

The 27th Gathering

of the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association, Pipestem, W.Va.



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'ALDHA News That Fits We Print'

Summer 2008



Extreme Southbounders: Gregg and Deia Treinish on top of the Andes during a nearly 2-year-long end-to-end trek.

Take a long walk, along the Andes!

IF YOU THINK taking six months to hike the Appalachian Trail is a long time, try spending two years on foot traversing the highest mountains of the Western Hemisphere.

That's exactly what Gregg and Deia Treinish accomplished in April of this year, when they became the first two people to successfully backpack the Andes of South America, hiking through the mountains, not on roads.

And now they're heading to Pipestem, W.Va., to attend their first ALDHA Gathering and to share their stories and amazing photos. They will give the feature presentation Saturday night, Oct. 11, on the campus of

Concord University in Athens, W.Va.

Take a quick look at their Web site, www.acrosstheandes.com, and you'll know you won't want to miss seeing their pictures on the big screen and hearing the stories behind the scenes during this, the first big presentation of their journey since they finished.

Gregg and Deia's message will resonate with every hiker in the audience:

"Our desire was to experience the culture and environment of the Andes first-hand in a manner that we feel only the pace of walking accommodates," they say on their site.

From glaciers and icebergs to sun-

baked stretches and exotic wildlife, the Andes mountain range has it all. They used map and compass in some stretches, centuries-old foot trails and bridle paths in other parts, and occasionally braved the train lines.

They — and no one else, for that matter (Deia is now the first woman to walk South America) — had ever done something like this before. And giving a presentation to a large group will be something else new for them. So we hope every member of ALDHA makes every effort to attend so we can give Gregg and Deia the warmest of hiker welcomes at the Gathering.

— Bill O'Brien

Things to look for at Concord '08

A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

We need a lot of help to pull this off, especially with the registration desk. Please contact Marsha Lee, our membership secretary, to find out how you can ease the burden on our corps volunteers.

Contact either Greg Walter at weathercarrot@hotmail.com or Marsha Lee at membership@aldha.org.

FOLKLIFE CENTER

Camping up over the hill near the campfire is usually a little noisier than down below along the fence. Park in designated areas only. The men's and women's dorms are available to those who need them the most on a first-come, first served basis. An additional fee payable to the Folklife Center is collected to cover the cost of opening them up and in-house showers.

Gathering folks can hang out in the main lodge by the fireplace. The center often has hot soup for sale.

The policy of the Folklife Center is not to have alcohol on the premises and we appreciate your cooperation.

SHOWERS

At the field house on campus again. Hours will be posted in the program. Please do not use the restrooms on campus for that purpose. The showers are awesome.

CAFETERIA

Affordable AYCE meals will be served from Friday supper through Sunday dinner at the campus dining hall. Times and prices will be posted on the ALDHA Web page by early September and in the program.

HIKER FAIR

This year's Hiker Fair will once again include many vendors, displays and book offerings. We'd also like to invite you to bring any good-condition hiking gear for the used gear exchange, which will function as a hiker box. The fair will be Saturday and Sunday at the Student Center.

ULTIMATE TRAIL STORE

Need a trail calendar for 2009? The Appalachian Trail Conservancy will

once again set up its trail store at the Gathering so you can find most of the items you would get in Harpers Ferry.

TRAIL DREAMERS MECCA

There are numerous workshops aimed at giving folks who want to hike the A.T. all the advice and encouragement we can muster. New-hatched thru-hikers who just finished the trail are invited to the Class of 2008 session, where dreamers can pepper you with all the questions you can handle.

Warren Doyle and Baltimore Jack will each offer their individual marathon sessions to get you mentally prepared for the challenges of the trail in their own unique ways. And other workshops aimed at dreamers will focus on Leave No Trace ethics, ultralight backpacking, and over-50 hiking.

A CALL TO MUSICIANS

If you've got instruments, there are lots of moments throughout the weekend to jam with your fellow Gathering attendees. Let's hear what you've got.

