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THE POTOMAC APPALACHIAN



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President's Logbook

By Jim Fetig



The first thing I see when Microsoft Word opens is a question. What would I like Co-pilot to draft?

What! While there may be some administrative areas where AI can be helpful to the club, I doubt we're in much danger.

AI might be able to help plan a hike, but it can't lead one. It can't build a waterbar, start a chainsaw, or repair a cabin roof. Of note, business is booming for the Crapper Crew. As an organization, as volunteers, as people who love the outdoors, we can feel confident that we will be busy.

As we melt into mid-summer, the administrative load lightens while our outdoor activity load and the temperature picks up. Seems like almost everybody is out and about.

At the moment, I'm preparing for crew week in Shenandoah where we work hand in glove with the park service crew. It's an opportunity to learn, bond, and share the load. It's a decades-long best practice.

Each time I enter the park, I'm struck by its founding story. Much of it is ugly. Families were displaced from their farms and livelihoods after a nasty propaganda campaign designed to denigrate those whose land would be taken at rock bottom prices by eminent domain.

I am quick to note that we work with park employees whose family names denote terrain features throughout the park. Some still lovingly tend family cemetery plots scattered throughout the park.

The July 1937 PATC "Bulletin" (now the Potomac Appalachian) tells another part of the founding story. It speaks to how the current location was selected over Massanutten. You can read the full article below.

When I talk to new members about volunteering, I always mention the friendships, the community of common interest, and the fun we have, be it leading a hike, building a new porch on Mutton Top, or in my case, working with the posse which helps maintain the AT section for which Nicole Bridgland and I are responsible.

Our posse includes people with whom I worked 30 years ago, a former ridgerunner, and others who share a love for the outdoors with whom I've crossed paths. Some come frequently while others come when they can. We're almost a mini trail crew.

Unfortunately, norovirus is present in our area. The first case was reported at Black Rock Hut in the South District of Shenandoah. The Conservancy and NPS are keeping track. This is not our first rodeo with norovirus. Our crews are disinfecting sites where we have confirmed incidents. The ridgerunners disinfect the privys as part of their normal duties. Stay safe, wash your hands with soap and keep your hands away from your face as you hike this summer.

Me, I'll be out checking my waterbars for tenure. Those that aren't tenured will probably be replaced by grade dips. As for the weeds, don't get too confident. We're coming for you.

BEGINNINGS OF SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK By G. Freeman Pollock

The Blue Ridge land I acquired through my father had appealed to him from the standpoint of its natural resources; but instead of profiting from these I preferred to enjoy the natural attractions of the place, which I was in love with from the beginning. This is probably the only kind of exploitation that preserves and protects instead of marring and destroying natural beauty, and since the first suggestion of a national park in the Blue Ridge was inspired by the state of nature at Skyland, and the suggestion was first "sold" to the site selection commission there, I think it can truthfully be said that the existence of Shenandoah National Park and the Skyline Drive today is due to my adherence to the fortunate decision I made thirty-five years ago.

Our good friends Mr. and Mrs. Harold Allen of Washington, D. C.. had visited Skyland several times and were so enthusiastic over its scenery that they only regretted it was not more widely known and enjoyed. In February, 1924 came a small Washington Star clipping by mail from Mr. Allen, with "Why not Skyland?" on a slip of paper attached. The clipping told of the appointment by Secretary of the Interior Work of a special commission to recommend the site for a national park in the Southern Appalachians. I was very busy, and nothing came of the matter until early in the summer when the Allens came to Skyland, but

Harold Allen had kept it in mind and before he left Washington, interviewed Colonel Glenn H. Smith, Secretary of the Commission, learned the status of the undertaking, and obtained a copy of the Government's printed questionnaire, which he brought with him to Skyland.

The commission had been approached by a number of individuals and groups suggesting various sites, all unsuitable for park purposes for one reason or another; the time for their report was nearly up, and the commission was pretty well satisfied that no acceptable site was available north of the Great Smoky Mountains. It appeared that the Massanutten Mountain area had been suggested to the Commission, but was not believed to be up to National Park standard. The questionnaire, which Harold Allen urged be filled in at once, was a challenge which he pointed out the Skyland region could meet; and with the benefit of his information received from Colonel Smith, he and I went into confab next morning with Mr. George H. Judd in that famous session in the Judd "Tryst of the Winds," and dictated to my stenographer a rough draft of the information pertaining to the Skyland region which the Government wanted about proposed sites.

I personally answered most of the questions as I was the only one sufficiently familiar with the area to do so. I said frankly that I was familiar with about 50,000 acres surrounding Skyland and felt sure that territory both north and south of this area could be quickly explored and undoubtedly would be found to be of the same caliber. I proposed to explore those areas at my own expense and make a further report. The answers sounded good. They actually were. We all got excited with the task as it progressed. And no wonder! Just to recount the natural features of the region convinced us that we had a real national park site to present, and were perhaps making history that very moment in doing so.

The time limit was so nearly up that Harold Allen left with the precious papers forthwith for Washington, where he condensed the rough draft, had the questionnaire typed up and, not trusting the United States mail, handed it himself to Colonel Smith with an earnest statement to the effect that "This has been prepared by responsible people who know the facts they present, It is all true. When you have read it you will see that it will be impossible for the commission not to come and inspect the Skyland region." This last statement also turned out to be true, but not without some further oral persuasion.

A few days later I read in a Winchester paper an article by the Honorable Thomas W. Harrison of Front Royal, Va., Member of Congress, describing the Massanutten area and stating that an organization known as Shenandoah Valley, Inc., was promoting that site and seeking to have the commission recommend it as suitable for a national park. I got in touch with Harold Allen and we studied this article and agreed that these people were working on the wrong track and that Virginia should get behind something much finer than the

Massanutten project. We made an appointment with Mr. Hugh Naylor of Front Royal, who was at the head of Shenandoah Valley, Inc., promoters of the Massanutten site, to show us the points of interest in it. A few days later Mr. and Mrs. Allen, Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Zerkel of Luray, Mrs. Pollock and I met Mr. Naylor and were taken to see what this area offered. We drove into the Fort Valley from Front Royal and came out at Strasburg. Even in this brief excursion it was obvious that comparison with the Blue Ridge was absurd, and we also quickly saw that there was no chance for this area being considered seriously by the commission.

Knowing that Ferdinand Zerkel was an important member of Shenandoah Valley, Inc., I made an appointment with him to meet me at the Page Valley National Bank in Luray on a matter of great importance. He met me and in the presence of Mr. Emmitt Berry, cashier of the bank, I talked for an hour like a wild man. The point was that with their organization already set up, this was a fine opportunity for them to take up the Blue Ridge proposition and drop the Massanutten at once. I explained that the park finding commission could see without walking out of Colonel Glenn Smith's office, by examining topographic maps, that the Massanutten area offered no attractions for a national park. Mr. Berry and Mr. Zerkel could not help being impressed with my argument, but the organization was already definitely committed to the Massanutten area. Action had to be quick as the commission had just about finished its visits and nothing acceptable north of the Great Smokies had been seen.

I clinched my argument with, "Why continue, only because you are committed to it, advocating something which you know to be a foredoomed failure? Why not get on the band wagon with a movement that promises to be a success?" This seemed to strike the nail on the head and when I asked Mr. Zerkel where I could get in touch with Shenandoah Valley, Inc., and he replied, "At Harrisonburg." I shouted. "Let's call them up. Let me talk to them." Mr. Dan Wine, Secretary of Shenandoah Valley, Inc., was quickly reached and I told him that I had some information relative to the national park situation of such immediate importance that I would like to have him call a meeting of as many of the members of his organization as could be gathered together while I was driving from Luray to Harrisonburg. "O. K. Come along," was Dan Wine's answer.

