

Carolina Mountain Club

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April 2014



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Spring Social: Hikes, Food, Learning

By Danny Bernstein

The annual Spring Social proved to be a damp, drizzly day but that didn't stop CMCers from having a bang-up day at the NC Arboretum. Les Love, with the help of Catherine Love and Sherman Stambaugh, organized the event for the eighth year.

Over 100 people registered and showed up for an afternoon of hiking and an evening of socializing, eating, and learning.

First the hikes. Even with the all-day rain, I led seven people on an enjoyable hike around Lake Powhatan. The conversation flowed, as did the streams around Bent Creek. Bobbi Powers and Linda Blue guided 16 flower-loving hikers on various trails. "It was a group effort," said Bobbi "but we saw about 30 flowers. For the social hour, Marcia Bromberg organized a cash bar. I use the word "organize" casually; it took a lot of work on her part to be allowed to have alcohol at the Arboretum. "People enjoyed the opportunity to have beer and wine with their meal," Marcia said. Bubba, who owns Circle B Ranch Barbecue on New Airport Road, offered his array of meats, sides, and dessert. His cole slaw beats them all, hands down. Bruce Bente was awarded an honorary life member for all his efforts on hike scheduling for years. Though the award was announced at the Hike Leaders dinner, he received his framed certificate from Lenny Bernstein, CMC president. Then the program. Jill Gottesman, Southern Appalachian Outreach Coordinator of the Wilderness Society, showed great slides as she explained how the Wilderness Act of 1964 affects the places w

e hike in today. "If you're going to read one Federal law," Jill says, "read the Wilderness Act. It reads more like poetry than a federal law." See the current Let's Go and March, 2014 eNews for more on the Wilderness Act. Becky Smucker, who heads the CMC Saturday Wilderness Crew, discussed how her crew differs from other CMC trail crews. By being on a weekend, the crew attracts folks with weekday obligations, more new people, and more women. A slew of tools were laid out on the table and Norm Sharp demonstrated a few of them. All together, the Wilderness Crew maintains 56.2 miles on 12 trails. If this intrigues you, contact Becky. The food was good, the hikes were fun, the program informative, and the camaraderie was top s. "We'll do it again next year," was Les Love's last word. He already has the venue booked for Saturday April 25, 2015. Put it on your calendar.

Students On The Appalachian Trail!

By Jan Onan

It could not have been a more beautiful 2 days to experience backpacking on the AT. "Trail Days" was taking place in Hot Springs and the trail was abuzz with through hikers. I eagerly anticipated getting back on the AT having such recent memories of accomplishing the CMC 90/90 last October. It was Friday afternoon, April 11, 2014, when my son, Jake, our trail dog, Sophie, and I waited at Tanyard Gap parking lot for the arrival of the group we volunteered to help chaperone. We knew little about this group.



One of the recent requests CMC received was from North Buncombe HS teacher, Michael Rowe. He received an ATC grant to take his Earth Science Club on a backpacking trip to experience the AT and to do water quality testing along the way in creeks, ponds, and the French Broad River. Will Maney, a history teacher at NBHS and a 2013 AT through hiker, was a natural to be along as a chaperone. The kids were ready and excited about being on the trail. One problem could have kept them from this planned trip. There were 13 students, 7 of whom were female. The group needed a female chaperone. Thus, the request came to CMC. When the request finally made it to my email, I looked at my calendar and saw that I was free and was excited that CMC could participate. Having been a Trail to Every Classroom participant in 2008, this fit perfectly with TTEC goals to get students on the AT.

