles Lobb from his time at Muhlenberg College (who took him on his first A.T. hike during cross country preseason), and his family — when they can make it. "I am grateful to have others who want to hike the Trail in sections and who are also patient with my photographic visions and needs," he says. "I often lead Appalachian Mountain Club hikes that focus on a love for photography, but are also strenuous, so we can maximize the amount of Trail we take in." Raymond's photos of the A.T. capture both up-close and sweeping views from as far south as northern Virginia straight up through to Connecticut.

[SalaniPhotography.com](http://SalaniPhotography.com)



Clockwise from opposite page: Welles "Coach" Lobb hikes the Trail in Connecticut; Wild azalea in northern Virginia; Mushroom family on Bear Mountain in Connecticut; Turtles along the A.T. in the Potomac River, southern Maryland









View of the Hudson River  
from the A.T. on Bear  
Mountain in New York

# A.T. COMMUNITIES

## MARION, VIRGINIA



### THE PERFECT MIX OF OLD AND NEW, INDOOR AND

outdoor, traditional and unusual. Located in southwestern Virginia, the town of approximately 6,500 residents has worked hard to create an appealing artsy, outdoorsy tourism destination and efforts are paying off. ¶ Marion is, in fact, a recognized, certified Main Street Community, which means it meets high standards in hospitality, offers heritage events, and promotes nearby outdoor recreation. It is also a designated Appalachian Trail Community, which means it works in partnership with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) to enhance hiker experiences and build stewardship for the A.T. In 2013, Marion and Smyth County officially became part of the A.T. Community designation program. Notably, tourism-based travel to Marion has increased over the past five years. ¶ Within close proximity of Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest, and Hungry Mother State Park, Marion serves as base-camp for day hikers and a place for campers to refresh and refuel. ¶ Only seven miles from the Highway 16 crossing and Partnership Shelter on the A.T., the community of Marion offers a 50-cent shuttle called the “Mountain Lynx” between town and two A.T. trail-heads, plus a range of overnight accommodations, dining, and resupply options. Several budget hotels on the north end of town are within walking distance to the Walmart. For a more upscale experience, Collins House Inn is a charming bed and breakfast with step-out-the-door access to downtown Marion.

For more information about this and other A.T. Communities visit:  
[appalachiantrail.org/communities](http://appalachiantrail.org/communities)

### What to see and do in and around Marion:

- Take a walking tour through downtown Marion’s historic district to drop into boutiques, art galleries, old-fashioned diners, and chic bistros.
- Stop at the General Francis Marion Hotel to check out the meticulous restoration of this grand old hotel, originally opened in 1927. While you’re there, make your way to the hotel’s Speakeasy for a dinner of gourmet southern foods.
- Be a part of a live performance of “Song of the Mountains,” an award-winning televised showcase of bluegrass and old-time music, broadcasted from Marion’s historic Lincoln Theatre.
- Pick up fresh produce and meats at Marion’s Saturday morning farm-to-table market.
- Try your hand at everything from yoga to wood-working, pottery, quilting, or beekeeping at the Wayne C. Henderson School of Appalachian Arts.
- Attend a special event including: artisan craft fairs, vintage car cruise-ins, musical concerts and theatre performances, and holiday extravaganzas.
- Canoe, kayak, swim, and fish from the shores of the lake at Hungry Mother State Park. The park also offers hiking and biking trails.
- Ride the “Back of the Dragon,” a paved 32 miles of 300 winding turns. A favorite of motorcyclists and sports cars enthusiasts.
- Make your way to the Dip Dog Stand on Lee Highway, practically an institution in Marion for its battered deep-fried hotdogs and custard cones.
- Get the lowdown on mountain life in the late 1800s at the Settlers Museum, 12 miles north of Marion and right next to the A.T.
- Get behind the wheel to travel along the Mount Rogers Scenic byway to the high country of the 150,000-acre national recreation area for exceptional views of Virginia’s two highest peaks: Mount Rogers (elevation 5,729 feet) and Whitetop Mountain (elevation 5,570 feet).
- And, of course, hike the Trail! ↗



Downtown Marion bustles during a Chili Cook Off and music festival.

Photo courtesy the Town of Marion



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**DUDLEY WHITE**

# A Single Task

By Beth Griffin

**DUDLEY WHITE'S CHILDHOOD WAS**

like that described by so many of his generation: exploring the woods near home unsupervised, on foot or on bikes. No internet, cell phones, video games — as long as kids were home before dark, nobody seemed to worry. For Dudley, there were also a couple of years in the Boy Scouts in elementary school, SCUBA on college spring breaks, and sailing as a young man. And then a PhD program, marriage, mortgages, children, and a demanding professional life to keep him more than busy — and off the water and out of the woods.