So Ferdinand Zerkel and I made the trip. There were some twelve or fifteen members of Shenandoah Valley, Inc., at the meeting. Ignoring formality, I laid the facts on the table, cold and hard. "You are betting on a lame horse. You haven't got a chance in a million. You are working in a lost cause. I know what I am talking about-my home in the Blue Ridge is 1200 feet higher than the highest peak in Massanutten and is surrounded by wonderful scenery with towering peaks and sheer cliffs. Close to Skyland lie hidden stands of virgin timber." So

I talked on. I wish I had a phonograph record now of that talk, for it must have been rousing. I was all "het up." Of course they showed immediate interest. When I urged that a group of them visit Skyland without delay and convince themselves of the facts I had stated, they accepted and a few days later a group arrived and were taken around. They were frankly surprised and impressed, but up to this point they had no idea of giving up advocacy of the Massanutten site, and a debate was proposed.

This took place at Dan Wine's mountain home at Rawley Springs. Hugh Naylor advocated the Massanutten area and I advocated the Blue Ridge. Ferdinand Zerkel supported me. At the finish Brother Naylor lacked a single leg to stand on, but this was no credit to us because it was only a case of facts. The Massanutten region contains lovely bits of scenery, but it is low in altitude and restricted in extent, and just not up to national park standard. Then again the national parks are under the control of the Department of the Interior, and the Massanutten area was already embraced in a national forest under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture.

That in itself would have been enough to eliminate it, as we later learned. The campaign had become a three-man "drive," the Washington end of which was handled by Messrs. Allen and Judd, the former even returning to his office at night to conduct the considerable correspondence that quickly sprang up. This has already been preserved and even now makes exciting reading. Mr. Allen again interviewed Colonel Smith and urged that the commission visit the Skyland area, but without obtaining a definite promise that they would. None of the members knew the Blue Ridge at all and they did not feel that there could be enough there to warrant a visit of inspection. There simply could not be anything worth while short of the Smokies.

At this point I fortified myself with letters of endorsement from influential people familiar with the Skyland region, and went to Washington. Taking with me Major General Merritt O. Ireland, then Surgeon General of the United States Army, who had long been an enthusiastic patron of Skyland, we landed in Colonel Smith's office. There I talked loud and long. Colonel Smith told me that Mrs. Smith had once spent two days at my place and he knew that it was beautiful, but that the commission did not feel that it could come up to the requirements of a national park: it seemed impossible that such an area could exist so near the capital. However, I was so persistent that Colonel Smith said finally that he would see what the commission might do. I immediately invited any or all of them to come as my personal guests. A few days later I received at Skyland a telegram from Colonel Smith, informing me he and Major Welch of the commission would arrive at Luray on a given date. I quickly informed officers of Shenandoah Valley. Inc., of the good news.

By this time I believe most of them were fully convinced that we were on the right track, but as an organization they were still committed to the Massanutten site. This was the first public indication of what had been done by Allen, Pollock and Judd toward attracting attention to the Skyland area for park purposes. It occurred on September 12, 1924, and the report made by the commission after the inspection, which became an official document, contains the following: "Major Welch and Colonel Smith left that evening for Luray to inspect an area lying in the Blue Ridge, extending from Front Royal to Waynesboro.

On arrival at Luray they were met by several hundred residents headed by a band. It developed that two delegations were present, one representing those interested in recommending the Massanutten Mountains as an area to be considered, and the other, headed by George Freeman Pollock, of Skyland, recommending the inspection of the Blue Ridge area. The committee members decided to go immediately to Skyland to make the inspection of that area first.

The delegation from the Massanutten Mountain area was invited by Mr. Pollock to accompany the Blue Ridge delegation, and the invitation was accepted.... After this short inspection Colonel Smith and Major Welch were so favorably impressed with the area that they decided to postpone further investigation until arrangements could be made for the whole committee to visit it.... The delegation recommending the Massanutten Mountains area, after this visit, were convinced that the area surrounding Skyland was superior to the Massanutten area; therefore the committee made no investigation of Massanutten at that time." Ferdinand Zerkel of Luray had long been whole-heartedly converted to the Blue Ridge area, of which he quickly became one of the most sincere and forceful supporters.

He did yeoman service among his fellow members in Shenandoah Valley, Inc., and among citizens of Luray almost from the first, and became one of the most valuable workers in the plan, with remarkable devotion of his personal time, effort and money. He organized the Luray greeting and accompanied the party to Skyland, where it can truthfully be said that the visitors, including many from the valley who had never been on the Ridge, were greatly surprised and impressed by the wonders unfolded to them.

After this inspection, which was continued on horseback by the commission members for several days-the entire group being entertained throughout as my guests Shenandoah Valley, Inc., officially abandoned the Massanutten project, thus bringing with its full support a wealth of devoted enthusiasm and service to the enterprise, the value of which can scarcely be overestimated. Immediately following the inspection Ferdinand Zerkel assisted in gathering together a large group of prominent residents of Luray in the parlor of the Mansion Inn, where I gave an informal lecture or talk, imparting as much information as we

had at that time, as to what a national park in the immediate vicinity would mean to local interests and to the State of Virginia.

The study and preparation of data for this talk had been dug out by Harold Allen in Washington, and we had all picked up much from the newspaper clippings when the commission was visiting North Carolina and Tennessee, so that I was pretty well equipped to give accurate and interesting information. This meeting was also attended by Dan Wine and others from Harrisonburg and Hugh Naylor from Front Royal. It was decided at this meeting to organize an association to be called the Northern Virginia Park Association, the object of which should be to bring about the recommendation of the Blue Ridge Mountain area around Skyland as a Southern Appalachian National Park.

This meeting really started the ball rolling. I was elected president; George H. Judd, of the Washington firm of Judd & Detweiler, printers of the National Geographic Magazine, (Mr. Judd having influence in Washington and having long been a cottage owner at Skyland), was elected first vice president; Harold Allen was elected second vice president; Dan Wine was elected secretary; L. Ferdinand Zerkel was elected chairman of the Board of Directors. We thereupon selected a number of prominent citizens, mostly of Virginia but a few from Washington, wrote them immediately asking if they would act on the Board of Directors, and received affirmative replies.

These letters were all written from Skyland. prepared a little 15-page Immediately Mr. Allen in Washington brochure entitled, "A National Park near the Nation's Capital," 5,000 of which were nicely printed through the generosity of Mr. Judd. These booklets, the first informative bulletin sent out, got into the mails about November 17, 1924, addressed to chambers of commerce, state officers, Members of Congress, prominent citizens, influential organizations in Virginia, newspapers, postmasters, Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs. They told briefly of the park movement and the Government's national park policy, narrated the Northern Virginia Park Association's genesis and objective, and set forth in full the Government questionnaire, with our answers. It stated forcefully what this tract would mean to the nation, and finally what it would mean to Virginia.

I think that nothing has been published even now that gives as much information, certainly not any more information, on the Shenandoah National Park. Our task was to inform and educate the people of the State on this park project, which was an entirely new one, outside the range of anyone's experience. At the same time that we were doing this, Shenandoah Valley, Inc., were working energetically along the same lines. The project aroused interest and received increasing support from various sections of the state. It was not known at that time that Virginia would have to buy the land. We had not been informed,

but took it for granted that the United States Government would purchase the land selected for a national park.

Propaganda went out constantly. I had hired two stenographers at Skyland and for three months carried on busily, making the promotion of the park project Skyland's first business; taking care of its guests became secondary. The best photographs ever taken around Skyland were those of Mr. C. J. Hepburn of Philadelphia, during his residence there. Shenandoah Valley, Inc. later employed a Harrisonburg, Virginia, photographer to cover the area. The Norfolk & Western Railroad also sent expert photographers to Skyland. Uncertain weather conditions often required several horseback trips to get just what was wanted. The pictures they obtained were very fine and I have a large collection of prints from them. I think, however, that the Hepburn photographs have never been surpassed.

Later, when Congress was considering the bill for a survey of the proposed park, I established headquarters at the Willard Hotel, where I kept "open house" for some time, trying to make myself generally useful in interviewing Congressmen and showing them photographs of typical scenery, as well as appearing before the Committee on Public Lands for the same purpose. The principal proponents of park legislation before the Committee were Major Welch, chairman of the site-finding committee, and Colonel Glenn H. Smith, its secretary, but we had enthusiastic interest stirred up in Virginia by that time and quite a delegation of native sons on hand to help the cause.

