

Carolina Mountain Club - *Since 1923*

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February 2015

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Camino Experience In Portugal

Tres Peregrinos Abroad On Trail

Editor's Note: Hiking in another country has unique challenges. Three CMC hikers ventured outside the country to hike a section of the Camino - The Portuguese Way this past September. They share their story below.

By Stuart English, Amy Treverton, Jane Apple

Jane: We started our Camino Experience in the town that gave Port wine and the country of Portugal its name. It is a city of ancient and modern charms on the Rio Douro. The sidewalks were intricately laid mosaic stone tiles in various designs and streets paved with cut stones of granite.

As charmed as we were with the streets and sidewalks reality set in as blisters began to show up due to the constant unevenness of the footing. Once out of the urban areas the paths were mostly cobblestone through farms, small villages and vineyards. We were all about our feet on this walking adventure so we became

experts on blister treatment. My favorite treatment was to pull a threaded needle through the blister, take off the needle, but leave the thread dangling through to wick out the moisture leaving a tough layer of skin. Compeed patches helped to treat the hot spots before they gave you trouble.

We wanted to experience a variety of lodging options and therefore stayed at missions, public albergues, private albergues, and hotels. Each one was a unique experience. One particularly fun one was a lovely mission and beautiful grounds. We had the run of the kitchen



Of curiosity to me as I walked through the rural areas was the vast amount of cornfields, a change from a few years back. Rarely were we served corn so what was the deal? I learned it is GMO corn that is very controversial but profitable. Most gardens grew pretty much the same things but one stalky plant with large leaves peaked my interest. It was a cousin to our collard greens and was used in Caldo Verde and other popular dishes. Upon arrival in Santiago we attended Mass at the famous Cathedral. I must say the performance was as lovely and theatrical as a production at the Met. Amy:

Despite the missed flight connections, cobble stones and sore, blistered feet, we hiked the Camino Portuguese from Porto, Portugal to Santiago, Spain in September, 2014. Probably the funniest incident was opening wine bottles in a monastery with hiking poles taking the place of a corkscrew. Desperate times for desperate hikers. Other nice things on the hike included getting taxi rides when we were exhausted, experiencing the best weather ever, eating really good food and some not so good, nibbling grapes along the way and being able to see "the end of the world", at Finisterre on a clear day!! All in all, it was a fantastic experience for the three of us. Stuart:

First of all thanks to Amy for organizing this great trip and thanks to Amy and Jane for being great traveling companions. Walking the Camino Santiago has become so trendy, especially among CMC members that even I thought I might try it. Of course the route I chose was the shortest one and the feature I liked best was the bailout factor, in that I could do that and "adios, compadres." At that time I could care less about getting any Compostela signed. We went from Porto, Portugal to Santiago, Spain, a walk of about 150 miles or 240 kilometers. The things that stand out for me: the heat and cobblestones in Portugal, the friendly, enthusiastic Portuguese, the experience of washing and drying our clothes and once seeing some of them "gone with the breeze", a panty burning incident that occurred as we tried new inventive ways to dry our clothes, "the rain in Spain is mostly in Galicia", and finally the way I felt on that last day as we walked up into the old part of Santiago. All of a sudden, I wanted my certificate signed and I'm proud of two of them that hang on my walls. Achievement through effort is kind of a religion of its own.



Digital Map Of DuPont Forest Available

If you own a smart phone or tablet, and hike in DuPont State Forest you can track and plan your hikes without cell service through a digital map provided by Friends of DuPont State Forest. The map costs \$4.99 and uses the Free Avenza PDF maps App. It allows you to track your location and has several other features. Proceeds from the sale of maps go back into projects to support the Forest.

ATC Seeks Help Pulling Invasive Plants

By John Odell

Resource Management Coordinator
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Southern Regional Office

In 2015, ATC is challenging itself and volunteers to pull 2189 pounds (one pound for every A.T. mile) of the invasive plant, garlic mustard from the A.T. corridor.