Jake and I were taking in the mountain air when a fleet of vehicles arrived at the parking lot. Out jumped 13 smiling students and 2 smiling teachers happy to finally be starting their adventure. Introductions were made, car shuttles worked out and the .7 mile hike to Mill Ridge camp site began. Along the way, we talked about the AT- from blazes to the 31 maintenance crews. The students learned how CMC members lead group hikes; trail breaks, sweeps and how not to get lost! I was amazed from the start at the abilities and positive attitudes of these HS students. Once at camp, I learned that much of their gear was gathered from what family or friends had about. As the kids made camp, I heard laughing and saw high-fives shared when it was discovered that one student grabbed what she thought was a 2-man tent to share with a fellow classmate, only to discover it was a child size single tent! This presented no dilemma as the students quickly came to a solution by sharing what equipment each of them had. This was the first time hiking, let alone backpacking and camping, for several of these students. I shared a Leave No Trace activity I learned from Trail to Every Classroom, so the kids could discover how long common discarded objects take to decompose, then Jake went over the 7 LNT principles using hand gestures to help them remember. They were all great sports and all participated. We enjoyed each other around the campfire before hitting the sleeping bags or hammocks. Saturday morning after breakfast, packing up and water testing, we headed out again towards Hot Springs. These students can hike! Even with heavy loads, they kept a great pace and arrived at the river a lot sooner than expected. I thoroughly enjoyed my time with this great group of students and would recommend other CMC members to volunteer your skills with others. Perhaps CMC could develop a database made of a contact list of members who enjoy working with and educating youth called Education Outreach Opportunities. I believe Tim Carrigan volunteered the same Saturday at the same campsite that we just left! He worked with a group of Boy Scouts. We have so much to offer and can share our love

of the trails with others who will be taking over the stewardship of our precious land that we work so diligently to preserve and maintain. Jan Onan Here's what the students had to say about being on the AT:

"I enjoyed the opportunity to apply textbook knowledge into the real world, which is something that is scarce in conventional education" -Julian "Hiking through parts of the AT was an incredible experience in which I saw how the environment works in a beautiful, vivid way" -Lindsey "The experience was a lot of fun. I enjoyed learning how the water filter worked, i also learned about LNT"-Stephanie " I learned that there is more things happening to the French broad River than I thought"-Mason

" I really enjoyed being outdoors with friends and just being outside of the classroom but still larning" Taylor



Solo Travel

You're Never Alone For Long On The Trail

By Chris Slater

The rain had been falling for three days, persistent but never dominant, like background music. The scattered farmsteads became sparser as I climbed, fields and stone fences gave way to lichen encrusted granite boulders and open moorland reminiscent of those other Celtic lands to the north. A wind turbine loomed through the gloom, spinning sadly as if doomed to rotate to death in the service of man, its vanes appearing and disappearing methodically into the cloud. A milestone, always a comfort to know the exact number of meters to Santiago, brought me back to earth, concentrate now, this is no time or place to get lost.

Last night at the albergue at Miraz we had a great concentration whose collective jollity dispelled the oppression of the day, aided by the hospitaleros - Bob's abundance of energy which seemed to spread through the building and Alison's imperturbable, multilingual dispensing of nuggets of wisdom and knowledge. We were full, even overflowing on to a floor somewhere else, this in dismal October, not hectic July. Aromas from the kitchen promised succour, diminishing anxieties of those of us who had failed to heed warnings of barren lands ahead, or who had missed the briefly-open store in Baamonde on Sunday night. Perhaps we wouldn't be dependent on little peanut-packets from Pilar's bar after all. A glorious cauldron of piping garlic soup emerged, somehow these most seasoned hospitaleros had concocted enough for all and seconds too, so bellies were filled and warmed simultaneously - despite warnings that only the first plate was supplied, there were no signs that anyone had brought - or needed - a second plate. But now that haven of cheer seemed a world removed, as the rain intensified and tilted to the horizontal. I gambled and took a short cut,

described in confident detail in a confraternity guide, forgoing the comfort of the milestones in the hope of s having 2 km off the soul-chilling rain. A few anxious moments but my luck held, the views toward Sobrado emerged as promised. The land became populated again, the milestones reappeared, even a bus shelter to afford the luxury of a dry seat. There were six of us at Sobrado where the sun put in a cameo appearance only to deceive as we rushed our washing in from the rain. So we endured another steamy, snory night. Next day I set off for Arzúa and a conjunction with the unwashed masses of the camino francés. I hadn't seen a single pilgrim all day, and viewed the crowds-to-come with mixed feelings, still, it was with pleasure that I chanced upon a young couple and greeted them in Spanish. The mumbled response flipped me into English - the default language - they were from Baltimore, yes, loved to visit Asheville, did I know the Laughing Seed, their favorite restaurant? You're never alone for long. Chris Slater