Potomac Heritage Trail Crew

By Robert Shutler, Pete Neal,
and Glenn Tobin

We admire our brothers and sisters who maintain the trails of the Shenandoah and Tuscarora, but sometimes the Potomac Appalachian looks like the Cadillac/Hoodlums Newsletter. We are here to tell you that there are indeed

other chapters. The Potomac Heritage Trail (PHT) Chapter maintains the delightful ten-mile



Chain Bridge, 1860s

trail that parallels the Potomac between Teddy Roosevelt Island and the American Legion Bridge.

Our stretch is dense with history. Native American settlements date back at least 5000 years. Captain John Smith noted in his journal that as his crew was taking on fresh water from a tributary at the base of the (Great) falls (probably Pimmet Run), natives pelted them with stones.

Going back a bit further, the stone that lines the Potomac Gorge is metamorphic (including metagraywackes-- love that name) and was formed about 750 million years ago. It is particularly useful in building since it breaks in a rectilinear way. Between 1830s and 1930s much of D.C.'s building foundations and roadbeds were made of it. Check out Georgetown University's Healy Hall, for example. The quarries from which it was extracted line the southern bank like giant crescent scoops. Evidence can be seen in the ruins of buildings and several abandoned boiler tanks that ran the steam operations. The photos show two holes cut into the stone for blasting. The six-point hole reveals that it was chiseled by hand, the round hole by steam drill.

Right in the middle of the PHT is Chain Bridge. That is Chain Bridge number eight. All previous spans were swept away by floods. Bridge number three used chains made of 4-foot iron links; the name stuck.

During the Civil War, the bridge was considered so important in the defense of Washington that three forts were built to protect it. One of those, Fort Marcy, is where the very first military aerial reconnaissance occurred. From a hydrogen balloon, Union forces were able to direct fire on the city of Falls Church, a Rebel stronghold at the time.

In 1930, both sides of the Potomac were designated a National Park, all the way to Cumberland, Md., with the C&O Canal on the north and the PHT on the south.

At the same time, work on the George Washington Memorial Parkway began, linking Mount Vernon to the new Memorial Bridge. It was the first federally funded parkway to incorporate divided lanes, limited access, and clover leaf intersections; it became the model for modern roadway design.

The Parkway was continued in the 1960s and by 1970 it linked to the Beltway bridge crossing the Potomac, known at the time as Cabin John (believed to be a contraction of Captain John, as in Captain John Smith). In 1969 it was renamed the American Legion Bridge. The designers of the Parkway (which included Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr) were careful to keep it on top of the bluff to maximize views, back when driving was a leisure activity. This allowed a wide swath of land for a delightful towpath at water's edge. There are no less than five waterfalls. Wildlife uses the Potomac corridor as a highway -

deer, beaver, even bears. The fall line, division between tidewater and piedmont, occurs at Great Falls, just upriver from Chain Bridge. As a result, we get all the brackish water fish as well as the freshwater fish and the accompanying waterfowl. With as many as 430 species of birds, there are plenty of opportunities for birding.

Our duties include rebuilding stone stairways, cutting water channels, removing blowdowns, trash collection, and managing invasives. There are times we consider ourselves the Kudzu Krew. Kudzu, much to our chagrin, was intentionally planted as erosion control along the GW Parkway.

New PATC Hike Leaders

By Gregory Roscetti and Nancy Seidel

PATC adds two new hike leaders to its team -- **Gregory Roscetti** and **Nancy Seidel**. Below, you will find statements from each of them. We invite everyone to join us in giving them a warm welcome.

Gregory Roscetti



I am originally from central Illinois. Growing up I used to hike frequently with my brothers and with my father. There aren't a lot of parks and woods in central Illinois, so we hiked more in the winter when local lakes and rivers froze, providing us additional miles to hike. The lake shores were mostly private property, but the frozen lakes were open to us. Perhaps this is why I still prefer hiking in cold weather. Or maybe it is because poison ivy is less of an issue in the winter, especially when you are out on the ice.

After college I went into the Army, and in that capacity, I had the opportunity to live (and hike) in different parts of the US and in Germany. I lived in Germany for 25 years and hiked a great deal. I migrated to trail running

as a time saving measure and more recently back to hiking after my knees decided that they didn't like so much running.

I've lived in northern Virginia for 13 years now. For most of that time, I hiked with and led hikes for a now defunct hiking group. People often ask me what my favorite hikes are, and I usually respond by asking for some context. Some of my favorite hikes are in the southern section of SNP, but I rarely do these hikes due to the length of the drive. If you ask me what my favorite hikes are within an hour's drive, that is a question I can answer – Riverbend, Seneca Regional Park, Sky Meadows, and Manassas Battlefield, to name a few.

Since I can no longer comfortably run, hiking is my primary form of exercise. This is why I prefer hikes with some hills to go up in order to get a cardiovascular workout. You can expect me to mostly lead hikes with at least 1000' of elevation gain/loss and a distance of 10 miles, plus or minus. Given that I am still working, I try to do one of these hikes every Saturday. I also hike on Sundays, but then I take my camera and go looking for interesting plants and animals.

Nancy Seidel



I have always enjoyed nature and sharing it with others. I can be easily distracted by a pretty wildflower, an interesting tree, or any kind of wildlife. I have enjoyed many hikes lead by others so now I hope to return the favor.

I come from a multigenerational family of outdoor enthusiasts and was hiking and camping before I could walk. I have walked many miles in the Adirondacks and the White Mountains. I grew up near Bear Mountain State Park in New York, which has the honor of being the lowest point along the AT (Woohoo!). The AT

has always had a place in my heart, and I have set foot on parts of the trail in every state except Georgia. I try to hike wherever I go and discover new places that only my feet can take me. I generally prefer hiking in smaller groups with distances of 4-6 miles, but sometimes I enjoy longer trails.

I have recently taken up backpacking and hope to do more. Favorite trails in Shenandoah include Rose River loop in most seasons and weather and Rapidan camp via Mill Prong in

spring when the wildflowers bloom. Favorites closer to my home include almost anything along the Potomac River including Great Falls (both sides), Riverbend Park, and Weverton Cliffs Overlook.

Hope to see you on the trail!

Gear Up for Service: Meet the [Super PATC Volunteer Bundle](#)

By Jess LaPolla



Every mile of trail cleared, every cabin maintained, and every hiker helped along the way has one thing in common: dedicated PATC volunteers.

Volunteers are the backbone of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. From trail maintainers to hike leaders, thousands of people contribute their time and energy to keeping our outdoor spaces accessible, safe, and enjoyable for everyone. PATC volunteers help care for more than 1,200 miles of trails, dozens of shelters and cabins, and thousands of acres of protected lands throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.

To celebrate those who give so much to the club, the PATC Store has created the **Super PATC Volunteer Bundle**—a collection of volunteer favorites that lets you show your PATC pride both on and off the trail while getting the most bang for your buck. The bundle includes six practical items every volunteer can use and saves 20% off the regular retail price, with members still eligible for their additional member discount.

The PATC Tree Line Long Sleeve T-Shirt

Whether you're spending a cool morning clearing blowdowns, staffing an outreach event, or heading out for a weekend hike, the PATC Tree Line Long Sleeve T-Shirt is a versatile layer that lets everyone know you're part of the PATC community.

Comfortable enough for everyday wear and durable enough for outdoor projects, it's the perfect shirt for representing the club wherever your adventures take you.

PATC Logo Baseball Hat

A good volunteer knows that sun protection is essential year-round. The PATC Logo Baseball Hat provides shade during work trips, hikes, and outdoor events.

Available in multiple colors, it's an easy way to show your PATC pride whether you're swinging a Pulaski, leading a hike, or grabbing coffee after a volunteer event.

PATC Logo Bandana

One of the most versatile pieces of outdoor gear you'll ever own, the PATC Logo Bandana can be used as a neck gaiter, sweatband, cooling wrap, trail rag, or even an emergency first-aid accessory. Lightweight and easy to carry, it's a practical addition to any volunteer's pack.

PATC Cooling Towel

Summer trail work can be hot, humid, and demanding. The PATC Cooling Towel is designed to help volunteers stay comfortable during warm-weather projects and hikes.