SQUARE DANCE

The Hoorah Cloggers, among the oldest friends of southern Gatherings, are back again for Saturday night's hoedown, which will be held in the Student Center ballroom from 9 p.m. to midnight.

SILENT AUCTION AND RAFFLE

The A.T. Museum Society is trying to raise money for a new building and will be holding its biggest silent auction and raffle ever on Saturday. Bring whatever you'd like to contribute, whether it is hiker related or not.

We'll be raffling off a ULA Catalyst Backpack with many other things included. For information, contact the society president, Larry Luxenberg, at info@atmuseum.org.

POST-GATHERING WORK TRIP

Plans are under way for our return to the New River relocation project near Pearisburg, Va. Details will be available at the Gathering.

Bring work clothes and suitable footwear (and gloves if you wish); tools will be provided, as will snacks and lunch.

Participants will meet Monday morning at the Folklife Center and head over in a convoy.

APPLE CONTEST

Bring your state's finest and let the judges decide who's this year's best. Judging will occur at the hiker fair.

MEMORY WALL

Bring photos of anyone near and dear to you and the hiking community who have passed away over the past year. They are still very much a part of our Trail Family.

A.T. MUSEUM SOCIETY SYMPOSIUM

The seventh annual A.T. Museum Society symposium is titled "A Celebration of the Hikes and Career of Earl Shaffer" to mark the 60th anniversary of Earl's 1948 thru-hike. It will include a discussion of Earl's life and achievements, including his service in the South Pacific, three thru-hikes and his many artistic outlets, as author, poet, singer, composer.

Participants include John Shaffer and Earl's 1998 hiking partner and biographer David Donaldson.

SUNRISE SERVICE

Reflections are shared among attendees in the chapel at the Folklife Center, timed to coincide with sunrise. A mountain dulcimer will help us sing tunes like "Amazing Grace," etc.

YOGA

Mornings at the Folklife Center, for 30-45 minutes. See program for times.

FREE, FAIR AND FUN ELECTIONS!

Part of our duty as citizens of ALDHA is to take part in the Sunday morning business meeting. Several offices will be up for election, so make your vote count early and often!

THANK-YOU CARD

We will have a large card set up at Hiker Central and we invite you to sign it with the warmest best wishes possible for Dr. Jerry Beasley, the longtime president of Concord University and a friend of ALDHA since its inception. He retired July 1!

A true gentleman of the trail to be honored

Call him a trail legend. Call him the founder of trail magic. Call him the best story teller. There's always something more than just interesting about Gene Espy.

This year at Trail Days, I observed Mr. Espy as I was volunteering at the ALDHA booth. He was walking at a steady hiker pace, not too fast, and pleasantly absorbing his surroundings. He had the look on his face of purpose, a reason for being there. He walked proud. I couldn't help but to run up to him, again, to shake his hand and tell him how much I appreciate his presence, existence, and his contribution to the hiking community. Looking into his face, as always, his smile made it's way to my heart.

At the Gathering this year we will honor Gene Espy for his gifts to the A.T. community during a half-hour presentation at the opening night festivities on Friday. We hope you can all join us in thanking him.

— Marsha Lee



Gene Espy shows off some of the items from his 1951 thru-hike.

Photo contest named after Earl

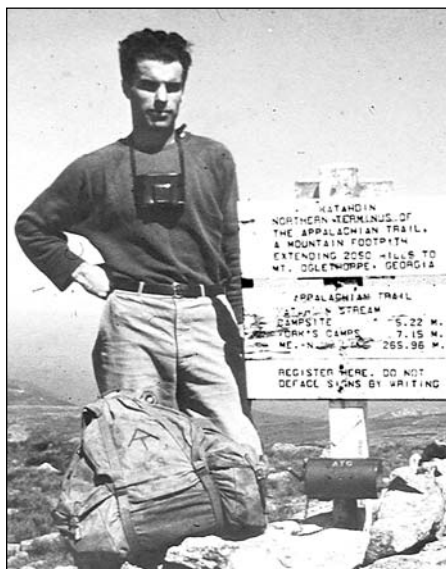
He's gone from us now but his memory still lives. Earl Shaffer was not only the first A.T. thru-hiker but also one of its earliest pioneer photographers, taking color slides of his 1948 hike. He carried a Retinna camera, as you can see in picture taken on the first Summit Day, Aug. 5, 1948.