In the south, we'll need to pull garlic mustard in April - before it goes to seed.

I would like to organize a few workdays in April to tackle some of the known infestations of garlic mustard along the Trail. Fortunately for us, garlic mustard is not as widespread in southern states as it is up north, but there should be plenty to keep us busy this spring. I know of garlic mustard infestations in every SORO club section (except for SMHC's section, at the moment).

If you are interested in helping out, please contact me to start scheduling an event and picking an area to target for garlic mustard removal at 254.3708 x15 or at jodell@appalachiantrail.org



Saturday, April 25

Scouts To Present Program At Social

By Les Love

The tenth annual Spring Barbeque will be held in the beautiful NC Arboretum on Saturday, April 25, from 2:30 until 8:30. This year our program will be on our club's involvement with the Boy Scouts of Western North Carolina and MC'd by Skip Sheldon. The Daniel Boone Council CEO, Joshua Christ, will speak, along with Assistant Scout Executive, Dan Rogers, who has thru-hiked across the U.S. and published a book on his 11,000 miles of backpacking. We'll also have accomplished scouts and scout leaders telling how scouting and hiking have influenced their lives.

CMC members, their families and friends are welcome. You do not have to be a

member to attend. 2:30 pm Casual hike around Lake Powhattan. The hike will be about 5 miles, and will leave from the front of the main building 3:00 pm Wildflower hike on the Arboretum trails. The hike will be about 3-4 miles, and will leave from the front of the main building. 5:00 pm Social hour in the main building - beer and wine available for purchase. 6:00 pm Dinner by Bubba Q. The menu will include barbeque pork and chicken, sides and dessert. Vegetarian Lasanga will also be available. 7:00 pm Program by Skip Sheldon, Scout Executives and local scouts.

The cost is \$18.00 per person. No gate entry will be charged - just tell them you are with CMC. Make your check made payable to Carolina Mountain Club by April 20 to: Les Love, 25 Scenic View Drive, Weaverville, NC 28787. For questions, please call Les @ 658-1489, or send e-mail to leslove55@gmail.com. Please provide the following information when you send in your money:

I am paying for _____ people to attend the Spring Social @ \$18.00 per person. I would prefer _____ vegetarian meals. Names of attendees.

Meeting Set About Issues, Solutions For WNC Forests

By **Stuart Camblos**

In the face of environmental threats, including climate, pests and invasive plants, how will our national forests survive? These and other important topics related to the overall health of the national forests in Western North Carolina will be discussed by a three-person panel, at 10am, Friday, March 13, at Trinity Episcopal Church in downtown Asheville. Sponsored by the French Broad River Garden Club Foudnation (FBRGCF), the program is designed to highlight critical environmental threats which may dramatically change the national forests for future generations.



The three experts, Lisa Jennings from the U.S. Forest Service in North Carolina, Sarah Workman from the U.S. Forest Service Southern Research Center, and Josh Kelly from the non-profit Mountain True (formerly WNC Alliance), will update us on the health of our forests with the knowledge they have from their work. They will share what some of the climate, human, and other threats are to our forests today. They will also tell us about what efforts are in place to control or eliminate some of these threats. They will present the issues and possible solutions, followed by questions and discussion with the audience. The program will be moderated by dedicated hiker and national park preservationist Stephen Woody.



Walt Weber

Master Plan For Trail Friends Of The MST Annual Meeting

Danny Bernstein

About 225 members showed up to learn the latest about the [MST](#), renew friendships, and get tips on how to hike the trail. Our own Walt Weber and his wife came to the meeting.

Mike Murphy, head of the [NC State Parks](#) system, invited us all to

celebrate the 100th anniversary of the state park system.

Yes, 2016 is the 100th anniversary of the National Park System but it's also a big year for state parks. There will be major celebrations at Mt. Mitchell, the first NC park, and Fort Macon, the second. North Carolina is becoming the Great Trail State.

