

May 4, 2011

Blind Appalachian Trail Hiker to Make Stop at Appalachian Trail Museum on May 14

GARDNERS, PA. – Bill Irwin, the only blind person to have ever completed the 2,181 mile Appalachian Trail solo, will be at the Appalachian Trail Museum on Saturday afternoon, May 14. The Appalachian Trail crosses 14 states from Maine to Georgia.

His historic hike, with his Seeing Eye dog Orient, began in Georgia in March 1990 and ended almost nine months later in north central Maine. “This amazing odyssey was the single most publicized human endeavor that year, and an inspiring example of overcoming the odds for all,” said Larry Luxeneberg, president of the Appalachian Trail Museum Society. “Bill will be hiking the Appalachian Trail with a youth group, and we are not sure when they will arrive at the museum on May 14, but we are planning for around midday to early afternoon.”

The Appalachian Trail Museum is located on the Appalachian Trail and is in Pine Grove Furnace State Park not far from Carlisle, Chambersburg and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The midway point of the trail is three miles south of the museum.

“Bill continues to inspire millions of people each year as a motivational speaker. His unique message of perseverance and the will to survive tantalizes all audiences throughout the world as he encourages his listeners to achieve their impossible dreams,” Luxenberg added. “His home spun, self deprecating humor and life experiences, (over 30 years in corporate America, recovery from alcoholism, the Appalachian Trail experiences and encounters as a family counselor) allow him to make life-changing observations which translate into eventual life changing decisions in the lives of others.”

Irwin's best selling book *Blind Courage*, the account of his lifetime of overcoming the odds and his incredible journey, was released nationally in 1992, is in its 11th printing and also is published in the United Kingdom, Germany and Taiwan. He has appeared on television programs such as "The Morning Show" on NBC, "Sonya Live" on CNN and "Heart to Heart" on CBN. Additionally, he has been the subject and cover story of many magazines.



Bill Irwin and his dog Orient in 1990

While at the museum, Irwin will talk with visitors and sign books. For youngsters at the museum, a children's book about the historic hike that Irwin made with Orient will be read by a museum volunteer.

The Appalachian Trail Museum is across from the Pine Grove General Store on Pennsylvania Route 233 in south central Pennsylvania. The museum is open from noon to 4 p.m. daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day and on weekends from noon to 4 p.m. in the spring and fall.

About the Appalachian Trail Museum Society

The Appalachian Trail Museum Society, a 501-C-3 not-for-profit organization formed in 2002, organizes programs, exhibits, volunteers and fundraising nationwide for the Appalachian Trail Museum. The museum opened on June 5, 2010, as a tribute to the thousands of men, women and families who have hiked and maintained the 2,181 mile long hiking trail that passes through 14 states from Maine to Georgia. Located in the Pine Grove Furnace State Park in Gardners, Pennsylvania, the museum is conveniently near Carlisle, Gettysburg and Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. Additional information is available at www.atmuseum.org.

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