A four-year work assignment in Australia offered Dudley new opportunities for biking, hiking, camping, fossicking, gapping and gorging in the desert. (Fossicking is collecting semi-precious stones either on the surface of the ground or

shifting with pans for amethyst, garnet, zircon, beryl, aquamarine, etc. Gapping and gorging is hiking to and through the gaps and gorges of the MacDonnell Ranges near Alice Springs.)

Back in the States, Dudley stayed connected with his rediscovered sense of adventure, and became involved with Boy Scouts, first with his son and then as an adult leader in his own right. His family had settled back in Virginia and there were many backpacking trips on the A.T. with his son, with Scouts, and on his own. He continued to drive hard professionally, volunteer for church and civic organizations, and devote himself to family; but the dream of a long walk in the woods to “focus on that single task of getting up and hiking some distance every day” while thru-hiking the A.T. had begun to take hold.

As this issue of *A.T. Journeys* is hitting mailboxes, Dudley White will be several weeks into his long-dreamed-of, post-retirement thru-hike. Heading north from Harpers Ferry to Katahdin to start, he will be travelling well ahead of the crowded bubble of northbound hikers who departed from Georgia in February and March. He’s chosen to start his thru-hike in the middle —to “flip-flop”—in pursuit of a quieter experience that helps conserve the Trail.

Preparation for his hike has included all the usual efforts — shakedown hikes, gear research and trials, and obsessive reading of guide books and maps. Beyond those efforts though, Dudley included a greater financial commitment to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and its mission to protect and preserve the Trail. After his company was sold several years ago, he and his wife established a donor advised fund that generates a substantial gift to the ATC each year. The Whites’ thoughtful planning will ensure annual gifts to the ATC for many years to come.

Dudley, we wish you (and all the others who walk the Trail) all the best on your adventure. And we thank you for what you do to protect the Trail experience. 📌



From top: Dudley on Goose Creek near Middleburg, Virginia; With his wife Barb at the University of Virginia



Beth Griffin is the ATC’s associate director of Individual and Planned Giving.

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Sunday / 8.12.2018  
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# REGISTER

Aspiring A.T. thru-hikers can now register their  
2018 hikes online. Registrants will be able to  
see the numbers of hikers registered to start  
on each day, then plan accordingly to start on  
an uncrowded day or location to limit their  
ecological and social impacts on the Trail.

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# Trail Passion

A special variety of grit is behind an unyielding burn to tackle the Trail

*By Robin Luthanen*



## SOME WHO POSSESS A PASSION

for the Appalachian Trail cannot plan thru-hikes. They lack support resources, they lack the pure physicality or conditioning necessary for the 2,190-mile hike from Georgia to Maine. But that passion still burns deep, like the embers of an evening campfire smoldering at dawn.

Such am I. Too short to stand in the five-foot section of a swimming pool, my 153-pound frame might be the envy of an eighth-grade football player, but not most 61-year-old women. Despite two repaired shoulders, a duck-footed walking gait, and a lifetime lack of camping experience, this passion has smoldered. When the tune “Shenandoah” played at my father’s

funeral in 2011, the emotion of the moment combined with the exquisite gentleness of the notes to create a music so beautiful that it hurt; it lit something inside me — a desire I never knew that I had.

Long after those particular moments, I faced the realization that I would turn 60 years old. Small, but active and in reasonably good health, I read an article in a Sunday newspaper magazine discussing hiking the Appalachian Trail. Now I could identify the desire lit within me years before — I could nurture that spark. I recognized that my spark would need to be fanned with research before action — lots of research. To begin, I contacted my son, Jon, in Bellingham, Washington. Having worked three years with the Montana Conservation corps, he proved to be a wealth of knowledge regarding backpacking. I also pored over websites discussing backpacking and camping equipment. The public library provided additional resources with books on camping, the Appalachian Trail, and so forth.

To plan requires a dream — to implement requires money. During the course of two years or more, I slowly acquired necessary gear using a variety of sources such as REI, Dick’s Sporting Goods, Gander Mountain, and Walmart. Training for this hiking involved multiple workouts each week at the Perry Fitness Center at the local high school. In addition, I practiced using equipment by testing Merrell hiking shoes from Gander Mountain on nearby hiking trails in metroparks. I also swam laps to help improve my aerobic capacity.

However, the necessary surgical repair of my right rotator cuff temporarily sidelined my training for this hiking. During this period of unplanned convalescence, I clarified my goal from “hiking on the Appalachian Trail” to “hiking 100 miles on the Appalachian Trail before I turned 65 years old.” This could be achieved with multiple day hikes two or three times a year.