Simply wet it, wring it out, and wear it around your neck for instant cooling relief. It's one of the most useful items in the bundle for anyone who spends time outdoors during the summer months.

PATC Car Magnet

Show your support long after the work trip ends. The PATC Car Magnet lets you display your connection to the club everywhere you go.

Whether parked at a trailhead, campground, or local grocery store, it's a simple way to promote the organization and spark conversations about PATC's mission and volunteer opportunities.

PATC Member Patch

The finishing touch to the bundle is the classic PATC Member Patch. Add it to your backpack, jacket, or gear bag as a badge of your commitment to trail stewardship and outdoor recreation.

It's a small item with a big message: you're helping preserve trails and public lands for future generations.

A Bundle Built for Volunteers

The Super PATC Volunteer Bundle isn't just a collection of merchandise—it's a celebration of the people who make PATC possible. Every item is useful, practical, and designed to help volunteers stay comfortable while showcasing their connection to the club.

Whether you're a longtime trail maintainer, a new volunteer looking to get involved, or searching for the perfect gift for a dedicated PATC member, this bundle delivers exceptional value and plenty of PATC spirit. [Shop the Super PATC Volunteer Bundle today.](#)

The Path to Eagle

Article and photos by Lee Howard



Troop 33 Scouts Having Completed Demolition of Boardwalk

On Saturday morning, May 30th, 17 Scouts and three adults from Troop 33 in Takoma Park, Md. assembled under the leadership of Eagle Scout candidate Aldan Peterson to complete a trail maintenance project. The Scouts and Scouters were greeted by seasoned Trail Maintainer **Ken Ferebee** near an entrance to a section of the Glover Archbold Trail in the Cathedral Heights neighborhood of Northwest D.C. The foot path is one of many maintained by the club within the National Park Service Rock Creek Park trail system.



Getting Close to the End of the Line

Peterson's goal for the day was to replace all of the decking, a couple of stringers, and one step of a 50-foot boardwalk within the stream valley of the 183-acre Glover Archbold Park. After a continental breakfast of donuts and coffee, and a tailgate safety discussion led by Peterson and Ferebee, the morning shift was ready to get to work.

The Scouts set about the demolition, removing deck boards with crowbars, claw hammers, sledge hammers, and even a rock bar for extra leverage. A bucket brigade of youth and adults took away the damaged and worn lumber, neatly stacking it near the trailhead in the public right-of-way for the Park Service to pick up later. Once the two decayed stringers were removed, Ferebee discovered that the underlying sills were also in bad shape. That was about the time PATC's D.C. Rock Creek Park (RCP) Trails Deputy District Manager **Josh Wolny** showed up to help, and agreed that the sills needed replacing.

After a few Scouts removed the rotten timbers, Ferebee made short work of leveling out the ground with his trusty McLeod. He discovered that the sills were resting on top of what was likely the original trail bed, which had been surfaced with back run gravel. Foundry Branch runs through the valley, and this area is prone to flooding. Years of stormwater runoff and flooding buried the old tread with mud and silt. One of the Scouts had never seen a McLeod before and said it looked like a Pac-Man ghost.

With all of the demolition complete, the crew took a break and enjoyed a lunch of pizza and snacks. While it was a beautiful, breezy day with a high of 65, the crew stayed hydrated during the morning shift and celebrated three and a half hours of work with no accidents or injuries. During the break, Ferebee entertained the other adults with stories about his career with the Park Service, and Wolny recalled that their club trail crew had given Ferebee the McLeod as a retirement gift when he left the Park Service in 2022.



Alex Sanders Provides Guidance for Attaching New Deck Boards

During the break, several Scouts from the morning shift left to attend birthday parties and sporting tournaments, and were replaced by substitutes who were eager to start driving nails. D.C. RCP Trails District Manager **Alex Sanders** substituted for Ferebee for the afternoon shift to supervise the installation of the stringers and deck boards. Sanders remarked that he didn't know that the sills needed replacing, or he would

have assigned this project to his trail crew. Peterson and the Troop 33 Scouts didn't back down from the challenge, though, and successfully completed the job by late afternoon.

While the Scouts were finishing the boardwalk, Sanders remarked that he is regularly approached by Eagle Scout candidates looking for projects. The volume of requests became so great that he created a spreadsheet to keep track of them all. Eagle Scout service projects often focus construction and conservation and could be opportunities for cabin and trail maintainers to engage with Scouting America units close to where the projects are.

The founder of Scouting, Lord Robert Baden-Powell, had a concept of the movement as a "school of the woods." Many Scouting America troops have strong outdoors programs, and service is a cornerstone of the organization. Eagle Scout candidates have to lead their projects, and think through the questions of scope, required materials and supplies, and level of effort with the help of an advisor. They work closely with a project beneficiary, for example a trails maintainer, who assists in identifying the deliverables of the project and approves the results when it's finished. Not every maintenance project, whether cabins,

lands, or trails, will be appropriate for an Eagle candidate, but some may be great opportunities for collaboration. Scouting units can be searched by location using the tool on the [BeAScout website](#).

Hoodlums May– An All-American Day in the Park

By Tom Moran



Figure 1 by an Anonymous Hiker; “Dan’s AT Crew”- from left: Dan Hippe, Roger Friend, Mark Wrobel, Mike Kennedy, and Rich Lordahl

The Shenandoah National Park North District Hoodlums were once again greeted with pleasant temperatures and a light breeze as they pulled into Piney River CCC Camp for the May outing. A robust turnout of 28 provided plenty of opportunities to tackle priority projects in the District and have some fun doing it. Following Head Hoodlum **Tom**

Troutman’s introductions and safety briefing (yes, the

snakes ARE out), the group divided into crews and set out to tame the unruly district.

Tom Troutman led a crew of four, including **Erin Taylor, Steve Parsley, and Ruth Stornetta** on a trip down Tom’s section of the AT between Jenkins and Hogwallow Gaps where they knew they would find work. They cleared a blowdown and tended to quite a few water control structures along the way when not being distracted by nature’s bounty. Erin and Ruth bonded over their appreciation for nature, which expressed itself with a freshly shed black rat snake, leaving its skin for inspection. With further observation they noted abundant Solomon’s seals, and False Solomon’s seals among other attractive flora. Lest one think that all focus on work was lost in nature appreciation, they did eventually finish the section and return in time for the potluck.

Dan Hippe led a crew of five on a section of the AT between the two Hogback overlooks. The focus was on tread and water bar maintenance repair on the section. They cleared 36 water bars and a large number of check dams, with careful attention to uphill trail bed sculpting to intercept water sooner and improve approach angles to the control structures. They also cleared a 30' lateral drain, which notoriously attract clogging vegetation. As is common, they dealt with unplanned issues – in one case disbursing remains of a campfire directly on the center of the AT, just yards from the parking area! They also bucked one stepover blowdown. The trail was very busy with large numbers of backpackers and hikers through the morning hours, including a few through hikers.



by Richard Lee: "Safety Briefing"- Tom Troutman holds court with Hoodlums before crews disperse

Ed Howell had recently become the Maintainer for Middle Piney Branch trail, and had put in multiple trips to attend to blowdowns and a backlog of trail bed issues. But one unresolved issue had persisted for years and was beyond what a single maintainer could address – a spring seep had moved uphill over years so that substantial flow ran onto the trail for about 25 feet, leaving a muddy, sloppy mess for hikers to deal with. This is a perfect setup for a crew dedicated to a specific task-- enter the Hoodlums. **Ed, Chris Viggiano, Kent and Julie Bauer**, and crew lead **Tom Moran** hiked in and spent their day extending an existing lateral drain up the trail far enough to capture the uphill flow that was on the trail. Soil and excavated rocks were moved to the nearby, newly elevated trail bed to provide a dry way past the now flowing drain. The work was, to be frank, a sloppy, muddy mess but the crew was happy in its mucky work!