Carolina Critter

Ursus Americanus~

The American Black Bear

By Becky LedBetter

"Some ecologists believe, because of the symbolism of the bear, how humans respond and protect their lands and their future will be the most honest depiction of how serious humanity is about preservation of our environment and the natural resources within it" ~ Ted AndrewsAnimal - Speak

It's spring. Finally. And with spring we start to see lots of wildlife activity on and off the trail. As I have done each time my Carolina Critter article for CMC is due, I wait to see what critter will present itself to me as my subject. The photo you see was taken in the North Asheville mountain neighborhood where my 84 year old mother lives.

The mother bear was following her yearling cub who had descended the hill before I could get its picture. No matter. Her standing on her hind legs to be the look-out was picture enough for me. I had just dropped my mother off after having dinner together and was rounding a curve when both of these beautiful bruins met me in the middle of the road. I stopped the car and watched them in reverence. I was awed by this encounter but also felt very sad. You see, the mountain top these bears call home is being subdivided into residential lots. These bears may become known as a nuisance, getting into garbage cans, birdfeeders or presenting a danger to the family dog. Hopefully they will move on to a better forested area before having to be relocated by someone with a Rocky Raccoon painted on the side of his truck and a sign advertising "Wildlife Removal". Thankfully the Blue Ridge Parkway is close by. Black Bears are naturally solitary animals although cubs will stay with their mother for up to two years after birth. Black Bears have also been seen foraging for food in groups where they tolerate each other as long as the food is plentiful. Black Bears have their own version of the Paleo Diet. They are omnivores dining on berries, nuts, grasses, roots, insects, fish, small mammals and occasional carrion. And yes, they like our garbage. American Black Bears in our part of the country are almost always black with a tan colored snout. The western version of this bear can be cinnamon or brown in color. They grow to be 5-6 feet tall and can weigh up to 600 lbs. They have non-retractable claws which aid them in climbing trees and digging for grubs. There are an estimated 600,000 American Black Bears in North America from the mountains of Mexico north into Canada. They can be found in 40 of our states. They thrive in forested areas where they can find food sources and shelter. Shelter usually consists of a cave, tree hollow, thick underbrush or burrows. Male Black Bears roam large territories sometimes as much as 80 square miles. These bears do not truly hibernate but enter into a state of dormancy during the winter months. They gorge themselves during summer and fall in order to build a thick layer of fat that will sustain them through the cold winter months. Their body systems slow down dramatically until the spring arrives. Researchers are particularly interested in this phenomena as the bears' kidneys shut down during this dormant period. In studying this process researchers hope to find vital information to help people with diseased kidneys to heal. Pregnant females usually give birth during the winter months. The mating season is in the summer and gestation lasts 63-70 days. Cubs emerge with their mother in the spring and are weaned after about 6-8 months. Native Americans believe that bear is kin to the human because it can stand and walk on 2 legs. Bear relates to all primal instincts. Bear is a symbol of alchemy. Bear's presence helps us to see the great value in the most common of experiences. So what lesson does bear leave with us? Bear's ability to become dormant reflects on how to go within ourselves and tap into our own inner resources. Oftentimes, our answers lie within. Thanks, Bear!