Now I needed to learn how to use the equipment that I had collected. Breaking a tent pole the first time, I tried to set up a tent proved to be a bad way to begin. Church friends, Doug and Joyce Zinn, invited me to camp with them at the nearby Thompson/Grand River Valley campsite, a KOA campsite not far from home (Perry, Ohio). So, at the tender age



Above: A foggy hike near Harpers Ferry, West Virginia; Right: Robin reaches the border marker between Virginia and West Virginia during her first hike on the Trail (just before turning 61)



of 60 years, four months, and 20 days, with their help, I set up my Northwest Territory nine by seven-foot tent and spent my first night outdoors. This gracious gesture allowed me to test and refine equipment and food ideas in preparation for my Appalachian adventure.

A week before my 61st birthday, Joyce and I drove to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Staying in a hotel seemed safest for this first step in fulfilling my dream. Our first day, we hiked from the Econolodge hotel on Washington Street to the West Virginia-Virginia state line up the Appalachian Trail south on a day hike — a strenuous 735-foot elevation change in a two-mile stretch. At one point, I sat alone on a log as the fog transformed the forest from huge trees to dark sentinels — water drops glistened like diamonds on leaves — the quiet surrounded me like a blanket — and I felt God’s pleasure in the sacred creation that He had made. This made me hungry for more.

Another day, another state, and my girlfriend, Bev and I sought the Appalachian Trail in Falls Village, the second smallest town in Connecticut. We were using our cell phone map features to find



our way when the screen suddenly went blank. “Bev!” I said. “There’s no WIFI here near the Appalachian Trail! Who would’ve thought it?” Well, as we drove I spotted the familiar white rectangle on a telephone pole. Here was the Trail. We parked, then meandered a few miles up and down hills, as showers occasionally permeated the forest top to cool us. Afterwards, we ate lunch at Toymakers Cafe — famous for serving A.T. hikers — and

I listened intently to conversations around me: “Think I can get another 18 miles today...” “The water at that free shower was freezing! I’d rather go without...” “It’s only been five days since I showered anyways. I don’t think I need to stop today...”

My September plan with my oldest son, Matt, fell apart. Despite long-held reservations at Big Meadows Campground in Shenandoah National Park, despite preparations including packaged meals, despite Automobile Association of America’s Trip Tik, the plan fell apart. Who could plan for my mother-in-law’s death? Love of family trumps camping, even though Shenandoah would have been the climax for the 2017 season’s hiking. But Shenandoah National Park will not go away. Nor will Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania, or Pearisburg, Virginia, two more planned hiking spots.

So today, trekking poles in hand and pack strapped to my back, I hiked along the trails of Lake Erie Bluffs, continuing to build endurance, test equipment, and maintain physical conditioning. And fanned that spark of passion — that spark with its slow, slow burn. ⬆

PAMELA “CHILLY” PARKER, A.T. TERMINUS, SPRINGER MOUNTAIN, GEORGIA. PHOTO BY BOB PARKER

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VIRGINIA CRAFT, A.T. PENNSYLVANIA PHOTO BY DAVID HALTERMAN



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### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

**African American History Hike**, Sunday, April 29, 1-3 PM. This popular National Park Service ranger-led one-mile hike is being offered as part of the Flip-Flop Festival. Learn the fascinating stories of how Harpers Ferry became the site of an influential institution of higher learning after the Civil War. Meet at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, 799 Washington St., Harpers Ferry, WV 25425. For more information visit: [appalachiantrail.org/events](http://appalachiantrail.org/events).

A.T. Museum Hall of Fame Banquet. The **eighth annual Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame Banquet** will be held at the Appalachian Trail Museum in Allenberry, Pennsylvania; Friday, May 4, 2018 from 6- 9 PM. For more information visit: [atmuseum.org](http://atmuseum.org).

The **How to Hike the A.T. backpacking courses** will help new hikers feel prepared to successfully hike the A.T., while gaining an appreciation for the outdoors, knowledge of the Trail, and long-distance hiking culture. Course graduates should leave as competent, responsible hikers prepared to accomplish their version of a successful long-distance hike. This year the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) will offer five courses throughout the southern region:

- June 8-10 (Great Smoky Mountains National Park)
- July 27-29 (Pisgah National Forest)
- August 17-19 (Nantahala National Forest)
- September 14-16 (Great Smoky Mountains National Park)
- October 5-7 (Pisgah National Forest)

Course attendees will be spending the two nights/three-days backpacking, rain or shine. Courses are limited to six participants, and spots will be tentatively reserved on a first come, first serve basis. Pending review, applicants will be chosen by ATC staff. Cost of courses

are \$375 per person, which includes food. Contact Chloë de Camara, ATC Trail education specialist at: [cdecamara@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:cdecamara@appalachiantrail.org).

ATC Affinity Groups. Help the Appalachian Trail Conservancy **reach out to communities currently underrepresented on the Trail** through our new launched Affinity Groups. We will host a webinar on April 25 at 12 PM. All are welcome. Contact Shalin Desai at: [shalin.desai83@gmail.com](mailto:shalin.desai83@gmail.com) or Julie Judkins at: [jjudkins@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:jjudkins@appalachiantrail.org) for more information.