Michael Gergely led a crew to a section of the AT near Elkwallow Wayside, where the maintainer has been out of town for an extended period of time due to work requirements. Hoodlums will help each other out! They cleared water bars, check dams, and several lateral drains, as well as weeded and removed invasive garlic mustard plants. Despite not having the “correct” tool (a *Pulaski*) for the task, they completed two 20 yard sections of side hilling on the ridge ascent where the trail was drifting. Flush with that success and an exuberant feeling, they hurriedly removed a blowdown just before the official 'blowdown' crew arrived. The most interesting wildlife encountered? A handful of AT thru hikers passing through, eyes forward as they sped down the final homestretch to Elkwallow Wayside and its famed blackberry milkshakes. Mike’s crew included **Cindy Ardecki, Noel Freeman, and Dave Jordahl**.

Two crews were dedicated to clearing downed trees. **Jim Fetig** led one of these to a sequence of locations where they would clear blowdowns that had been scouted or, in some cases, reported by

others. Sometimes these reports can be inaccurate or outdated, as they found when two near the Range View Cabin had already been cleared. Nonetheless, they found eight worthy specimens and clipped quite a few briars along the way before potluck came calling. **Tina Rafalovich, Meghaen Anderson, and Roger Christ** did the heavy lifting while Jim swung his Stihl like a light saber. (Well, not exactly like that, but with skill and dexterity for sure.)

The other blowdown crew was led by **Justin Corddry**, back yet again to the section of the AT between Beahm’s Gap and the Pass Mountain Hut. If this seems a bit repetitive,

you may be a regular reader of this column! This section of the AT is the gift that keeps on giving if cutting a path through fallen trees is your idea of a gift. Despite having a small crew, which included **Richard Lee, Russell Miller**, and section maintainer **Kyle Brost**, they were able to clear the entire section of blowdowns before hiking out.

The theme this month for the traditional after work potluck was All-American BBQ, with Hoodlums Head Chef **Joe Wood** working the grill and dishing out the burgers and dogs, complemented by a large array of contributions from attendees. Ruth Stornetta pulled out



by Rich Lordahl: Ruth Stornetta with her uke

her ukelele and laid down a beautiful backing track, adding a great vibe to the scene. All was well until a fast-moving storm moved across the mountain, sending the last hardy few back to their cars.

Meadows Privy: The hole truth and nothing butt the truth

By Lee Howard, Kent Query, and Stephanie Richard



by Lee Howard: Front view of new privy with open door

If you follow PATC on social media, you may have seen a post about the Meadows privy fire in mid-December. A friend of the club and recent Meadows renter discovered the destruction, then posted a photo with the warning, “be advised that the privy is no longer there.” As you can imagine, the comments that followed were highly amusing, but this was no laughing matter. To make matters worse, the cabin maintainer wasn’t available to respond to the emergency and the cabin was booked solid through the end of the year.

Headquarters and newly-appointed Piedmont District Cabins Supervisors **Lee Howard** and **Stephanie Richard** immediately jumped into action.

Within 36 hours Cabin and Lands Coordinator **Ben Danforth**, Supervisor of Facilities **Anstr Davidson**, Lee, and Stephanie pulled together a disaster recovery response team and a plan. Headquarters coordinated with the CSI: PATC unit and the Madison County Sheriff's Office on an investigation. Suspiciously, four cigar butts were discovered near the cabin, but the cause of the fire remains a mystery. Only small, charred remnants and the metal roof remained, but the privy has since risen from the ashes.

Within five days a porta john was delivered to the property to accommodate renters until a new privy could be built. The “new amenity” prevented the cancellation of any rentals so that the cabin didn't have to be removed from the reservation system.

Meanwhile, the disaster recovery team consulted with PATC Crapper Crew veterans and long-time club operatives **John Hedrick** and **Steve Bair**, plus Cabins Operations Committee Chair Emeritus Mel Merritt, to decide on how to proceed. They arrived at a decision to move forward with the economic one-hole pit privy, the old standard at PATC primitive and semi-primitive cabins, though some have been upgraded to moldering privies in recent years.

The holidays and inclement weather presented many obstacles, blocking the path to a quick resolution. In addition, former Meadows Cabin Maintainer **Kim Mathews** passed away on Christmas Day. He lived close by and maintained the cabin for 25 years; he will be missed within our community. Shenandoah Valley District Supervisor **Thomas Jorgensen** fondly recounted that during the renovation of Meadows in 2001, the work crew “stayed at Kim's house every night for the entire summer.” The club recognizes his years of service, and his memory will persist in our efforts to maintain the cabin for years to come.



by Stephanie Richard: Forrest Yeager (left) and Kent Query (right) cutting lumber

When the inclement weather began to break in mid-March, the project gained momentum. Shelters Committee Chair **Henry Horn** and Myron Avery Award recipient **Frank Turk** helped to procure some prefabrication materials. A contractor was hired to build the pit liner, excavate the hole, and drop the liner in place. Hiring a professional minimized risks of



by Lee Howard: Kent Query and Kara Judy working on privy build

personal injury to volunteers, and resulted in a more streamlined process for building, excavating, and installing the pit liner. Former president of the American Society of Outhouse Architects Bob Cary estimated, “the average hole requires excavating about 144 cubic feet of earth, or somewhere in excess of 700 shovels full.” My back aches just reading about it!

With preparations complete, a work team was scheduled at Meadows to finish the job over the last weekend in March. In the meantime, the vernal equinox ushered in better weather, a landscape of spring colors, soundscape of birdsong, and the first work trip for the new Meadows Cabin Maintainer **Kara Judy**. She and her dog Katia joined Lee, Stephanie, Trout Run School Co-

maintainer **Kent Query**, Lambert Co-maintainer **Forrest Yeager**, and his dog Ranger for a productive weekend that saw the completion of the three and a half month long project. Along with the new privy, the cabin received a thorough cleaning and several interior upgrades, including new furniture and lamps.

Lee and Stephanie finished preparing the Stoner Cabin for rental last year after a successful renovation led by former Piedmont District Cabins Supervisor **Bruce Berberick**, but this was their first end-to-end project. They are especially grateful to the aforementioned work team for their efforts, John for being the “boots on the ground” during the excavation, Mel for guidance, Steve for providing tools and moral support, and Merritt’s Mutton Top Cabin Maintainer **Rob Gilchrist** for recruiting Kara.

The Meadows Cabin provides direct access to the Rapidan and Rose River trail systems. The property borders the Shenandoah National Park, not far from the White Oak Canyon and Old Rag (Berry Hollow) trailheads and close to a variety of popular hiking trails. For more information and to book, [check out our website](#).

PATC Heads to Trail Days

By Matt Waurio



Part celebration, part reunion, and part outdoor expo, Appalachian Trail Days in Damascus, Va. has been one of the largest gatherings of the AT community since the 1980s. This year, PATC

joined more than 5,000 attendees in Damascus from May 14-17 to share our work, connect with hikers, and learn from partners across the trail community.

With such a highly distilled audience of outdoor enthusiasts and conservation-minded individuals present, PATC's involvement was excitedly welcomed. By the end of the weekend, our booth had generated an estimated 300 direct interactions with hikers, current thru-hikers, volunteers, community members, and representatives from other organizations. More importantly, we left with new ideas, stronger relationships, and a better understanding of how people see PATC from outside the organization.

Prominently representing PATC were our Ridgerunners **Dillon, Josh, Karen, and Marissa**. Two things became immediately clear: our Ridgerunners are great at their jobs and people love talking with them!

Throughout the weekend, hikers and locals alike stopped by to meet them, thank them for their hard work, and learn more about their efforts along the AT. Many former thru-hikers had already encountered PATC Ridgerunners during their journeys, while others were curious about how the program worked and what it took to become one. Their presence

helped put a face to PATC's stewardship efforts and opened the door for Ridgerunners to discuss the impact our volunteers and seasonal staff have on the trail experience.

Trail Days also gave us an opportunity to introduce PATC to thru hikers before they reach our region. It's surprising how many people can walk on the AT for months without giving a thought to how it's maintained. Our booth allowed us to tell our story - to explain who we are, what we do, and why volunteer stewardship matters to the thru hikers' goal of traversing the entire AT.