Movie About Camino To Premiere At Carolina

Walking the Camino - Six Ways to Santiago will premiere in Asheville premiere at Carolina Cinemas opening on May 9th thanks to the reputation of WNC as a vibrant hiking area. The film follows the joys and agonies of six real pilgrims (not actors) on the Camino and was made thanks to many donations. It's been a hit at film festivals and on a West Coast swing. Come along, and spread the word!

ASHEVILLE PREMIERE AT CAROLINA CINEMAS!

"A brilliant documentary!"
-Martin Sheen

Walking the Camino
Six Ways to Santiago

This multiple award winning film has been selling out screenings around the world and is having its premiere in Asheville, NC!

Come embark on a journey with six strangers as they attempt to walk 500 miles across Spain on foot.

Join us for Q&A sessions with Producer/Director Lydia B. Smith opening weekend!

WWW.CAMINODOCUMENTARY.ORG

Opens Friday, May 9th at Carolina Cinemas
Q&A with Producer/Director Lydia B. Smith opening weekend
1640 Hendersonville Rd. Asheville, NC 28803
Visit www.carolinacinemas.com/asheville for more information

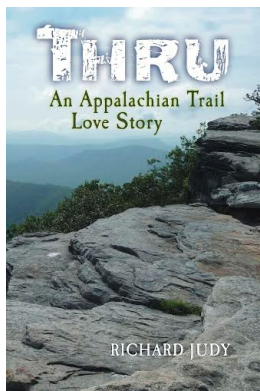
This film usually sells out. Be sure to get your tickets early!

caminodocumentary.org



CMC Featured Maintaining Wilderness Trails

Smoky Mountain News recently featured a story about trail maintenance in wilderness areas and included background about the Carolina Mountain Club and the CMC's Maintenance Crew.



AT Thru Hiker Fulfills Dream To Share Journey Of 1973

THRU is a gritty -- sometimes downright wacky -- portrayal of what it is really like to hike from Georgia to Maine on the world's most revered footpath. Richard Judy has a half century of leading a hiker's life, including an AT thru-hike in 1973 and a section hike that wraps up this summer. His kids have both thru-hiked the AT. The book contains much of what he has learned, sensed, smelled and suffered through during many years of hiking.

Richard Judy serves as board president of the nonprofit overseeing the Len Foote Hike Inn in North Georgia, just one mile off the AT Approach Trail.



Send eNews articles to eNews@carolinamountainclub.org

The newsletter will go out the last Friday of the month. The deadline to submit news is the Friday before it goes out.

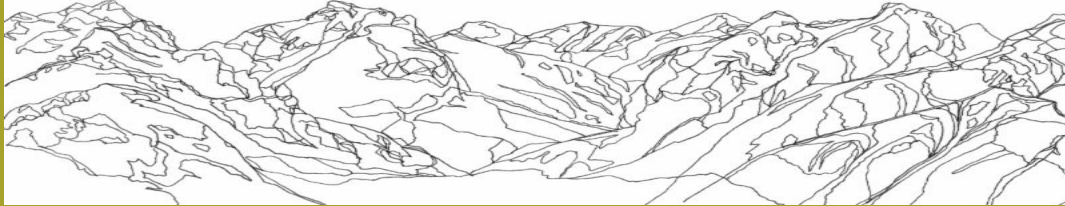
The next issue will come out on Friday, June 27 so send your news by Friday evening at 9 P.M. before the newsletter comes out, that is, by Friday evening June 20 to Kathy Kyle at eNews@carolinamountainclub.org. Include your email address at the end of your story. Thank you.

Westgate parking - Park in the northernmost part of the lot - past EarthFare, in the last row of parking spaces.

To join Carolina Mountain Club go to: www.carolinamountainclub.org. Click on "Join CMC" on the right side. Follow the instructions. Send all address and email changes to Gale O'Neal at gogalemail@gmail.com. Do not resubscribe yourself to the eNews. That will be done automatically. If you are a non-member subscriber, you need to go back to the eNews and make the change yourself.

Kathy Kyle

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