The **Trail Dames announce their next summit**, to be held July 13-15, 2018 at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina. The Trail Dames Summit is the nation's only hiking and backpacking conference just for women, and welcomes armchair dreamers, and complete novices, as well as seasoned backpackers. If you identify as a woman of any shape, size, color, religious, political, or otherwise persuasion, you are welcome. In addition, there will be book signings, gear vendors, and a silent auction to benefit the Trail Dames Charitable Foundation. For more information about three days of laughter, learning, and dreaming with women who share a love for the outdoors visit: [traildamesummit.com](http://traildamesummit.com).

The **Appalachian Trail Conservancy is recruiting for several internship positions**. For more information and to apply visit: [appalachiantrail.org/internships](http://appalachiantrail.org/internships). [A](#)

Public Notices may be edited for clarity and length.



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Shadow self portrait on the Trail by Harry Deitz



## IT IS LATE IN THE AFTERNOON

when we emerge from the canopy of the tall trees and thick woodland that has sheltered us from the strong spring sun. We have been climbing for three hours, stopping only occasionally to catch our breath, rest our heavy legs and sip water that has long since lost the refreshing chill from the stream in the valley far below.

The Trail seemed to go on endlessly as we looked ahead and up. Always up. The mountaintop, our destination, seemed to be just steps or minutes beyond us. But each time the path leveled off, it brought into view another climb. Another challenge. It's always that way on the Trail. You hike along, not knowing what lies around the next bend or over the next crest. You desperately want to reach the destination, and you know you will, but then the journey will be over. So, in spite of the struggle, you try to focus on enjoying the present. Every step takes on the significance of another milestone reached. Each mile brings with it a special sense of accomplishment, but only briefly, because the next mile waits for you.

The next mile — often steeper and rockier than the previous one — stretching out ahead, challenges you not to quit yet, daring you to go a little farther along this lonely, narrow road — even as your legs ache and the bottoms of your feet burn. Sometimes you wonder why you put yourself through this — the

walk from one point on a map to another — especially when the rocks beneath you slide and force you to catch yourself just before you stumble off the path. Then, as suddenly and sharply as a twig snapping beneath your boot, the pain disappears. You feel a new mixture of energy and calm. For a moment, you stop, but this time not because of exhaustion or a need for water. It just seems to be the right thing to do. All around, the world seems to stop with you.

Your mind, which had been so occupied with your struggle, now is consumed by the momentary silence and bathed in the beauty and peace that surrounds you. You notice the sounds of nature begin to build. Birds communicate from their hidden perches, possibly announcing your arrival. Gentle gusts of wind occasionally kiss the new leaves of spring. A tree branch falls in the distance, a late victim of heavy winter snows that had weakened it until it could hold on no longer.

Just as suddenly, the sounds of the forest fade. You listen to the quiet of the woods. Then you take a step, and another, and your journey resumes. But those few reflective moments stay with you. Something has changed. Almost without warning, the trees around you are gone. The soft blue sky of this late afternoon opens above you. There before you, is the reward for all your labor. You stare in awe at the view of the

valley below and the far-off mountain ridge. You try to find the words — majestic, breathtaking, magnificent, captivating — but none will satisfy you because there are no sufficient words. Only seeing it can describe it. This is why you climb. This is what made the struggle so worthwhile.

You sit and stare across miles for what seems like hours. At this moment, there is nothing to distract you. There is nothing more important or pressing in your life. The colors in the distance start to fade, so slowly, so subtly that at first the change eludes your detection. The light dims as the sun starts to drop behind the next mountain in the distance. Your exhaustion returns, but this time more peacefully. You're almost too tired to eat. But you force a little nourishment, prepare your shelter, and soon are wrapped in the darkness that is broken only by a few stars on a clear and almost moonless night. You call them heaven's night lights. Sleep comes quickly. Soundly. Completely.

Then, you hear the birds again, and you pull back the tent flap as the first rays of light break through the trees behind you. You watch as the sun rises. Just as you knew it would, because it always does. You can count on it. And ahead of you lies the next section of Trail. A new day awaits. Another journey calls to you. It's always that way on the Trail. It's always that way in life.▲

Harry Deitz is the winner of the myATstory essay contest. Check back for the runners-up for the myATstory Essay Contest as well as the Photo Contest and Video Contest winners in the Summer issue of *A.T. Journeys*.

"As I See It" is a column from guest contributors representing the full range of ATC partners, members, and volunteers. To submit a column (700 words or less) for consideration:



[journeys@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:journeys@appalachiantrail.org)

or write to Editor/As I See It  
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