The success of this kind of outreach is difficult to measure, but its value is real. A positive interaction with PATC in Damascus translates into information sharing among hikers and around campfires. Thru hikers are then primed to recognize the work being done and, during their daily hiking, may develop more questions about what it takes to make and maintain a trail. This can mean a better knowledge base among the community along with more future volunteers, members, cabin renters, donors, or simply hikers who better understand and appreciate the work that goes into maintaining the trail.

Beyond the PATC booth, Trail Days provided valuable opportunities to connect with peer organizations. Representatives from organizations such as the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association (ALDHA), the Green Mountain Club (GMC) of Vermont, the Appalachian Trail Museum, the Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS), and several regional trail clubs spent time discussing both successes and challenges facing the broader trail community.

Topics ranged from land acquisition and conservation concerns to volunteer recruitment, trail maintenance models, sawyer training programs, and the growing pressures facing public lands. These conversations reinforced an important lesson: while each organization operates in its own region, many of the challenges we face are shared. Building relationships with partner organizations today creates opportunities for collaboration tomorrow.

In so many ways, attending Trail Days aligns directly with PATC's broader communications goals. Good communications are not simply about publishing articles, updating websites, or posting on social media. They're about connecting people to people, people to the outdoors, helping individuals find meaningful ways to engage, and strengthening the communities that make stewardship possible.

One recurring theme from conversations at Trail Days was that some people wanted to volunteer with PATC but didn't know how to get involved. Others struggled to find events that fit their schedules or were uncertain where to begin. Those conversations reinforced the importance of making our information easier to find, simplifying volunteer pathways,

and ensuring that our website and event calendar serve as effective tools for engagement - leading to us unveil a new feature a bit earlier than planned: the option to link personal digital calendars to the [PATC events calendar](#).

The weekend also highlighted areas where PATC can improve. Several of our outreach materials are overdue for updates. Some display boards have likely been serving the Club for well over a decade, some printed materials are dated, and we found that booth volunteers would benefit from a simple guide explaining PATC programs, leadership roles, and volunteer opportunities. We also recognized the need for a more streamlined process that helps interested individuals move from curiosity to active involvement.

Fortunately, these are good problems to have. They're signs that people are interested.

Looking ahead, PATC plans to update outreach materials, develop better booth resources, improve volunteer information, and explore additional partnerships that emerged from Trail Days. We are also considering ways to make future participation even more effective, including bringing volunteers from a wider range of PATC activities to help tell the Club's story.

Most importantly, Trail Days served as a reminder of something PATC has known for nearly a century: trails are maintained by people, but they're sustained by community. Whether through a conversation at a booth, a day of trail work, a night in a cabin, or a chance encounter on the AT, the relationships we build are what make stewardship possible.

By that measure, Trail Days 2026 was a success.

CentennialFest Volunteers Needed!

By Jean Stephens

The weekend of October 2-4, 2026, PATC will be kicking off its Centennial with CentennialFest at Caroline Furnace in Fort Valley, Va. This is a great opportunity to meet other



members of PATC and participate in many fun activities such as hikes, workshops, demonstrations, and trail maintenance. We hope you won't just attend to enjoy the fun, but that you might also give a little of your time.

We need volunteers to help with registration, parking, assisting hike leaders on hikes, and meal confirmation. We could also use a photographer for the awards ceremony. If you would like to help, contact **Jean Stephens** at stephensjean25@gmail.com or look for the sign-up form coming soon on the CentennialFest website at <https://www.patc.net/centennialfest>. Join us for a fun weekend with other PATC members and their families.

What's that Flower? Tuscarora Trail Dry Gap to Power Lines—Late Summer

Article and photos by Richard Stromberg

This article shows you some of the flowers to look for in July and August on the Tuscarora Trail north of Dry Gap. The trail is described in Section 16 of the PATC publication "[The Tuscarora Trail a Guide to the South Half](#)." This is a popular trail section because of the spectacular view from Eagle Rock, one mile north of the Dry Gap parking.

All species below are native unless otherwise noted.

As you approach the Eagle Rock viewpoint, you will see evidence of the November 1, 2024, fire: blackened earth, logs, and bark at the bottom of trees.

Bristly Sarsaparilla (*Aralia hispida*) is known for sprouting in burn areas, and you will see it here. The upper stems can be smooth and only the lower stems, bristly. It is a northern plant categorized as rare in the PATC area. Its tiny white flowers are in a rounded umbel. A large population existed under the power lines three and a half miles from the parking but has been dwindling without fire there.



Pilewort (*Erechtites hieracifolius*) also likes burned areas, so is also called American Burnweed. It is a tall plant with a grooved stem. The flowers are green tubes, swollen at the bottom with a brush-like tip. When ripe, fluffy seeds appear.



Heal-all

Heal-all (*Prunella vulgaris*) is also called Selfheal. The plants are usually under a foot tall. The flower spike is on top of the plant above paired leaves. Usually only a few flowers are open at a time. Each flower is dominated by the purple, upper hood. When all the flowers are gone, the inflorescence looks like a tiny corn cob. It is not native.

Indian Tobacco (*Lobelia inflata*) flowers are only about a quarter inch and are light blue to white. They have an upper lip with two, erect lobes and a lower lip with three, spreading lobes. They grow in long spikes. The structure behind the petals is strongly inflated.

Cowwheat (*Melampyrum lineare*) plants are four-to-twelve inches tall. The half-inch, tubular, white flowers with a yellow tip grow in the axils and are often hidden by leaves.

Hoary Mountain-mint (*Pycnanthemum incanum*) can grow to over six feet tall. Its light purple flowers sprout irregularly from a circle at the top of the plant and around the stem in the leaf axils. The leaves are egg-shaped with the wide part towards the stem. The term “hoary” is applied because the leaves seem to be sprinkled with a white or grayish powder.

Panicled Hawkweed (*Hieracium paniculatum*) They have only ray florets like Dandelions, no central disks. It has spread out panicles--the thin-stemmed flowers seeming to float in air. (A panicle is a many-branched inflorescence.) Panicled Hawkweed leaves are entire, with no teeth.

Entire-leaved False Foxglove (*Aureolaria laevigata*) flowers are eye-catching: leafy racemes of 1-2 inch yellow tubes with five, flaring lobes at the end. It has a smooth, green stem and most leaves are entire, though lower leaves may be toothed.

Downy Rattlesnake Plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*) is most noticeable for its evergreen, dark green leaves



Entire-leaved False Foxglove

with a network of white veins at the base of the plant. It is an orchid. The flower raceme is about a foot tall. The flowers look like little ($\frac{1}{4}$ "), white balls, densely packed on the stalk and never open very much.

Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) is a succulent, branching plant over three feet high with racemes of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch white flowers with five, petal-like sepals. The fruits are deep purple berries.

Horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis*) has many flower clusters at the top of the plant, each flower is a tube, less than five millimeters long. If you look closely, you will see the top of each flower is a tiny daisy with white rays 0.5 to 2 millimeters long. The seeds form small Dandelion-like fluff balls to blow in the wind.



American Pennyroyal

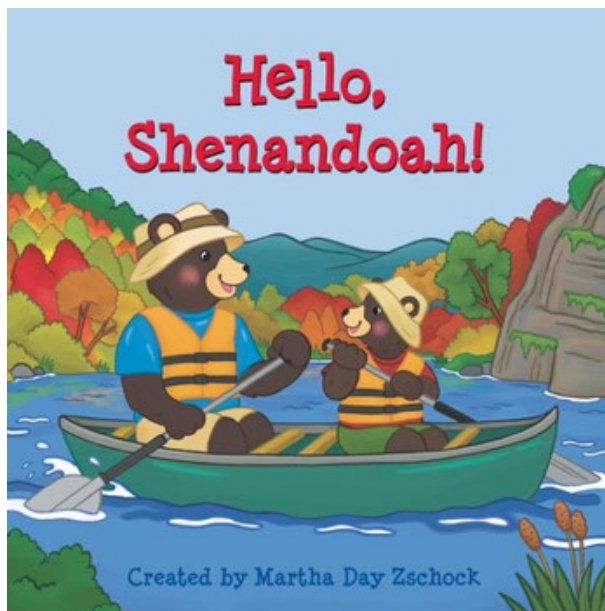
White Snakeroot (*Ageratina altissima*) can grow to five feet tall. It has branching clusters of up to 30 small flowers at the top. Individual quarter-inch flowers have five, pointed petals and protruding white stamens. Leaves are long-pointed, egg-shaped with $\frac{3}{4}$ inch stems.