So to honor his legacy, the annual photo contest at ALDHA Gatherings is now named after him. Sponsored by the Earl Shaffer Foundation, it will be organized once again by Sanne and Chris Bagby, who have another nice lineup of prizes. The five top winners in each category will receive an Epson Stylus CX5000 All-In-One Color Photo Printer/Copier/Scanner. Additional prizes will be awarded.

The five categories are:

1. Beauty and Grandeur of the Appalachian Trail.
2. Beauty and Grandeur of Any Other Trail.
3. Trail Humor.
4. Wildlife on the Trail.
5. The Trail Community: Building, Maintaining and Enjoying the Trail.

All photos should be submitted in person at Hiker Central as early as



possible. The photo gallery will be open Friday. Photos will be on display throughout the Gathering.

You may enter a maximum of five photos taken by you while hiking. Maximum size 8"x10". Photos may be matted if you like, but they must be unframed. Contestants should make arrangements to collect their photos and prizes at the close of the contest.

Introducing new creativity contest

There are so many talented ALDHA members out there that the board decided to offer the opportunity for members to share their work at the Gathering.

If you're a poet, writer or artist, consider bringing your work to be displayed at the Gathering.

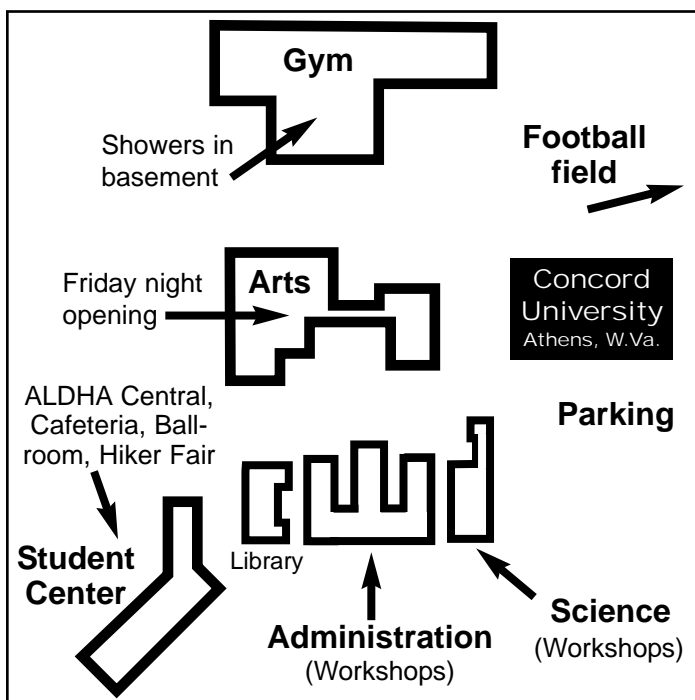
Written works should be displayed no larger than 8.5 x 11 inches; artwork should not exceed 16 x 20 inches.

If your artwork doesn't fit into these criteria, contact Sanne "Ready" Bagby at readyhiker@yahoo.com or Leslie "GottaHike" at Lnmass@hotmail.com and we'll try to make it work out for you to share your masterpiece!

