

Recap of ATC Biennial in Emory, VA July 2011 by several PATH Members

For those of you unable to get to this season's ATC Biennial (the 38th) in Emory, Va., you'll be pleased with PATH's high-profile presence. I attended an abbreviated but enjoyable few days (Fri afternoon to Sunday 11 a.m.) and took a lot of notes at the fascinating lectures and workshops and helped out a bit on Saturday at our work-trip table. Attila and John Boy Hartpence will give you a more thorough post-conference write up, I'm sure.

I do feel a special tip-of-the-hat is in order for PATH member Chris Bracknell. He has done a ton of behind-the-scenes work, including the lining up of Saturday evening's music concert in nearby Abingdon: guitarist/luthier Wayne Henderson and pianist/vocalist Jeff Little. Those two internationally acclaimed musicians provided an enjoyable evening of entertainment (and some hilarious jokes) with a range of high-octane traditional mountain music. I suspect that getting them on board for this event was not all that easy, as they are in great demand. This morning's positive comments about the concert from a number of attendees really indicated that Chris had chosen some first-rate entertainers. So, give Chris a big pat on the back when you see him.

The Biennial will continue throughout this week, with plenty of hikes and workshops and two days of work-trips (Tues and Thurs), sponsored by PATH, for those attendees eager to get their hands dirty and see how PATH works its wonders.

....Karl Kunkel in steamy High Point, NC

Emory 2011

Emory 2011 was held at Emory and Henry College in Emory, Va. The trail clubs hosting the biannual AT Conference were: Mt. Rogers, PATH, Virginia Tech Outing Club, Roanoke, Natural Bridge, Tidewater, and Old Dominion Outing Club. The Conference went from Friday July 1- Friday July 8.

PATH members gathered in Sugar Grove on Wednesday-June 29 to pack for Emory. Thursday morning we went to Marion and had breakfast with Peggy(owner) at the Sugar Grove Diner. Her meals are fantastic as always. After breakfast we headed for Emory. We set up our big tent. We put up the displays in the gym and limed the field for the camping. We made over 130 sites for camping. Chris Bracknell headed up the camping.

The conference open on Friday. Bill Boudman, Jim Houck, and John Harpence manned the PATH booth. Bill Sadler and John Jaskolka manned the Mountain to Sea Trail Booth. Rhonda Bracknell headed the selling of Emory T-Shirts. Marian Jordan and Sylvia Swain were the gophers for all of the booths and headed up our hospitality. There were booths from all of the clubs along the AT. The ATC had a large booth. There were many other groups who had booths--Leonard Atkins, girl scouts, Va. Tourism, Discovery Trail and others. The booths were set up in the gym from Friday - Monday noon.

The hikes and workshops began on Saturday. Bill Boudman, Jim Houck, Andrew Mitchell, Harry Atkins, John Jaskolka, Chris Bracknell, Diane Billips, David Faucette, David Johns led hikes on PATH's section. Andrew Mitchell headed a two day rehab of Chatfield Shelter. This included painting the shelter and privy, steps at Va. 644, water bars, Quida Dips, and rock work. We had 18 workers each day. Bill Chatfield(Atlanta-the son of Louise Chatfield who the shelter is named for) joined us on this project. All of these workers earned a PATH patch.

The workshops were great and our members attended these. We had workshops on GPS, Invasive plant species, geology, Education (schools-Norma Johnson was our representative) and the trail, privy building and upkeep, birding, eagles, and many other things.

We ate breakfast at the PATH tent. Bill "Sweet Willie" and JJ(Jaskolka) had the coffee going by 6 am. Bill, Andrew, Harry, Attila, and Sylvia did the cooking!! We had food to prepare our lunches. Many of us ate in the E and H cafeteria for supper. The meals were FANTASTIC.. Sylvia and Marian made supper for those eating at the tent.

After supper we had a socializing time at the tent. The entertainment at the Conference was headed up by Chris Bracknell. The featured entertainment was in Abingdon, Va, on Saturday night. The entertainers were Wayne Henderson(guitar and banjo) and Jeff Little(ragtime piano). We had other bands during the week. Each night was a different form of music--Monday(Rock and Roll--50's and 60's), Tuesday(mountain music) and Wednesday(Bluegrass). Chris did a great job picking out these bands.

We had over 950 attend the Conference. PATH had 26 members attend and work the Conference. Everyone had a great time. E and H College were fantastic hosts. They attended our every need. The Conference in 2013 will be at Western Carolina University(west of Asheville). Bill will send out a summary of the work our members did at the Conference.
John Hartpence-Secretary

I want to give a big **thanks** to all that helped with the camping and T-shirt sales. Couldn't have done it with out you.

If I tried to list everyone that helped, I'd likely miss some one, but I do want to especially want to mention several that put in extra effort to help with the camping set up and manned the camping and tee shirt sales desk. Those are Rhonda, Sylvia, Mariam, Jim, Bill Sadler, John Hartpence, Bill Boudman, John Jakoka. and not with our club, Bob Reid (Tidewater).

Very sincerely,
Chris Bracknell

First and foremost I want to thank Chris Bracknell for all the work he did on making the AT Conference a Success. Chris was put originally in charge of just the camping area and it escalated to entertainment, t-shirts, around the neck red pouch, etc. Chris did a fantastic job with everything.

I also wish to thank all those that volunteered to lead hikes, be the trailer, work the trail desk, work trip desk and the t-shirt desk. Rhonda did a wonderful job of manning the desk most of the time.

Jim, Andrew and others did a masterful job of planning and coordinating all the work around Chatfield Shelter. Jim oversaw the painting, Andrew oversaw the steps, and Atilla laid back in his hammock without breaking a sweat and watched the Rock Water bars and Coweeta dip go in.

Many thanks go out to those that helped in the kitchen with BF and Dinner. Thank you Sylvia and John for all the manning of the desks and for help with BF and Lunch and Dinner.

There are just too many to thank for making this the best AT Conference That I have ever attended and it goes to the many volunteers from PATH that made it successful.

Another Thanks goes out to Chris and Rhonda Bracknell.

Volunteers on ATilla's list:

161 Volunteer Days!!!!

Harry Atkins- 10, Bill Boudman- 10, Chris Bracknell-10, Rhonda Bracknell - 10, Jeff Brown -1, David Faucette -8,
Evelyn Goldston - 2, Paul Haag - 4, John Hartpence -10, Jim Houck - 11, John Jaskolka - 10, David John - 8,
Norma Johnson - 8, Marian Jordan - 10, Hollyce and Marvin Kirkland - 1, Karl Kunkel - 4, Andrew Mitchell - 8,
Leo Nunnink - 2, Bob Reid - 9, Bill Sadler - 10, Sylvia Swain - 9, Margaret Wainwright - 5, David & Martha Emrey – 2, Diana Billups-2.

I hope I missed no one.

God Bless all of you!!!!.

Bill Boudman
PATH
Trail Supervisor