State Parks, with lots of help, is working on a master plan for the MST. The Statewide Master Plan will create the foundation needed to complete a continuous off-road hiking trail across North Carolina, including paddling and biking alternatives. The hired firm that is actually writing the master plan will need input from MST enthusiasts like CMC. There will be four input sessions across the state and I'll do my best to let our membership know the details when they come to our area. Tom Earnhardt, writer and host of UNC-TV's Exploring North Carolina



Tom Earnhardt

, was the guest speaker. You've all seen him on Thursday nights. Tom is as enthusiastic in person as he is on TV. A lawyer by training and profession, he's turned into an avid naturalist, a real renaissance man.

Tom started by praising walking. "Walking is the most noble form of transportation." That grabbed me from the beginning. He spoke about the importance of ground truthing

. Maps and GPS are important but you have to get out there. You have to see and feel the ground: cold, wet, smell and feeling that you get by actually being in the place you describe.

He recalled his 10 to 12 year old boyhood self. "No skepticism, no cynicism, no politics," he said.

His father took him to the Eastern Continental Divide close to Bearwallow Mountain and explained that here half the water went to the Atlantic Ocean and half went to the Gulf of Mexico. That captured Tom's imagination. The next thing he did was to bring all his 10 to 12 year old pals and they all peed to send their liquid both ways. But most of his presentation was about the wonders of North Carolina. He threw out a lot of numbers, but you didn't have to catch them all to understand why our state is so diverse biologically. I had the privilege of moderating a panel of MST Completers. Nine hikers finished the MST in 2014 and seven participated on the panel. They were a diverse lot. Two university students felt that it was a perfect trail for students because you could do it in a summer. Two veterans scouted out the MST to see if it could be used for the Warrior Hike project. The hike is set for September. The panel discussed what they thought the best part of the trail was. Almost everyone said "the people." They loved walking the road because it brought them through small towns where they met locals. There were the usual practical questions about where to stay and how heavy were their packs.

I hope the panel and the whole annual meeting convinced a few more people to get on the trail. Because at the end, you have to ground truth the MST. The next Friends of the MST meeting will be on Saturday February 6, 2016. Put it on your calendar now!

Record Number Of Visitors Recorded At Park In January

Great Smoky Mountains News Release

Record setting visitation to Great Smoky Mountains National Park continues in 2015, with 351,670 visitors enjoying the park in January. The National Park Service has maintained monthly visitation records since 1979. Since that time, visitation has never exceeded 351,000 in the month of January.

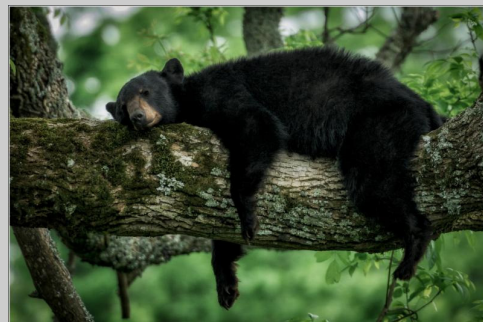


Photo by Charlie Choc

Visitation was up at all major park entrances as well as the park's outlying areas. This increase was noticeable at the park's visitor centers, especially at Oconaluftee in North Carolina. The staff at the Oconaluftee Visitor Center welcomed 12,658 visitors in January, a 51% increase over 2014. Sugarlands Visitor Center staff saw a 13% increase in visitation compared to 2014.

The record month comes on the heels of the park's busiest year in 14 years. In 2014, 10,099,275 visitors enjoyed the national park, an 8% increase over 2013. The numbers were spurred by strong July and August visitation as well as the highest October visitation in 27 years.



Send eNews articles to eNews@carolinamountainclub.org

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

The next issue will come out on Friday, March 27, so send your news by Friday evening at 9 P.M. before

the newsletter comes out, that is, by Friday evening March 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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