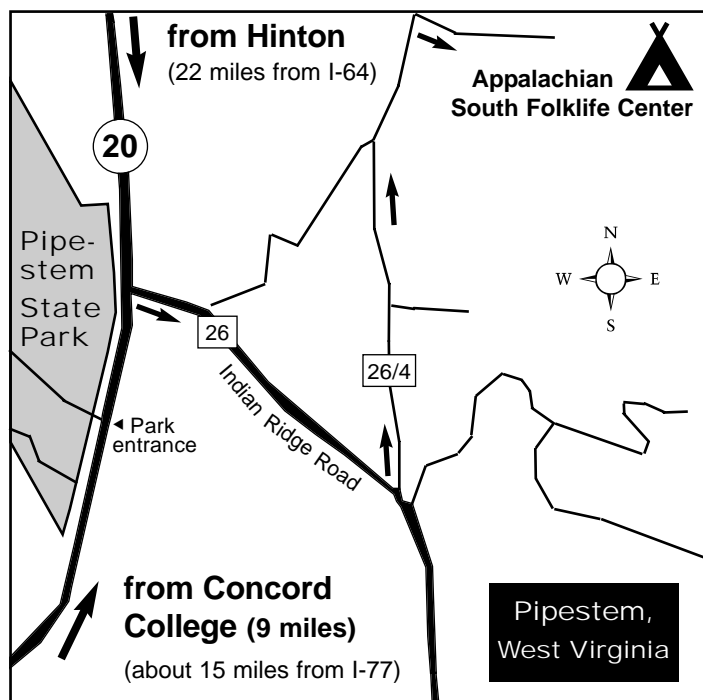
It's a new concept for all of us, so we're learning as we go! If the gallery is successful, ALDHA will consider making it a part of future Gatherings, as well.



Campus layout



Folklife Center directions



Directions to the 27th Gathering

FROM THE NORTH

From Interstate 64

Take the Sandstone exit (No. 139) and follow Route 20 south through Hinton. The turnoff for the Folklife Center is on the left, about 20 miles from the exit. (We will post signs.) Concord College in Athens is about another 11 miles down Route 20 from Pipestem, through the hamlet of Speedway. When you come to your first traffic light, with a pharmacy on opposite corner, turn left onto Vermilion Street and the campus is a mile on the left.

FROM THE SOUTH

From Interstate 77

Take the Athens Road exit (No. 14) and head for Route 20, then go north 11 miles to Athens. The folklife center is another 11 miles north, on the right, just beyond the granite stone entrance to Pipestem State Park, which you'll see on your left.

From U.S. Route 460

Get onto I-77 North at Exit 9 and follow directions from I-77 above.

Ride board

On our Web site, located at www.aldha.org, we have posted a ride board for folks to leave messages either seeking a rider or seeking a ride.

If you would like to get yourself on that list, call Bill O'Brien toll-free at (800) 992-3232 Ext. 1444 and leave a message on my office voice mail. I will post your information with the ALDHA e-mail address for replies. If anyone responds, I'll be happy to either call you or e-mail with the info on how to get in touch with the other person.

It's set up this way to avoid posting your private info on the Internet.

Campus parking

Your best bet is to head toward the football field, where there is ample parking. There are also some spaces alongside the Science complex.

Please do not park in the limited number of spaces directly in front of the Student Center. Exhibitors can unload their displays there, but please park in the other lots mentioned above. Your cooperation on this is greatly appreciated.

Carpool it

When traveling to and from the college from the Folk Life Center, consider the benefits of carpooling! It would sure make the Earth a nicer planet.

Southbounders!

At the Gatherings in Pipestem, we traditionally have a fair number of active Southbounders on hand. Please sniff them out and offer whatever assistance you can. Buy them a meal at the cafeteria. Give them rides to and from the school or campsite. See if they

need anything. Remember the help you got on your hike? This is your chance to pay it forward.

Things to bring

■ **Earplugs:** Never leave home without them, especially if sleeping in the middle of a large contingent of hikers.

■ **Coffee cup:** We'll provide the coffee and tea, but not the cups. That's your cue.

■ **Apples:** The 2008 apple-tasting contest will take place during the day on Saturday. So bring along your state's finest. Details at the registration desk.