American Pennyroyal (*Hedeoma pulegioides*) plants are small, less than 18 inches. Before you have seen it, if you see it at all, you probably have smelled

its strong minty smell because you brushed or stepped on it. Its paired leaves are narrow and less than one and a half inches long. Several flowers cluster tightly around the stem in the leaf axils. One-eighth inch, bluish-purple flowers extend from the similar-sized green sepal tube. If you get down on your knees to look at the tiny flowers, you will see that they have the typical, two-lipped formation of the mint family. The small upper lip curves slightly over the lower lip, and the bottom lip has three lobes, the middle one the largest.

Keep Calm and Read On: Summer Camp

By Wayne Limberg



School's out and vacations loom. It is now time to look at some good reads for kids. With high gas prices and many planning to stay closer to home, most of these books focus on Shenandoah National Park and can be found at its visitor center gift shops. Proceeds help to support the park. All of these books are available online and make great gifts.

For the infant to three set, "Hello, Shenandoah" by best-selling author-illustrator Martha Day Zschock is the story of a papa bear and cub exploring the park. They start with the Visitor Center at Big Meadows

and are soon saddling up at Skyland Stables, hiking the AT, and viewing the sites along Skyline Drive. As a board book it is all but indestructible and trusted sources report it is also a good gnaw. Another book is "Good Night, Forest," which is a take on Margaret Wise Brown's classic "Goodnight Moon." Author Emily Johnson presents a soothing collection of bedtime stories and rhymes about 16 different animals as they shuffle off to sleep. Adults are likely to find their heads nodding too.

For ages four to eleven, there is Sarah Del Grande's "Shenandoah National Park: A Guide for Kids," part of a series of Grande Guides to National Parks for children. In this book, a racoon ranger named Leo takes readers on a journey to explore SNP, hiking Nicholson Hollow Trail and making stops at Corbin Cabin and Rapidan Camp as he recounts the history of the park and those who have lived and worked in it. Another pick for this age group is "Shenandoah National Park: A Fact-filled Adventure" by Juliette Felde. It's an account of the park's human and natural history with a different approach than many other children's park guides. It has "Pause and Think" questions at various points to test what readers have learned. Adults can use these moments to engage their listeners and learn themselves.

And then there is "Who Pooped in the Park? Shenandoah National Park: Scat and Track for Kids" by Gary Robson. Once again this is one in a series of books covering other parks. It tells the story of two kids who become frustrated by not seeing many animals while exploring SNP only to learn from scat and tracks that the animals are all around them. The

illustrations are great and the book includes a quick-identification chart. From reader reviews, it's a toss-up as to who enjoys this book more, kids or adults.

Another choice for young readers is "The Adventures of Bubba Jones: Time Traveling Through Shenandoah National Park." It is the second in a series by authors Jeff Alt and Hannah Tuohy set in national parks. In each, Bubba Jones and his sister Hug-a-Bug, having inherited time travel skills from their grandfather, go back in time centuries, even eons to explore the given parks' human and animal residents and history. In the case of Shenandoah this includes treks up and down hollows and hills. Though aimed at eight to twelve year old readers, younger kids will also enjoy hearing the tale.

Regardless of age, Bison Press' "Shenandoah National Park Activity Book" with its 45 pages of games, puzzles and brain teasers, is sure to keep kids and adults busy and happy--and off screens. They will hone their creative thinking, writing, drawing and wilderness skills, learn about park flora and fauna, history, and what rangers do. It's a good bet for kids who enjoy the parks' Junior Ranger programs. Another choice is National Parks Books' "Shenandoah National Park Animals and Attractions" by Billy Grinslott and Kinsey Marie. It is a good introduction to the park, listing sightseeing spots and hikes with a special emphasis on younger kids, though Dark Hollow Falls, Mary's Rock, and Old Rag are included. Grinslott has a number of books on fish and wildlife to his credit and brings his expertise to bear (no pun intended) when he describes in words and pictures the park's attractions.

In every life--and many vacations--a little rain must fall. Coloring books to the rescue! Jen Racine's "The National Parks Coloring Book" covers 24 parks, including SNP. It is both fun and educational and includes drawings and information of animals and wildflowers as well as a map of all the national parks. Though aimed at ages four to twelve, adults will also enjoy it. Another choice for youngsters and oldsters is "The Art of the National Parks: Coloring Book." With its poster-sized prints drawn from the Fifty-Nine Parks series, it is an art book in itself. Each picture is a modern take on the WPA park posters of the 1930s by leading contemporary artists. All the national parks are included, as well suggestions for color choices. NPS coloring pages are available at park visitor centers and online.

The final choice, Mike Bezemek's "Mysteries of the National Parks," is for kids and adults. With 35 stories of unexplained disappearances and phenomena it's a natural for around the campfire. Did a UFO really fly past Mt. Rainier? What secrets lay hidden in Ford's Theater and along the Blue Ridge Parkway?

Do you have a page-turner? Send it along to wplimberg@aol.com. Meanwhile, enjoy the summer and keep reading. See you on the trail.

Trail Maintenance Workshop

Saturday and Sunday, September 19 & 20, 2026

Shenandoah National Park - North District

For more than 35 years, the PATC's Hoodlums Trail Crew and Shenandoah National Park staff have conducted a Trail Maintenance Workshop in the North District of the Park. The objective is to teach basic skills to new and prospective trail maintainers and to provide experienced trail maintainers advanced training in trail design, construction, and maintenance. SNP trail professionals and experienced PATC crew leaders provide instruction that will help novice and veteran trail maintainers alike. Workshop participants typically camp for the weekend at the Mathews Arm Campground in the North District of the Park. Participants will have free entry to the Park and Campground.

The Workshop will begin Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. and end Sunday at 1:00 p.m. Participants are encouraged to arrive Friday afternoon/evening and camp at Mathews Arm, socialize with other participants, and thereby avoid an early-morning drive. The fee for the workshop, which includes dinner Saturday and breakfast and lunch Sunday is \$45.

The workshop is limited to 30 participants, which we typically reach by early-August. The registration deadline is Friday, September 4. For more information contact **David Nebhut** via e-mail: david.nebhut@gmail.com or by phone: 571-465-1041.

Space is limited, register today!

If you are ready to register, click [here](#)

Participation in the Workshop is available only to PATC members ages 18 and above, and registration in advance is required.

Help Wanted for June

Wood Sign Maker- contact John Hedrick at C 703-403-1479, jhedrick@erols.com

Shelter Volunteer

Henry Horn ~ 301-642-1122 patcshelter@comcast.net

Paul Gerhard Shelter ~ PATC map F

District Manager ~ Ashby / Possums AT & Blue blazed [Rte. 50 to SNP] ~ Map 8, 9

Jon Rindt ~ H 540/635-6351, jkrindt@comcast.net

Co- District Manager ~ Tuscarora Central [Map L]

Bill Greenan, wpgreenan@yahoo.com

SNP North District Blue blazed ~ Map 9

Tom Moran, (703) 715-0050, twmoran19@gmail.com

Fork Mountain Trail ~ Co ~ Piney Ridge Trail to Hull School Trail (1.1 mi)

Jeremys Run Trail (middle) ~ Co ~ 8th Ford of Jeremys Run to junction Knob Mt. & Neighbor Mt. Trail (2.7mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ SNP Boundary to Thompson Hollow Trail (1.5 mi)

SNP Central District Blue blazed [north] ~ Map 10

Patrick Wilson ~ pwilson@hsc.edu

Eugene "Buz" Groshong ~ 540-522-6749, buzgroshong@verizon.net

Josh Fuchs (703) 346-4842, jrfuchs48@gmail.com

Catlett Mountain ~ Hannah Run Trail to Hazel Mountain Trail (1.2mi)

SNP Central District Blue blazed [south] ~ Map 10

John Hedrick ~ 540/987-8659, jhedrick@erols.com

Rock Spring Parking/Cabin/Hut ~ Rock Spring Parking to AT/AT to Rock Spring Cabin & Hut (.2mi)

Rock Spring Cabin/Hut Spring Trail ~ Rock Spring Cabin & Hut to spring (.1mi)

SNP South District Appalachian Trail ~ Map 11

Bob Pingry ~ 434-981-5094, bobpingry@gmail.com

AT ~ Co ~ Loft Mtn Camp Store trail to Loft Mountain Amphitheater trail (1.3)

SNP South District Blue blazed ~ Map 11

Wayne Limberg, H 703-533-8639, C 703-216-2396

Jeff Landis, 540-434-6354, knobred-muddled@yahoo.com

Brown Mountain - Brown Mtn. Summit to Big Run Portal Trail (3.5 mi)

Gap Run Trail - Junction of Rocky Mount Summit Trail to bottom of Gap Run (1.50mi)

Rocky Mountain Run Trail ~ Big Run Portal Trail to Brown Mtn. Trail (2.7 mile)

Furnace Mountain Trail (Upper) ~ Furnace Mountain Summit Trail to Trayfoot Mountain Trail (2 mile)

Pennsylvania Tuscarora ~ Maps J & K

Chris Firme ~ 717-794-2855, bncfirme@innernet.net

Dave Trone ~ 717-778-1308, trildavidt@gmail.com

Pete Brown 410-207-2921, trailpete@gmail.com

PA Tuscarora [J] ~ Fowler Hollow shelter to Hemlock Rd (2.2mi)

PA Tuscarora [J] ~ Mountain Rd. to Jct. PA 641 (6.2mi)

PA Tuscarora [K] ~ Alice Trail to Yellow Blazed Trail (4.2mi)

PA Tuscarora [K] ~ Yellow Blazed Trail to PA 456 (6.7mi)

Tuscarora Central ~ Map L

Bill Greenan ~ wpgreenan@yahoo.com

Co-District Manager needed

Tuscarora Trail ~ Burnt Mill Bridge to Lutkins Passage (3.2mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Meadow Branch to Eagles Nest Parking (2.2mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Eagles Nest Mt. Parking Lot to Meadow Branch Trail (3mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Larrick Overlook to Lucas Woods Trail (2mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Sleepy Creek Registration to Hampshire Grade Road (5.6mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Hampshire Grade Road to High Rock (2.7mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Co ~ Lucas Woods Trail to Powerline (3.5mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Sleepy Creek WMA Border to VA 671 (Shockeysville Road) (4.1mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ US 50 (Back Creek) to Gore Access Trail (1.3mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Co ~ Powerline to Dry Gap (3.5mi)

Devils Nose Connector Trail ~ Devils Nose Parking Area to Tuscarora Trail (.5mi)

Spruce Pine Hollow Trail ~ Tuscarora Trail to Spruce Pine Hollow Park Trailhead (.10mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Gore Access Trail to Hunters Cabin (Forest Road Crossing) (2.1mi)

Massanutten North ~ Map G

Steven Parsley, 443-864-3606, mbspeak2000@gmail.com

Zoe Sollenberger, (703) 447-8636, zoe4dogs@shentel.net

Massanutten Trail 408 ~ Bear Trap Trail to Rte 675 (2.2mi)

Duncan Knob Trail 409A ~ Gap Creek Trail to Duncan Knob (2.7mi)

Milford Gap Trail ~ Tolliver Trail to Hazard Mill Campground Road (1.81mi)

Bear Wallow Spur Trail ~ Mud Hole Gap to Tuscarora Trail (2.4mi)

Mud Hole Gap Trail ~ Parking off SR678 [800] to Parking off Massanutten Trail (FR66) (4.28mi)

Shawl Gap Trail ~ SR613 [700] to MM/TT intersection at Shawl Gap (2.3mi)

Sherman Gap Trail ~ Mudhole Gap Trail to SR613 [580](5.79mi)

Sidewinder Trail ~ Mudhole Gap Trail to Tuscarora Trail (.83mi)

7-bar None Trail ~ Peters Mill Run Trail to Massanutten Trail (.46mi)

Bear Trap Trail ~ Peters Mill Run Trail to Massanutten Trail (.48mi)

Lupton Trail ~ Massanutten Trail to Peters Mill Run Trail (.43mi)

Indian Grave Ridge Trail ~ Parking lot off SR717 to Massanutten Trail (2.44mi)

Kennedy Peak Trail ~ Massanutten Trail to Tower Lookout (.24mi)

Tolliver Trail ~ logging road to Milford Gap Trail (1.79mi)

Massanutten South ~ Map H

Paul Boisen, (540) 246-5662, paulboisen@hotmail.com

Massanutten South Trail ~ Pitt Spring to Morgan Run Trail (1.4 m FR 65) (3.3mi)

Roaring Run Trail ~ Catherine Furnace to TV Tower Road (3.8mi)

Pitt Spring Lookout Trail ~ Massanutten South Trail to lookout point (.27mi)

Great North Mountain ~ Map F

Mike Allen ~ 540-333-3994, michaelallen0056@gmail.com

North Mt. Trail ~ Stack Rock Trail to VA 720 (4.3mi)

Stack Rock Trail ~ Forest Rd 252 to North Mt. Trail (1.5mi)

Long Mountain Trail ~ Trout Pond Trail to FR 1621 (4.4mi)

Big Schloss Trail ~ 2.3 Mile Marker of Mill Mt. Trail to Big Schloss View (.3mi)

Mill Mt. Trail ~ Wolf Gap to Big Schloss Cutoff Trail (2.8mi)

Gerhard Shelter Trail ~ Tuscarora Trail to Vances Cove (1.5mi)
Bucktail Cutoff Trail ~ Bucktail Trail to Halfmoon Trail (2.7mi)
Bucktail Trail ~ Trout Run Road to Waites Run Road (5.2mi)
Capon Trail ~ Bucktail trailhead to Waites Run Road (2.9mi)
German Wilson Trail ~ Halfmoon Lookout Trail to Bucktail Trail (1.2mi)
Cedar Creek Trail ~ FR88 to FR1863 (4.4mi)
Old Mailpath Trail ~ Wilson Cove to TT Three Ponds Trail (2.3mi)
Sulphur Springs Gap Trail ~ SR603 to TT Little North Mountain Trail (2.9mi)
Little Sluice Mountain Trail ~ FR92 to TT Three Ponds Trail (5.3mi)
Trout Pond Trail ~ SR59 to Long Mountain Trail (2.5mi)
Falls Ridge Trail ~ FR1318 Laurel Run Spur Trail to North Mountain Trail (2.5mi)

North River Map-National Geographic Trails Illustrated #791

Lynn & Malcolm Cameron, (540) 234-6273, slynncameron@gmail.com

Braley Pond Loop ~ 491, 496, 654 from Braley Pond Parking to Braley Pond Parking (3.6 mi)

MD Montgomery County Parks ~ Map D

Lynn Gallagher ~ (301) 320-4862, or lynn.t.gallagher@gmail.com

Cabin John Trail ~ Seven Locks Rd to Tuckerman Lane

Prince William Forest Park

Dennis Calhoun, 703-583-4386, dennis_calhoun@comcast.net

Carl Nicholson, 703-314-6365, cwnicholson@gmail.com

South Valley from Scenic Drive [3rd Intersection] to North Orenda Road (1.1 mi)

MD Piedmont District - Monocacy Natural Resources Mgt. Area and

Seneca Greenway in Seneca Creek State Park

Jim Tomlin, (301) 774-1228, jftomlin@gmail.com

Jeffrey Clyman, (443) 864-4547, jiclyman@verizon.net

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ River Road to lower Berryville Road (1.5 mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ lower Berryville Road to upper Berryville Road (2.1 mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ upper Berryville Road to Route 28 (1.9mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Route 28 to Black Rock Road (1.2mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Black Rock Road to Route 118 (1.5mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Route 118 to powerline (1.4mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ powerline to Riffle Ford Road (1.5mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Riffle Ford Road to Seneca Creek Road (1.6mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Seneca Creek Road to Visitor Center (1.10mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Visitor Center to Route 335 (2.3 mi)